

**PUBLIC RELATION PRACTITIONERS ASSESSMENT OF THE USE OF
SOCIAL MEDIA IN BANKS IN BENIN CITY (A STUDY OF ACCESS,
GUARANTY TRUST BANK)**

BY

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DECEMBER 2022

**PUBLIC RELATION PRACTITIONERS ASSESSMENT OF THE USE OF SOCIAL
MEDIA IN BANKS IN BENIN CITY (A STUDY OF ACCESS, GUARANTY TRUST
BANK)**

**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF MASS
COMMUNICATION, FACULTY OF ARTS, UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY. IN
PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF
BACHELOR OF ARTS (B.A) DEGREE IN MASS COMMUNICATION**

BY

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DECEMBER, 2022.

DECLARATION

I, **AGBAMA NAPOLEON OSATOHANMWEN** hereby declare that this project is based on a study conducted by me in the department of Mass Communication, Faculty of Arts, University of Benin, under the supervision of Dr Festus Olise.

All findings and analysis are the product of my personal research and where the views of others have been used and expressed, they were duly acknowledged.

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AGBAMA NAPOLEON OSATOHANMWEN

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CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this project work was done by **Agbama Napoleon Osatohanmwun** under my supervision and has been approved and accepted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Bachelor of Arts (B.A) Degree in Mass Communication, University of Benin, Benin City.

.....

Dr. Festus Olise

(Project Supervisor)

.....

Date

.....**Dr. Dan Ekhereafo**

(Head of Department)

.....

Date

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to GOD ALMIGHTY the bedrock of all my success.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My heartfelt gratitude goes to Almighty God. He is indeed my sunrise and my sunset. Through his love, guidance, provision, mercy and infinite wisdom, I was able to cope with the stress of academic work. To my parents, Mr Agbama Napoleon and Mrs Agbama Josephine whose unconditional love has seen me through trying times. Thank you for grooming me into the responsible young woman that I am today, for your support, provisions and prayers. May you reap the fruits of your labour and I promise to make you proud. My sincere gratitude to my Siblings, Mr Aimien Napoleon, Mr Erhun Napoleon, Mrs Osarenoma Eghosa, Mr Oghogho Napoleon, Mr Osadabamwen Napoleon for your support and contribution.

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ABSTRACT

Social media in enhancing corporate communication in bank especially in Guaranty Trust Bank can be seen as an integrated approach to achieving organizational study. This research work looked into the public relations practitioners assessment of the use of social media in performance of communication activities of access and Guaranty Trust Bank in Benin city, how it harnesses the huge corporate communication. The main source of data used in this research is both primary and secondary data. Secondary data consist of data from already published materials such as textbooks, journals, the internet, academic dissertation, workshop papers and annual reports. Primary data was collected through the means of questionnaire. This consist of data collected from the field survey. This source of data formed the basis of analysis in this study. The research established the important of social media in corporate communication within the two mentioned bank, which are Access and Guaranty Trust Bank. It confirmed the support given to corporate communication by public relations practitioners

through the engagement of social media in bank. It also emphasize the benefit of social media in the banking industry by public relations practitioners.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

On daily basis, public relations practitioners and all those charged with the responsibility of promoting a favourable image for an Organizations seek ways on Banks or financial institutions can meet up with a high level of success. The public relations practitioner helps people and organizations to gain public acceptance by explaining the aims, objectives and methods of their organization, and by building and maintaining favourable image. All these cannot be done in isolation as the coming of the social media seeks to improve and promote the job of public relations practitioners, especially in the banking sector.

Public relations (PR) is the practice of managing and disseminating information from an individual or an organization (such as a business, government agency, or a nonprofit organization) to the public in order to affect their public perception. Public relations is controlled internally to build, enhance and sustain a favourable image for an organization, by putting various strategies in place.

Business is in the manner it deals with customers. Therefore, placing the publics at the center of the banks' activities is critical to the success or otherwise of the organization.

The banking word can be extremely competitive. Banks in Nigeria strive to make a difference and secure favourable image in the eyes of the members of the society it is serving.

To achieve this, the Bank's Corporate Communications department or public relations department is charged with the role of sustaining the Bank's image or reputation in good light.

Building a favourable image by the public relations practitioners can help enhance the bank's trust and acceptance of the bank's monetary and fiscal policies. This is why the Public Relations practitioners or Corporate Communications Manager must do all it can to project bank's image favourably, by utilizing the various social media channels and key stakeholders in actualization of this drive. Negative publicity can damage a bank's reputation. Public relations can give the people or bank's publics better understanding of how the bank works.

Nwosu (1995), notes that; Public Relations is an important and fascinating area of management on which most business and non-business organizations depend directly or indirectly for their continued existence. The image maker of the bank owes the people a duty to constantly build and sustain a favourable image between it organization and the publics as nothing is done or actualized in isolation. Refusal to feed the people with what they should know, means that they can easily decide to believe what comes their way, through the social media which are becoming one of the fastest means of communication.

Karl (2010), Bill (2012) & Okoli (2011); added that proper use of Public Relations strategies can help in managing the situation and retaining the banks' customers. Considering the need to adequately feed the public through social media platforms by Corporate Communications Manager, in a review of CBN 2017 Annual Report under Mr. Godwin Emefiele, the Central Bank Governor, which was made available on their various social media handle, noted that, many would agree that they year 2017 was an enthralling and exerting one for the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) and for the Nigerian economy due to the economic uncertainties and foreign exchange challenges endured in the preceding year, which began to abate during 2017. This CBN Governor added that, the onset of economic turnaround witnessed during the year was

accompanied by brightening short-term outlook even as global recovery remained less-than-expected.

Amidst the remaining economic fragilities during the year, the Bank experienced significant changes in its governance structure, which he partly attributed to the contributions of two former Deputy Governors, Dr. Sarah O. Alade and Alh. Suleiman Barau, who exited the Bank on 24 March 2017 and on 12 December 2017, respectively, after ten years of meritorious service to the nation.

In 2017, the global economy witnessed a gradual dissipation of the Vulnerabilities that hitherto undermined growth and outlook. The observed recovery of global growth reflected the uptick global demand, strengthened business and consumer confidence, the benign global financial environment, and the significant pickups in investment, trade, and industrial production, among others. This occasioned an increase in global crude oil demand and led to oil price recoveries.

However, the recession that greeted the nation between 2016 and 2017 remain one of the most trying moments in the nation's economic history. The place of this report aims at making the people know the challenges, effects made to tackle it and the desire to feed the social media user and the people with firsthand information.

Abayomi (2020) note that, Public Relations is a vital tool for corporate governance in the banking sector.

He avers that communication remains strategic to corporate governance and could enhance a better understanding of operations in and outside the banking hall.

The major determinant of the quality of interaction between the bank image makers and its customers beyond the banking hall is the level, quality and regularity of the communication of its activities that is available in the public domain. This is seen as a management as a key management strategy.

However, the 1978 Mexican submission of Public Relations, which sees it as the art and social science of analyzing trends, predicting their consequences, counseling the organization leaders and implementing planned programmes of action which serve both the organization and public interest.

Smith (2016), cited Okafor (2006) & Osuji (1999), argued that since management and Public Relations have similar functions of planning, organizing and directing or leading and controlling in an organization, all geared toward the achievement of organizational goals, Public Relations is a management function. Public Relations natural responsibilities to the management include:

- To facilitate and ensure an inflow of representative opinions from the organization's publics so that policies and operations may be in tune with the needs and views of these publics;
- To advise management on ways and means of maintaining or reshaping operations or communications policies to gain maximum public acceptance;
- To devise and carry out programmes that will gain wide and favourable interpretation of the organization's policies and operations.

Perhaps, the reason why Public Relations is a management function were advanced by the Public Relations Society of America which expounded that, as a management function.

Continuous communication and engagement of all stakeholders in the banking industry remain paramount.

However, communication efforts by image makers of the banks should not be perceived by the public as mere cosmetic gestures, but a deliberate public relations strategy and effort by the image makers.

Public Relations practitioners must sustain good use of the social media in order to enhance its service delivery in the areas of service delivery, governance, strategy, support, information and asset security, as well as, applications upgrade. For public relations practitioners, as social media advance, they must also advance alongside, in order not to be seen as “a yesterday person or analog fellow.”

According to Bhole (2006), financial institutions as business organizations that act as mobilizers and depositors of savings and suppliers of credit or finance. The financial institutions operate as agents that provide financial services for their people and are under the supervision of the government.

Public Relations practitioners in banks are therefore expected to do the following:

1. Provide information's through house journals, media reports, press briefings on activities of the bank.
2. Handle customer complaints with dispatch because one dissatisfied customer is capable of causing great disaffection for a bank
3. Create regular avenues for interaction between a bank and its customers
4. Suggest corporate social responsibility programmes for the bank as a way of promoting and sustaining cordial relations between the organization and it publics; and

5. Promote a healthy interaction among staff members and with competitors”.

Activities of Public relations practitioners remain critical to the continued existence of establishment. The public relations practitioners exists to the building and sustainance of a favourable image for the banks.

Therefore, it is in the light of this that the researcher seeks to examine Public Relations Practitioners assessment of the use of social media in selected banks in Benin City, Nigeria.

1.2 Statement of the problem

In this era of new media, public relations practitioners and social media exist to complement each other. Even governments in countries of the world have realized the “powers” of the social media, considering its ability to enable citizens to disseminate and receive information. Social media as sources of communication and interaction amongst the people all over the world remain critical to the development of any given financial institutions, especially banks.

The social media remain an essential aspect of the banking sector.

Social media have become one of the engines of running business in the world today. Social media being a form of electronic communication which facilitates interaction based on certain intervals and characteristics. Social media is a platform for social interaction among users. The speedy growth of social media activities that have been observed over the last two to three years is very enormous as they have changed the face of the world as they have changed the face of the world.

However, the social media have gained attention of larger numbers of the youths, who also form good number of bank customers.

Social media as modern protest and advocacy against poor bank service delivery have helped to shape the course of bank-customer relationship.

Folorusho (2019) did a survey on social media and youth mobilization in Nigeria; he discovered that social media have become effective tools for youth mobilization I Nigeria. There's more to what these digital platforms are doing and achieving.

Furthermore, the social media have great influence on the activities of public relations practitioners and banks because, once dissatisfied social media users take to facebook page to complain about poor service delivery, other user tend to hold a negative perception or view of the bank. This leaves a huge task for the public relations practitioners.

What then, therefore, is the public relations practitioners assessment of the use of social media in Guaranty Trust Bank and First Bank of Nigeria in Benin City?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are to:

1. Findout public relations practitioners perception on the types of social media used in Guaranty Trust Bank and First Bank of Niger, Benin City.
2. Determine public relations practitioners assessment on the effectiveness of the use social media in related banks in Benin City.
3. Discover the challenges affecting the use of social media for public relations in Guaranty Trust Bank and First Bank of Nigeria in Benin City.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What is public relations practitioners perception on the types of social medial used in Guarantee Trust Bank and First Bank of Nigeria, Benin City?

2. What is public relations practitioners assessment on the effectiveness of the use of social media in related Bank in Benin City?
3. What are the challenges affecting the use of social media for public relations in Guarantee Trust Bank and First Bank of Nigeria Benin City?

1.5 Scope of the study

The main focus of the study is public relations practitioners assessment of the use of social media in selected banks in Benin City, Nigeria. The scope of this study is centred around public relations practitioners in Benin City. The study was limited to two banks in Edo State capital-Guaranty Bank (GTB) and First Bank of Nigeria, Benin City, with focus on public relations practitioners assessment of the sue of social media.

The study focused on the place of social media in the banking sector and the role public relations practitioners are expected to play if the Bank must meet up with a high level of success.

It also focused on what public relations practitioners must do to satisfy its customers in the areas of service delivery, banking policies, strategy, support, information and asset security, as well as, applications upgrade.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This findings of this project work would be of great benefits to banks, their ever increasing customers, public relations practitioners and managers of financial institutions generally. The findings of the research, no doubt be useful to public relations practitioners and corporate communications managers in helping them enhance their image building drive.

It would also be useful to Operators of banks, especially on the need to give attention or priority to social media usage which have become part of our daily lives, today.

This study would also redirect the course of public relations practitioners in adopting modern strategies geared enhancing and building a favourable image between their organizations and the publics.

Ultimately, researchers and Student would benefit from the findings of this study as it would highlight the perception of public relations practitioners on the use of social media by Banks and also provide empirical evidence that will aid further studies.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

In the process of carrying out this study and administering the research instrument some respondents who were Purposively selected for the study cite time wastage as the reason for them to decline filling the questionnaire.

In addressing the problems or challenges encountered while carrying out this study, the researcher distributed the questionnaire more to the samples that were available, purposively selected and are willing to fill the questionnaire.

1.8 Operational Definitions of Terms

The following terms frequently appeared in this research work and are operationally defined accordingly:

- **Assessment:** An evaluation or the systematic process of documenting and using empirical data on the knowledge, skill, attitudes, and beliefs to refine programs and improve researcher's study.

- Customers: Persons who patronize or transact businesses with Banks.
- Perception: the way in which public relations practitioners view use of social media by Banks
- Practitioners: Persons actively engaged in an art, discipline, or profession of image building or public relations.
- Public relations: The professional maintenance of a favourable public image by a company or other organization or a famous person.
- Social media: a computer-based technology that facilitates the sharing of ideas, thoughts, and information through the building of virtual networks and communities.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

2.1 Overview of Social Media and Public Relations Practices

The term Social media refer to a computer-based technology that enhance sharing of idea, thoughts and information through the establishment of virtual networks and communities.

Social media are internet-based and give users speedy electronic communication of content. The Content ranges from personal information, documents, videos and photos. Users here engage with social media through the use of computer, or smartphone through a web-based application. The social media have been encouraging users to speak out with one voice in a bid to discourage poor service delivery in banks in Nigeria.

The cost of poor bank-customer relations in Nigeria banks cannot be measured as single error has possibility being made subject of discussion on the social media. However, social media users have begun to adequately utilize social media as means of expressing their displeasure whenever they fell “cheated” by a bank.

Arowobusoye (2020) pointed out that, when the outcry against an establishment becomes even more vociferous, the usage of social media increases.

One key area that Nigerians are always quick to react to is banks extorting or making undue deduction from customers account. However, Dambo, Erosy, Auwal, Olorunsola, Olonode, Arikewuyo & Joseph (2020), found out that, one does not need to wait until one becomes a victim of extortion before joining the campaign to put an end to unpleasant occurrences. However, there are some ways the youth are launching out to get their voices heard. It is majorly through social media.

On Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and its likes, Nigerian Youth, within a twinkle of an eye can dragout a bank for a issue that happened in the banking hall. This is why the public relations practitioners must also make efforts to be deeply rooted in the social media in other to swiftly respond and clear cloudy area where necessary.

Social media have dramatically impacted the public relations industry in the last few years. Publics are increasingly geographically dispersed, traditional media and user-generated content are converging, and the relationship between ‘customer’ and ‘Bank’ is becoming more and more understood.

There is also a growing emphasis on social media as an effective vehicle for two-way symmetrical communication between public relations practitioners/ Corporate Communications Managers and publics.

Practitioners in Nigeria are now having a mutual experience with social media. Social media usage by banks remains key to the sustainance of their business, especially in Nigeria where users are very high.

DiStaso, McCorkindale and Wright (2011) notes that a good number of public relations practitioners use social media in their bid to advance business and relate easily with customers.

Also, public relations practitioners need social media on a daily, if not hourly, basis. Others use it more sparingly, whilst some are completely dead set against it. Among the most significant trends social media has experienced in recent years is its use by banks and business organizations. Whether to serve customers, boost brand awareness, expand consumer base, enhance customer experience or inform about products and services, the effective use of social-media platforms is proving to be a crucial tool in the arsenal of banks and marketing strategies.

However, the above specifically applies to the banking sector. These recent times have increasingly seen banks all over Nigeria ramp up their social-media strategies, simply as a way to improve customer experience and expand business opportunities.

In the submission of zerfass, Fink and link (2011) added that organizations have taken advantage of social media as a communication channel. Practitioners now use social networks as part of their practice in the banking sector.

The use of social media by Banks is no longer subject to debate, but now part of the system which is geared towards meeting up with greater heights.

2.2 Social Media Platforms

There is no doubt that social Media have enhance Communication. It is however true that there challenges affecting the use of social media, as noted by Taiwo (2011), where he said, social media have so many drawbacks and most individuals do not know the problem that is caused by social media. Social media is responsible for hacking, cybercrime, cyberbullying, decrease academic performance, negative performance in the workplace, and creates problems in personal relationships. There is need for it to be used more safely to minimize the risks of hacking, cybercrime.

Below is a list of 20 Most Popular Social Media platform/sites

1. Facebook

Facebook: This is one of the most recognizable social media platforms in the world. With 2.7 billion monthly active users, including public relations Practitioners, more than a third of the world's population uses Facebook. It is also the social media platform that banks patronize most. Taiwo (2001). It was founded on February 4, 2004, Facebook has consistently evolved through the years to fit the need of its users and attract new ones. This includes the acquisition of Instagram and WhatsApp geared towards expanding business by Mark Zuckerberg. Business can create their own pages, groups, and events. Facebook also offers targeted advertising opportunities for those who want to increase visibility to specific consumers. Banks also use Facebook Messenger to send personal messages to customers.

Considering the effectiveness of the use of social media in Bank, Wright & Hinson (2011) stated that, social networks such as Facebook is the platform that is most used by banks. There is hardly any Bank in Nigeria that is not operating a Facebook handle.

2. Twitter: This is one of the social media platforms available to Banks in carrying out their operations. Twitter gained notoriety as a microblogging site just included text posts of up to 140 characters. Since its launch in 2006, it has raised that character limit and now lets a user share other media like photos and videos. With about 330 million monthly active users, it's not as ubiquitous as Facebook. However, it is still widely used among general consumers. Additionally, it can be a useful site for interaction, like joining Twitter chats in your industry or responding to customers who have customer service questions. Bank's

image makers from the comfort of their offices can easily tweet and get feedback accordingly.

3. LinkedIn: This is regarded as the most popular social media site for professional networking. LinkedIn has over 700 million registered users, with about 300 active each month. Launched in 2003, LinkedIn allows a user to add their resumes, connect with others in their industry, and even post and respond to job listings. In a marketing sense, LinkedIn is often especially useful for business. It even offers paid ads and content publishing options. It serves as a means for banks to also hunt for young and sound graduates that have made their marks in the University.
4. YouTube: YouTube is not just the most popular video-sharing website in the world, it is also the second most popular search engine behind Google. The company was founded in 2005 and was eventually bought by Google. YouTube has over 2 billion logged-in visitors per month. There are even more who visit the site and watch videos without signing into their own account. Basically, any business that wants to use video marketing can use YouTube to reach a wide audience. YouTube also provides analytics, facilitates interaction between users, and lets you embed videos in other websites.
5. Pinterest: Pinterest is one part social media site, one part search engine. It consists of digital bulletin boards where a user can save products, project ideas, and inspirational images. For business, it's a perfect place to share product images, unique ideas, recipes, and unique visuals. You can also make content on your sites "pinnable" by including pin-it buttons that allow visitors to share your content to their boards. Pinterest launched in 2010 and has since amassed more than 400 million monthly active users.
6. Instagram: Instagram is another social media channel with a heavy emphasis on visuals. The site launched in 2010 and was later purchased by Facebook. It has more than 1 billion

monthly active users and is mainly a mobile platform. Like Facebook, Instagram offers targeted advertising options to help business users reach a specific user. Instagram also offers various posting options, including photos, videos, slideshows, stories, and live streams.

7. Tumblr: Tumblr is a blogging platform that allows several different post formats. You can include quotes, chat, videos, photos, and even audio content. It originally launched in 2007 and is now owned by Automagic. The user base has decreased a bit in recent years. However, it still has about 400 million monthly visitors. The business population isn't high on Tumblr as it is on other platforms like Facebook. However, that could potentially help brands stand out from other sites that are oversaturated. It also offers sponsored posts and lets a user easily re-share content.
8. Flickr: Flickr is a popular platform for sharing photos and videos. Launched in 2004, the site was purchased by Yahoo in 2005 and is now owned by SmugMug. It's especially popular for photographers or business that want to see their images shared around the web. You can also use it to find royalty-free images for use in content. The site has lost some of its industry clout in recent years. However, it still has about 90 million monthly users.
9. Reddit: Reddit is a social news and entertainment website with tons of sub-communities dedicated to specific interests. A registered user can submit content and comment on threads to interact with other users. Launched in 2005, the site has amassed a monthly active user base of 430 million. Reddit isn't super popular with marketers. However, there are tons of active, targeted communities that make it an attractive option for sites looking to reach a new audience. There are also business-related subreddits for those interested in networking or learning.

10. Snapchat: Snapchat is a mobile messaging social media platform. A user can share one-time content with friends or post stories that go out to all that users followers. Released in 2011, the app quickly became popular, especially with young consumers. It has since slowed a bit. However, there are still about 360 million monthly users worldwide using this social media channel. Brands that market to young consumers can set up business accounts and advertise on the app.
11. whatsApp: whatsApp is a popular mobile messaging app. You can use it to send images, texts, documents, audio, and video content to another user individually or in groups. Launched in 2010, the company is now owned by Facebook along with instagram. whatsApp now has more than 2 billion monthly active users. Small businesses can use the app to easily communicate with customers and prospects on a personal level.
12. Quora: Quora allows users to ask questions and share answers on a variety of topics. Originally launched in 2009, it now has more than 300 million monthly users. Businesses can use Quora to build expertise in a specific area. Quora may come across your responses.
13. tikTok: tikTok is relatively new to the world of social networks. However, it has already made a memorable mark on the social media landscape. The app lets a user create short, creative videos. It already has more than 800 million monthly active users around the world. Businesses can use it to show off their creative side and create viral content as part of their social media marketing.
14. Vimeo: Vimeo is a professional video platform. Though not as widely used as youTube, it offers quality features perfect for videographers and those who want to share cinematic content. There are about 170 million monthly active users on this social media channel. However, Vimeo users can also share and embed videos on other sites. Users can also access advanced stats and analytics to monitor performance.

15. bizSugar: BizSugar is a social platform specifically for small business owners, entrepreneurs, and managers. The site was created in 2007 and is now owned by small Business Trends LLC. Users can share videos, articles, blog posts, podcast episodes, and websites. Other users can discuss or vote on the content they love. The site reaches more than 2 million small business owners monthly. As a result, it's a great place to share resources, gain knowledge, and market to an audience.
16. Mix: Mix is a personalized discovery platform. The company purchased popular content aggregator Stumble Upon back in 2018. Users can attach other social sites like Facebook and Twitter to curate their feeds. Before the transition, Stumble Upon had about 35 million active users. However, not all have stuck around. Still, this social media channel can come in handy for small businesses that want to share useful or viral content.
17. Medium: Medium is a platform for creating and sharing long-form content. Although technically not a social media channel, millions of people and organizations share the site's content. The difference is it doesn't have a ton of extra features like other social sites to distract people from the main purpose. As a result, it's ideal for content creators who want their ideas to shine. Twitter cofounder Evan Williams founded Medium in 2012. There are now nearly 100 million users on the site monthly. Businesses can use the site to share complex ideas or discussions with a wide audience.
18. Digg: Digg is a news aggregator with a curated front page. Topics on this social channel vary widely and may include political issues, scientific finds, and viral videos. Founded in 2004, the site has gone through several iterations through the years. Though not as popular as it once was, there are 8 million users per month. Businesses can use it to curate their own online feeds or share relevant content.

19. Viber: viber is a VoIP and instant messaging mobile app blending social media and communications. Released in 2010, the app now has about 260 million monthly active users. You can use it to exchange audio, video, and images with other registered users. Like other chat apps, it's perfect for sharing on a personal level with customers or partners. There are also group chat options.

20. weChat: weChat is a multi-purpose mobile messaging app. People can send text messages, voice calls, video content, and even make payments. There are group and individual chat options. And there are about 1 billion monthly active users around the world. weChat offers official business accounts. As a result, brands can use the service to easily facilitate communication with customers and send out messages as part of a social media campaign.

However, the fear of banks losing control of information and the possibility of communication crises are consistently rated by practitioners as major reason in adopting social media in their Banks. SiStaso et al., (2011); Macnamara, (2010); Robson & James, (2011); Verhoeven et al., (2012).

2.3 History of First Bank of Nigeria and Guaranty Trust Bank

The history of First Bank of Nigeria is as old as the nation. Its zonal office is located in Benin City, Edo State capital with branches spread across the state and the nation. Banking as an industry cannot operate in non-monetized economy. The growth of the banking in Nigeria started as a British Colony with the introduction of the British coinage and currency system in the late 19th century.

The establishment of First Bank of Nigeria plc., predates the birth of the Nigerian nation as a sovereign nation. Bank of British West Africa (BBWS) as a matter of fact was the first bank to be established in Nigeria. The name "First Bank", which was eventually adopted in 1979 is

appropriate, having been conferred on the bank by history. The truth, however, was the bank was the first successful bank to operate in Nigeria. Being truly the first bank to be successfully set up and managed on the Nigeria soil, it also has endured a steady but tough banking twain. Banking system in the country started through the efforts of Alfred Lewis Jones and George William Neville. They are also seen as the founding father of BBWA, now First Bank. The banking system came or started in their (i.e the founding fathers) quest to protect their interest of their company a sole shipping agent of shilling of West Africa from London. Since the existence and establishment of the bank in 1894 and its adoption of the bank in 1979, the bank has continued to exist with the rigours within and around the country, and has been able to set up other branches.

While, Guaranty Trust Bank plc was incorporated as a limited liability company licensed to provide commercial and other banking services to the Nigerian public in 1990. The Bank commenced operations in February 1991, and has since then grown to become one of the most respected and service focused banks in Nigeria.

In Septembers 1996, Guaranty Trust Bank plc became a publicly quoted company and won the Nigerian Stock Exchange President's Merit award that same year and subsequently in the years 2000, 2003, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009. In February 2002, the Bank was granted a universal banking license and later appointed a settlement bank by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) in 2003.

Guaranty Trust Bank undertook its second share offering in 2004 and successfully raised over N11 billion from Nigerian investors to expand its operations and favourably compete with other global financial institutions. This development ensured the Bank was satisfactorily poised to meet the N25 billion minimum capital base for banks introduced by the Central Bank of Nigeria in 2005, as part of the regulating body's efforts to sanitize and strengthen Nigerian banks.

Post-consolidation, Guaranty Trust Bank plc made a strategic decision to actively pursue retail banking. A major rebranding exercise followed in June 2005, which saw the Bank emerge with improved service offerings, an aggressive expansion strategy and its vibrant orange identity.

In 2007, the Bank entered the history books as the first Nigerian financial institution to undertake a US\$350 million regulation S Eurobond issue and a US\$750 million Global Depositary receipts (GDR) Offer. The listing of the GDRs on the London Stock Exchange in July that year made the Bank the first Nigerian Company and Africa Bank to be listed on the main market of the London Stock Exchange.

In December 2009, Guaranty Trust Bank plc successfully completed an offering of N13.165 Billion Fixed Rate Senior Unsecured Non-Convertible Bonds Due 2014 (Series), being first ranche under the Bank's N200 Billion Debt issuance programme.

In May 2011, the Bank successfully launched a US\$500 million bond-the first non-sovereign benchmark bond offering from sub-Saharan Africa (outside South Africa), to the international community. The highly successful offering which matures in 2016, went further to show the international finance community's believe in the GTBank brand.

In 2013, the Bank issued a USD 400,000,000 Euro bond at a coupon rate of 6%; the least obtained by a Nigerian company in the international capital market. The Eurobond was issued under the USD 2,000,000 Global Medium Term Programme, which is registered under both regulation in the United State of America and Rule 144A in the United Kingdom and sold to investors across Africa, America, Asia and Europe. FBN & GTB (2021).

2.4 Functions of Public Relations Department at FBN and GTB

Taiwo (2011) noted the following as functions of public relations department at First Bank of Nigeria and Guaranty Trust Bank:

1. to aid management of the bank interpret issues of public concern: First Bank Nigeria (FBN) and Guaranty Trust Bank (GTB) are big establishments that the presence of effective public relations department will give room for easy interpretation of issue of public concern, as the people in such department are believed to be experts in the field of public relations.
2. Public relations department exists to advise the management of the bank on ways to promote public confidence: Every organization seeks to promote mutual confidence, goodwill and sustainable relationship between the management of the bank, its staff and the publics.
3. Explains the nature of Service to its customers when there is service failure: First Bank of Nigeria and Guaranty Trust Bank are quick at telling customers in advance when service will not be available or during service upgrade.
4. Give true position of issues to the public: This is usually seen in the period of consolidation 'fever' or bank merger usually supervised by the Central Bank of Nigeria, where customers make huge withdrawal from banks for fear of losing their money.
5. Makes customer/staff friendly policies: The welfare of customers and staff should also be the watchword of any responsible Organization. It is the policies of these banks to always give soft loan through collateral security and bonuses, especially during yuletide season.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

The researcher adopted the media ecology theory as the theoretical framework. Media ecology theory is the study of media, technology, and communication and how they affect human

environments. The theory was proposed by Marshall McLuhan in 1964, while the term media ecology was first formally introduced by Neil Postman in 1968.

However, ecology in this context refers to the environment in which the medium is used – what they are and how they affect society. Neil Postman notes that, “if in biology a ‘medium’ is something in which a bacterial culture grows in media ecology, the medium is ‘a technology within which a culture grows.’” In other words, “media ecology looks into the matter of how media of communication affect human perception, understanding, feeling, and value, and how our interaction with media facilitates or impedes our chances of survival. the word ecology implies the study of environments: their structure, content, and impact on people. An environment is, after all, a complex message system which imposes on human beings certain ways of thinking, feeling, and behaving”.

Media ecology argues that media act as extensions of the human senses in each era, and communication technology is the primary cause of social change.

Media ecology looks into the matter of how media of communication affect human perception, understanding, feelings, and value, and how our interaction with media facilitates or impedes our chances of survival. The word ecology implies the study of environments: tier structure, content, and impact on people.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study employed survey research method **to** Investigate Public Relations Practitioners Assessment of the use **of** Social Media **in** selected banks **in** Benin city, **Nigeria**.

Esiri and Onwubere (2013:47) see research design as the plan of the research, which defines what the research is to study, why it is to be studied, when is to be studied and how is to be studied. This research method (survey) entails the sue of the questionnaire instrument to collect data from the population of the study. Survey is a data collection technique that involves asking the questions of a number of people who are either representative or all the members of group one wishes to study.

The reason for adopting the survey research method is because of its ability to help the researcher to enquire, present and predict consequences of actions, all in a bid of proffering solution to an identified problem. The survey research's design allows the use of questionnaire as instrument for gathering data, as such, a large amount of data can be collected with relative ease from a variety of people who constitute the sample size. It allows the researcher to examine many variables such as: demographics, attitudes, motives etc. as it

relates to the problems being investigated and to use a variety of statistics to analyse the data gathered for the study.

3.2 Population of the Study

The population of the study is 517 as obtained from office of Edo State Chapter of the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR), which consist of Public Relations Practitioners in Benin City, Edo State.

3.3 Sample size

A sample size is a part of the population. Since it is impossible to examine the whole elements in the population, it is imperative to draw a sample size from the population. For the purpose of this study, the population would have equal chance of being selected and represented in the study.

A sample size of 100 respondents were selected for this study. The sample size was drawn from the Public relations practitioners in Benin City, who have knowledge of the public relations workings at First Bank of Nigeria and Guaranty Trust Bank, Benin Zonal offices and are duly registered members of Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR), Edo State Chapter. The Taro Temane (1960:240) statistical formula was used in determining the sample size as follows:

$$n = \frac{N i}{1 + N (e)^2}$$

Where N = Population

e = Level of significance

1 = A constant value

3.4 Sampling Technique

The study adopted purposive sampling technique for the selection of Public relations practitioners in Benin City, the Edo State Capital. This was purely for the logistic convenience of the researcher and considering their knowledge in the areas being investigated. The aim of this technique was to determine features or characteristics in the sampling Clements (respondents) and also to ensure that the respondents chosen have the required features for the study.

3.5 Instrument of Data Collection

The survey adopted the use of the questionnaire as instrument for the collection of its primary data for analysis. Ohaja (2003) notes that the questionnaire remains veritable and very useful instrument for collecting data from a large number of subjects.

3.6 Validity of the Instrument

The questionnaire was structured by the researcher under the strict supervisor of the research supervisor, to cover the range of meanings and address the basic concerns of the study as expressed in the introductory chapter.

Consequently, the study achieved content validity.

3.7 Reliability of the Instrument

However, a pilot study was conducted on a smaller fraction of the study's population using the same instrument and ultimately, the result of the study yielded result expected. To this end, which finally made the instrument to achieve reliability.

3.8 Method of Data Collection

The data collection was characterized by a fieldwork whereby the researcher personally administered questionnaire to various respondents who were purposively sampled and who are public relations practitioners, with good knowledge of social media and bank operations.

3.9 Method of Data Analysis

The responses of respondents were collated and analyzed using simple percentage. The data were presented on tables with rows and columns accordingly.