


DIGITISING PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICE: A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF THE  
TWITTER PAGES OF SELECTED ORGANISATIONS IN GHANA

BY



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THIS DISSERTATION IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON IN  
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF MA IN  
COMMUNICATION STUDIES DEGREE



SEPTEMBER 2025

INTEGRI PROCEDAMUS

**DECLARATION**

I, Keren Dusu here by declare that this material is original unless otherwise duly acknowledged, under the supervision of Prof. Margaret Ivy Gyan of the Department of Communication Studies at the University of Ghana, Legon.



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INTEGRI PROCEDAMUS

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my mother and sisters, Jemima, and Rosemond. I am eternally grateful for your prayers and support even when you needed it as much.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to express my gratitude to Prof. Margaret Ivy Gyan my supervisor, for her direction and advice. Maurice, Samuela, Paapa, Sheila, Felix, Elikem, and Hope, thank you so much for supporting and boosting my spirit during a difficult period.



## ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to examine how organisations in Ghana used Twitter as a public relations medium to interact with their stakeholders. The primary focus of the study was to analyse how Twitter posts conformed to the relationship indicators propounded by Hon and Grunig (1999) as well as Grunig and Hunt's (1984) public relations models. The study employed both qualitative and quantitative content analysis to gather and analyse the tweets of TV3, Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC), Consolidated Bank Ghana and Fidelity Bank on their respective Twitter accounts. Guided by Hon and Grunig's (1999) relationship indicators and the two models of Grunig and Hunt (1984), the study revealed that the organisations engaged in interactive activities such as posting original tweets, retweeting other Twitter account users' posts or the organisations' past posts, and replying to other account users' tweets. The study also discovered that Twitter posts promoted some aspects of Grunig and Hunt's (1984) theoretical models. The majority of the organisations' tweets depicted press agency and public information models. Moreover, the Twitter posts of the organisations also reflected Hon and Grunig's (1999) relationship indicators. The wordings employed in the text, the images and the videos posted carried meanings that were associated with at least one of the relationship indicators. The majority of the organisations' tweets conformed to control mutuality, commitment, exchange relationship and communal relationship.



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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.0 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the research topic, including the background and significance of the study. It highlights the practice of public relations, social media and its integration into organisational practices. The research objectives, research questions, and significance of the study are also presented. The chapter concludes with a brief summary of the study.

#### 1.1 Background of the Study

Public relations and its practices have been described by scholars in several ways. Broom and Sha (2013, p. 27) described public relations as “the art and science of building and maintaining a cordial relationship between an organisation and its publics”. Similarly, the International Public Relations Association [IPRA] (2019) explained public relations as a management strategy that aims to foster connections and shared interests between organisations and their target audiences via the use of credible and ethical communication channels to disseminate information. Also, Ledingham and Bruning (1998, p. 62) explained public relations as “the state which exists between an organisation and its key publics in which the actions of either entity impact the economic, social, political and/or cultural well-being of the other entity”. It can be deduced from the definitions that organisations prioritise public relations practices to maintain relationships, gain trust and build a good reputation in the eyes of their publics.

The public relations industry is acknowledging the importance of relationship building and management through the employment of technology as far as this digital age is concerned

(Gulerman & Apaydin, 2017). It is now obvious in this era of the digital age that dealing and interacting with an organisation's publics require digital tools like the internet and social media. The public's experience is progressively becoming a combination of technology and social life such that many publics use technological tools to communicate directly with organisations concerning the search and selection of products or services, and the experiences of using the products or services (Shareef, Dwivedi & Kumar, 2016). It is easy to see why people have grown increasingly dependent on their cell phones and the associated social media platforms, given their portability, consumer mobility, and continual information and communication nature (Wang, Xiang & Fesenmaier, 2016).

In Africa, public relations practice has undergone significant transformation in recent years, with many organisations adopting digital technologies to better engage with their stakeholders. According to a study by Muntingh and Muntingh (2019), digitising public relations practice has become increasingly important in Africa due to the rapid growth of internet and mobile phone usage across the continent. This has created new opportunities for organisations to connect with their audiences in more meaningful ways, while also presenting new challenges in terms of managing online reputation and dealing with misinformation. Expanding one's audience reach is a major advantage of digitalizing public relations in Africa. As noted by Oyedele and Kehinde (2019), digital platforms such as social media and email offer organisations a cost-effective way to communicate with stakeholders, particularly those in remote or hard-to-reach areas. Additionally, digital technologies can help organisations to gather feedback and insights from their audiences more quickly and efficiently than traditional methods.

In the context of Ghana, public relations (PR) practices globally are being transformed by the digital revolution, and Ghana is no exception. With the increasing penetration of digital

technologies and the growing online presence of organisations, the landscape of PR in Ghana is evolving rapidly (Boateng et al., 2020). In Ghana, organisations are increasingly leveraging digital tools and platforms to enhance their PR efforts. According to Agyei and Ofori (2019), social media platforms such as Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook are now commonly used by organisations in Ghana to engage with stakeholders and build relationships. These platforms have become essential communication channels for PR professionals in Ghana, allowing them to reach a wider audience and interact in real-time.

### 1.1.1 Digitalisation

Due to the pervasiveness of digital revolutions in recent years, an increasing number of organisations are integrating emerging digital technologies into their practices. Since modern digital technologies make communication easier and more efficient, public relations is one of the most well-known industries to include them. Brennen and Kreiss (2016) refer to digitalisation “as the way in which many domains of social life are restructured around digital communication and media infrastructures” (p.6). Schumacher, Sihn, and Erol (2016) simplify this definition by suggesting that, digitalisation “describes the social implications of increased computer-assistance, new media and communication platforms for economy, society and culture” (p. 2). Digital technologies have become the driving force behind many organisations today as practitioners have recognised their relevance and adapted to the trend of integrating new media technologies into their daily activities.

The launch of World Wide Web in 1992, skyrocketed the internet's ubiquity with an estimation of 4.95 billion of the world's population now having access to it (Kemp, 2022). It is worth mentioning that the internet's arrival has marked the beginning of a new age in public relations, dubbed “Digital public relations” by the public relations community. “Digital Public

relations is public relations communication on cyberspace, the internet and the World Wide Web (www)” (Kharisma & Kurniawan, 2018). In simpler terms, digital PR leverages digital media to conduct PR initiatives. Kent and Saffer (2014) argue that to stay relevant to their organisations, practitioners must learn the fundamental concepts and procedures of digital public relations and make a conscious effort to be computer savvy.

### **1.1.2 Social Media and Public Relations**

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) describe social media as “a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological grounds of web 2.0 and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content” (p. 16). These include the likes of social networking sites, virtual game worlds, social worlds, collaborative projects, and content communities.

As far as social media is concerned, it is worth mentioning five of the most used platforms today, especially by organisations. These platforms are Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, and YouTube. Practitioners must have a more profound comprehension of each of these platforms and its respective use. This will in turn give a better understanding of what to use each platform for and when to use it. For this study, only Twitter will be examined.

Twitter was chosen over the other widely used platforms because of its unique characteristics that align with the study’s objectives. Unlike more closed or private platforms, Twitter offers open and publicly accessible data, which makes it suitable for systematic content analysis. Its emphasis on brevity, immediacy, and interactive features such as hashtags, mentions, and retweets enables organizations to engage directly with audiences in real time. These affordances make Twitter particularly relevant for examining organizational communication strategies and stakeholder interactions.

Twitter stands out for its capacity to support real-time interaction, reach and audience engagement, content analysis capabilities, media visibility, and hashtag analysis.

***Real-time Interaction:*** Twitter enables organisations to interact with their stakeholders in realtime through tweets, replies, and direct messages. This real-time interaction is vital for assessing how organisations are utilising digital tools to communicate with their audiences promptly (Smith, 2017).

***Reach and Audience Engagement:*** Twitter has a wide user base, including key stakeholders such as customers, media, influencers, and policymakers. Analysing the content on Twitter pages of selected organisations can provide insights into how these organisations are engaging with their audience and shaping their PR messaging (Olinski & Szamrowski, 2020).

***Content Analysis:*** Twitter content is concise, making it easier to analyse and extract key themes and trends. By conducting a content analysis of the tweets shared by selected organisations, researchers can identify patterns in messaging, tone, and communication strategies (Chung & Nah, 2017).

***Media Visibility:*** Twitter is a platform where news breaks quickly, and journalists often source information and quotes from Twitter posts. Studying the Twitter pages of selected organisations can reveal how they manage media visibility, respond to crises, and disseminate news through digital channels (Brummette & Kassing, 2015).

***Hashtag Analysis:*** Hashtags play a significant role in categorising and amplifying content on Twitter. Analysing the hashtags used by organisations can provide insights into their PR campaigns, partnerships, and engagement strategies (Li et al., 2018).

Consequently, the choice of Twitter as the focus platform for this study would provide a valuable and extensive collection of information and understanding of how companies are adjusting to the digital landscape and leveraging social media for PR purposes. The real-time nature, broad reach, content analysis capabilities, media visibility, and hashtag analysis potential make Twitter a valuable platform to understand the evolving PR strategies in the Ghanaian context.

### **1.1.3 The Use of Twitter by Organisations**

Twitter is a widely used social networking tool that allows users to share brief comments on their experiences and views, facilitating the sharing of information via a live news feed (Bristol, Billings & Kowalski, 2010; Mistry, 2011). Blogs, photos, videos, and other online documents are among the public messages sent and received using Twitter. According to Mollet, Moran and Dunleavy (2011, p. 1), "thousands of individuals, organisations, academicians, and researchers at different levels of expertise and disciplines utilise Twitter daily." Currently, there are 436 million Twitter users across the globe (Dixon, 2022).

As a result of Twitter's high interactivity features, it has been recognised by many organisations as the most effective means of communication with their stakeholders (Evans, Twomey & Talan, 2011). One of the unique features of Twitter is that it has the capacity for organisations to gain social media presence by linking their profiles or accounts to other social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn (Fischer & Reuber, 2011).

The current study focuses on the applicability of Grunig and Hunt's (1984) two models of public relations; namely; the One-way communication model and the Two-way communication model.

The one-way communication model is a traditional approach to communication where information flows from the sender to the receiver without any feedback or interaction. In this model, the sender is in control of the message and the receiver passively receives the information. This model is often used in advertising and marketing campaigns where the goal is to inform or persuade the audience without expecting a response.

One criticism of the one-way communication model of public relations by Grunig and Hunt (1984) is that it is seen as outdated and ineffective in today's digital age. According to Heath (2006), the one-way model fails to take into account the interactive nature of communication in the modern world, where audiences expect to be able to engage with organizations and have their voices heard. Another criticism of the one-way model is that it is too focused on disseminating information rather than building relationships with stakeholders. According to Ledingham and Bruning (2000), this approach can lead to a lack of trust and credibility, as organizations are seen as only interested in pushing their own agenda rather than listening to and addressing the needs of their audiences.

The two-way communication model by Grunig and Hunt (1984) emphasizes the importance of feedback and interaction in communication. In this model, communication is seen as a dynamic process where both the sender and receiver are actively engaged in exchanging information. This model recognizes the importance of building relationships and engaging in dialogue with the audience to achieve mutual understanding and trust. The two-way communication model also highlights the role of public relations in building and maintaining relationships with stakeholders. It emphasizes the importance of listening to feedback, responding to concerns, and engaging in dialogue to build trust and credibility. This model is more aligned with modern approaches to public relations that focus on building relationships and engaging in dialogue with stakeholders to achieve organizational goals.

The two-way communication model of public relations by Grunig and Hunt (1984) has also been criticized for being overly simplistic and not fully capturing the complexities of communication in practice. According to Botan and Taylor (2004), the two-way model assumes a linear process of communication where messages are simply sent and received, without taking into account the multiple channels and feedback loops that exist in real-world communication. Additionally, the two-way model has been criticized for placing too much emphasis on dialogue and not enough on action. According to Kent and Taylor (2002), simply engaging in conversation with stakeholders is not enough to build trust and credibility – organizations must also demonstrate their commitment to addressing stakeholder concerns and taking concrete steps to address issues.

Some of the issues of concern or interest in the application of Grunig and Hunt's Public Relations models in the study include:

***Two-way symmetrical communication:*** Grunig and Hunt's model emphasises the importance of two-way symmetrical communication in public relations, where organisations engage in dialogue with their publics to build mutually beneficial relationships. In the context of Twitter pages, it is important to analyse whether the selected organisations are using the platform for genuine engagement with their audiences or simply for broadcasting messages (Grunig & Hunt, 1984).

***Relationship management:*** Another key aspect of Grunig and Hunt's model is relationship management, which involves building and maintaining positive relationships with stakeholders. In the study, the researcher examines how organisations are using their Twitter pages to cultivate relationships with their followers and address any issues or concerns raised by them (Grunig & Hunt, 1984).

**Transparency and authenticity:** Grunig and Hunt's model also emphasises the importance of transparency and authenticity in public relations practices. Researchers may investigate whether organisations are being transparent in their communication on Twitter and whether their messages are perceived as authentic by their audiences (Grunig & Hunt, 1984).

**Evaluation and measurement:** Grunig and Hunt's model advocates for the evaluation of public relations efforts to determine their effectiveness. Researchers may assess how organisations are measuring the impact of their Twitter activities, such as through metrics like engagement rates, follower growth, and sentiment analysis (Grunig & Hunt, 1984).

## 1.2 Problem Statement

Due to the widespread use of digital media, traditional activities that were centered on organisational goals have shifted to new communications practices that are more oriented towards the goal of the organisation as well as its publics (Huang, Wu, & Huang, 2017). Floreddu and Cabiddu (2016) suggest that new media technologies have affected every facet of communication and relationship building, with Armstrong, Delia, and Giardina (2016) indicating that Twitter is among the most popular social media platforms organisations are increasingly adopting.

Understanding how organisations use social media, particularly Twitter, is important because it allows for effective communication with stakeholders and the public. Social media platforms such as Twitter provide businesses a direct means to interact with their audience, share information, and respond to feedback in real-time. By utilising social media effectively, organisations can build relationships with their stakeholders, enhance their reputation, and increase brand awareness.

Grunig and Hall's public relations model is important in this context because it provides a framework for understanding the role of communication in building relationships between organisations and their publics. The model emphasises the importance of two-way communication, mutual understanding, and building trust and credibility with stakeholders. By applying this model to social media strategies, organisations can ensure that their communication efforts are strategic, ethical, and effective in achieving their communication goals. For example, organisations can use Grunig and Hall's model to guide their social media content strategy by focusing on creating engaging and informative content that fosters dialogue and interaction with their audience. They can also use the model to evaluate the effectiveness of their social media efforts by measuring key metrics such as engagement rates, sentiment analysis, and brand perception.

Studies that relate to Grunig and Hunt's (1984) models of public relations and the use of Twitter as public relations tool have not attracted much scholarly attention in Ghana. To contribute to filling this gap, this study explores the association between Twitter and public relations amongst selected organisations in Ghana.

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

The study sought to examine the extent to which Twitter is being utilised by public relations practitioners in Ghana. The following are the specific objectives:

1. To highlight the use of Twitter as a communication tool in the selected organisations in Ghana
2. To determine the extent to which the Twitter posts of selected Ghanaian organizations align with Grunig and Hunt's (1984) models of public relations.
3. To determine the extent to which Twitter posts from selected Ghanaian organizations adhere to relationship indicators outlined by Hon and Grunig (1999).

#### 1.4 Research Questions

1. How do Ghanaian organisations use Twitter to engage and communicate with their target audience?
2. How do the Twitter posts of selected Ghanaian organizations align with Grunig and Hunt's (1984) models of public relations?
3. To what extent do Twitter posts from selected Ghanaian organizations adhere to relationship indicators outlined by Hon and Grunig (1999)?

#### 1.5 Significance of the Study

This current study will contribute to the existing body of research by revealing the public relations practices of Ghanaian organisations on social media especially Twitter that correlate to the two models of Grunig and Hunt (1984). This will disclose the ways in which Ghanaian organisations use Twitter to engage and communicate with their publics. Besides this, the study will reveal the practices of public relations that reflect Hon and Grunig's (1999) relationship indicators.

Moreover, literature on social media and PR practice in Ghana primarily concentrates on Facebook, overlooking other social media platforms such as Twitter, which is considered one of the digital landscape's dominant players (Murthy, 2018). This study will serve as a resource for public relations practitioners in developing a more engaged Twitter presence for their companies and their publics in Ghana. Practitioners can use the findings of this study as a guide for future research into how to use Twitter as a tool for public relations. This study will also contribute towards an understanding of how Ghanaian organisations communicate with their publics on Twitter.

## 1.6 Definition of Terminologies

**Interaction/Interactivity:** It is the level to which Twitter users participate in the discussions, which usually necessitates some kind of feedback. However, it is not restricted to verbal exchanges alone. It could be in the form of videos, pictures, memes, or GIFS.

**Social media:** Online platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram LinkedIn, and YouTube are commonly referred to as “social media”.

**Publics:** People with shared interests in an organisation or brand. For this study, there are prospective customers, stakeholders, and clients, who follow the organisations' pages

**Twitter ID:** This references a user's (individual/organisation) username.

**Tweet:** Text, photographs, GIFs or videos, posted on a user’s account qualify as a tweet.

**Retweet (RT):** Repeating another Twitter user's content in the form of a tweet on a user’s feed.

**Feed:** A vertical list of regularly updated tweets from a user.

**@ Reply:** Response to a specific user's tweet

**#hashtag:** Identifies a word or phrase with the # symbol. It makes it easier to keep track of or filter out relevant subjects

**Follower:** An account user that adds/ follows you and receives your tweets

## 1.7 Summary

This chapter provided a discussion of the study's background with an emphasis on public relations practices, digitalisation and the use of Twitter as public relations tool. The chapter also presented the study's objectives, research questions, significance, and key terminologies that were introduced in the study's background.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.0 Introduction

This chapter has two sections. The first section provides a discussion of the theories that underpin this study. The second section also presents a discussion of the literature that was reviewed in relation to the current topic being investigated.

#### 2.1 Theoretical Framework

This section of chapter two presents the theories that underpin this study. The tenets, assumptions, and the engagement of scholars in contribution to the theories, and the relevance of the theories to this current study are discussed.

##### 2.1.1 Grunig and Hunt's Models of Public Relations

Grunig and Hunt (1984) propounded two models that guide public relations practice. The models are thought to provide substantial advances in the field of public relations by leading and assessing operations that improve and ethically strengthen organisations over time. The two models of Grunig and Hunt (1984) are grouped into two, that is; the one-way communication model (which comprise of the press agentry/publicity, public information), and the two-way communication model (which comprise of the two-way asymmetrical, and two-way symmetrical).

The One-way communication model comprise of the Press agentry/publicity and public information. The press agentry/publicity is a one-way communication tactic from the organisation to their publics, generally without the aim of generating feedback or with little to no research done. Its persuasive nature is used to persuade the public to act in ways that benefits the organisation.

This idea feeds on propaganda and lies; ethics and truth are not vital. This model is attributed to P.T Barnum, the “savvy publicity showman” who was aware of the press's impact and understood when and how to utilise it to his benefit. Although it is the least successful and ethical approach, practitioners adopt it when they want to generate positive publicity (Edman, 2010). In summary, this model focuses on creating attention and generating publicity for a client or organisation through tactics such as stunts, events, and media placements. This model contributes to the understanding of how to effectively grab the public's attention and create buzz around a brand or message. In the entertainment industry, press agency/publicity is strongly connected with publicity. Staged events, PR stunts, and sensationalism are some of the tactics used. More publicists than press agents work in the entertainment industry today, attempting to get their clients' or events' names in the media (McKernan, 2011). In the case of this study, this model will be used to describe the one-way communication organisations employ in disseminating information to their publics on Twitter without the aim of receiving feedback.

The public information model on its part seeks to inform. This communication model is similarly one-way but turns from half-truths making it ethical. This model is mostly used to spread organisational information which is direct and objective. The application of this model ensures that organisations disseminate informative content without using persuasive or biased language. As stated by Grunig and Hunt (1984), the distribution of information must not always have the intention of persuasion as its goal. To share information with the public, this model is utilised by law enforcement authorities, military units, and government organisations utilising resources such as news releases, online content, brochures, flyers, and others. The model can be used to explain how organisations send objective and direct information without the use of persuasive and biased language to their publics on Twitter. In summary, this model emphasises the dissemination of

accurate and objective information to the public. It focuses on providing the public with factual information about an organisation or issue, without attempting to persuade or manipulate opinions. This model contributes to the importance of transparency and honesty in communication.

The two-way asymmetric model is a two-way communication that extends between the organisation and its publics and back into the organisation. Feedback is essential for practitioners, but it is not a question of improving organisational practices but rather influencing public views. This strategy aims to change the attitudes and behaviors of the audience within a limited timeframe. The main objective of gaining feedback from the public is just to help the organisation make its message more acceptable to modify its public perception. As a result, research is undertaken in this model, but it is used to find the best techniques of influencing the public and gaining public support without necessitating any behavioral change from the organisation (Grunig, 1990). In summary, this model involves two-way communication between an organisation and its publics, but with the goal of persuading or influencing the publics to adopt a certain viewpoint or behavior. This model contributes to the understanding of how to strategically communicate with stakeholders in order to achieve specific goals or outcomes. In this study, the two-way asymmetrical model will help explain the organisations' Twitter posts that require feedback to modify the perceptions of their publics in a more acceptable way.

Finally, the two-way symmetrical paradigm involves reciprocal communication that is advantageous for both the organisation and its publics. It uses research to improve the formation of long-term, mutually beneficial partnerships. The model “uses communication to manage conflict and improve understanding with strategic publics” (Grunig, 1990, p. 16). The objective of this approach is dialogical rather than monological. The organisation's practices are modified and improved as a result of the feedback it receives. It is a win-win relationship that guarantees both

the organisation and publics as winners at the end of the day. This public relations strategy is by far the most ethical. The targeted objective of this model includes dispute resolution, negotiations, mutual respect, and fostering understanding and rapport between the organisation and its audience. Essentially, the objective of this approach is to attain a shared comprehension and establish mutually advantageous connections between an organisation and its target audience. This paradigm prioritises the use of communication, active listening, and cooperation as means to establish trust and credibility. This paradigm emphasises the need of establishing robust connections with stakeholders based on mutual respect and understanding. The two-way communication model will unravel the dialogical ways of communication between organisations and their publics on Twitter.

### 2.1.2 Relationship Indicators of Hon and Grunig

According to Hon and Grunig, evaluating the efficiency of public relations relies heavily on the quality of interpersonal interactions. As a response to the question, “How can PR practitioners begin to pinpoint and document for senior management the overall value of public relations to the organisation as a whole?” (Hon & Grunig, 1999, p. 2), they established a set of relationship metrics. Hon and Grunig developed a relationship measurement scale to assess the strength of interpersonal connections considering the following six characteristics: mutual control, trust, satisfaction, commitment, exchange, and communal relationship ((Hon & Grunig, 1999).

**Control mutuality** refers to the ability of consumers to actively and collaboratively manage and influence their online experience. while still having access to a broad variety of options provided by organisations. When consumers feel empowered by the options available, they are more likely to create relationships with other choices that empower the user and give them a sense of control to enhance relationship building. “Interactivity represents the critical component of control mutuality in online communications and lower-level forms of interactivity are also possible, such

as responsive discourse and simple feedback” (Hallahan, 2008, p. 53). Control mutuality as a relationship indicator will help to explain the organisations’ ability to direct and control the communication with their publics on Twitter.

**Trust** is the public’s readiness to build a connection and their confidence in the organisation. Organisational trust is built on a foundation of integrity, dependability, and competency (Hon & Grunig, 1999). If the public regards the organisation as equitable and fair, it has integrity. The public's perception of the organisation's capacity to maintain its promises/commitments is the focus of **reliability**. In connection to this study, the trust indicator explains the connection and confidence the publics have based on the Twitter posts of the organisations.

**Satisfaction** is the degree to which both parties have a favorable impression of one another (Hon & Grunig, 1999). To develop effective OPRs, organisations must first guarantee that their customers are satisfied. Customers are satisfied when they seek individualised and tailored information online, and this may add to the overall satisfaction of customers who utilise the internet (Hallahan, 2008). The satisfaction indicator will describe the favorable impressions of the publics based on the Twitter posts of the organisations.

**Commitment** entails maintaining and promoting a relationship (Hon & Grunig, 1999). Developing a relationship takes time and effort on the part of both individuals involved. It is important to distinguish between continuance commitments on the one hand, which implies a specific course of action, and affective commitment on the other, which implies an emotive inclination. The use of up-to-date software that is user-friendly and delivers relevant and valuable information demonstrates an online commitment (Hallahan, 2008). The commitment indicator will describe how the organisations are able to maintain and promote their relationship with the public through their Twitter posts.

In an **exchange relationship**, one partner derives advantages from the other depending on their prior or anticipated contributions to the well-being of the other (Hon & Grunig, 1999). How much information and feedback a company shares with its customers over the internet can be measured by an exchange relationship. Consequently, the idea of an exchange relationship is measured by the relevance of the information and the number of visitors who return to the page (Park & Reber, 2008). This indicator relates to how organisations and their publics can benefit from each other through Twitter interactions.

Since they are concerned about one another, both participants in a **communal relationship** contribute to one another's well-being. Regardless of whether the other party has previously benefited from or will benefit in the future from the assistance provided, in a communal relationship, one party provides assistance to the other. Those in the field of public relations, as attested by Hon and Grunig (1999), should strive to cultivate this kind of connection. This paradigm is used to evaluate public relations and its relations with websites and social media activities, as well as the relationships between organisations and their stakeholders. The communal relationship will examine Twitter posts of organisations that aim to provide assistance to their publics.

### **2.1.3 Relevance of the Models and Relationship Indicators to the Study**

In relevance to this study, the models of Grunig and Hunt (1984) will help in revealing the many communication channels that organisations use to engage with their target audience on Twitter. These metrics are the one-way communication model and the two-way communication model

On the other hand, Hon and Grunig's (1999) relationship indicators will determine the various relationships that exist between companies and their publics by measuring and identifying the effectiveness of their communication tactics on Twitter.

The study may greatly benefit from the use of Grunig and Hunt's models of public relations. These models provide a conceptual structure for comprehending how companies interact with their audiences via communication. The One-way communication approach emphasises the creation of attention and the generation of publicity, as seen by the sort of information published on businesses' Twitter sites to attract followers and generate buzz. Furthermore, it emphasises the dissemination of accurate and informative content to build credibility and trust with stakeholders. In the context of the study, analysing the Twitter content of organisations in Ghana can reveal insights into how they utilise the platform to provide important information to their audiences.

Furthermore, the Two-way communication model highlight the importance of dialogue and engagement in public relations. By examining the relationship indicators on the Twitter pages of selected organisations, such as mutual control, trust, satisfaction, commitment, exchange, and communal relationship, the study can assess the extent to which organisations in Ghana are practicing two-way communication and striving for mutually beneficial relationships with their publics.

## **2.2 Literature Review**

This section of chapter two presents a review of related literature. Three themes emerged from the review of literature. The themes are the role of public relations in organisations, digital public relations, and Twitter as a tool for public relations practice.

### 2.2.1 The Role of Public Relations in Organisations

Public relations practices have been instrumental to organisational growth in every facet of interactions between organisations and their publics. Gilaninia, Taleghani, and Mohammadi (2013) assert that the incorporation of public relations into organisational management functions enables the organisation to accomplish its goals, maintain operational transparency and public accountability, defend human rights, and detect and address societal problems.

Gqamane (2010) conducted a qualitative study to investigate the role public relations played within selected organisations in the greater Durban area. The researcher focused on seven corporate organisations which were South African Breweries, Transnet, Mondi, Tiger Brands, Tongaat Hulett, Toyota SA, and Sappi. Data was gathered through in-depth interviews with two individuals (head of the department and one public relations officer) per organisation. The study revealed that the public relations professionals in the organisations were interdependent with other departments of the organisations. The role of public relations in the organisations was to ensure the smooth operation of the production process, disseminate information, maintain a good image, and develop and maintain relationships with all relevant stakeholders. Other functions included improving the visibility and positioning of the organisation and its products.

Furthermore, Kaleli, Otslulah and Mutisya, (2021) investigated the role of public relations tools in sensitising the public on governmental projects in the ministries in the Central Government in Nairobi, Kenya. The research focused on media relations, community relations and the influence of sponsorships and community events on public awareness of government programs. Kaleli, Otslulah and Mutisya (2021) employed a survey to amass data from 162 heads of departments (public relations officers) in state corporations. The study found that community relations, sponsorships, media relations play a key role in the sensitisation of governmental projects.

In another study, Igben (2016) explored the role of public relations in government and oil companies in the Delta Region of Nigeria for effective conflict resolution. The researcher employed both survey and focus group discussion as data collection methods. The survey was used to gather data from 400 respondents while the focus group discussion was used to collect data from 30 participants who were from three selected Niger Delta States. Guided by the excellence theory, the study revealed that public relations practice in the government and oil firms reflected the interests of distinct groups but not the collective interest of the crucial players in Niger Delta oil. These practices contributed to the effective peacebuilding and conflict resolution processes. During the dispute settlement process, the PR departments used two-way symmetrical communication, which took into consideration the interests of all Niger Delta oil resource players on an equitable basis.

Nwafor (2014) study on the role of public relations in crisis management in Nigeria adopted a survey method to collect data from 52 public relations professionals working at the bank. The study revealed that public relations was considered a vital tool for maintaining peace during crises. Other findings revealed that the bank's public relations tactics assisted it in maintaining relationships with their stakeholders.

Kilu and Akrong (2014) analysed public relations practices, community affairs and gender roles in Ghanaian mines. The study was qualitative in nature. An in-depth interview was conducted to gather data from respondents in three mining companies whereas discourse analysis was employed in analysing the statements of the respondents. The results indicated that community affairs and public relations representatives from the mines served as the face of the companies in the communities where they operated. Female community affairs and PR officers consequently served as virtual barriers and targets of enraged community members.

Asante (2016) investigated the transformation of public relations in the media liberalisation of Ghana. Through in-depth interviews, the researcher gathered data from public relations practitioners and lecturers with a wealth of experience in the public relations field. The results showed that public relations professionals can disseminate information without limitations today because of media liberalisation. Furthermore, as a result of the aforementioned, the need for public relations practitioners in organisations has expanded, resulting in increased career opportunities for practitioners.

### **2.2.2 Digital Public Relations**

Organisations are modifying their relationships with their publics in the digital age and communicating with them online. Several organisations have tasked themselves to adapt to the changing digital environment (Kartikawangi, 2015) which is now a requirement for many organisations to remain relevant in the digital era.

Contemporary public relations has evolved from the conventional way of communicating with the public face-to-face or through traditional media to now being able to communicate with them at any time online. Many organisations have adopted different digital tools for to interact with their publics online. Permatasari, Soelistiyowati and Suastami (2021) investigated digital public relations trends and digital public relations competencies of practitioners in corporate institutions in Turkey. Qualitative data was gathered from 10 practitioners from the following companies: PLN Jakarta, BNPB, The Atrium Hotel and Resort Yogyakarta, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Imogen PR, sprout.co.id, PR Indonesia, Great Digital Media, Eksperia.id, and an independent PR practitioner. The study found that organisations still require conventional and digital public relations since they coexist well today. In addition to possessing strong interpersonal, communication, writing, critical

thinking, and soft skills, a public relations practitioner should be knowledgeable about digital platforms and be able to create engaging digital material.

Kharisma and Kurniawan (2018) studied how the use of micro-level social media contributes to achieving PR objectives in public organisations. The researchers used the National Archives of the Republic of Indonesia (ANRI) as a case for the study. Qualitative data were collected through interviews with public relations practitioners and document analysis. The study uncovered that Twitter and Facebook was the micro social media platforms that ANRI had been using since 2014. It was discovered that the PR model for their social media management was asymmetrical, with the proactive approach and transparent communication type dominating the PR strategy. Social media usage was still present but was only regarded as modest. PR practitioners at ANRI acknowledged that social media management and other communication techniques needed to be implemented, but claimed they were unable to fully execute them because of issues with organisational policy and social media managers' abilities.

Notwithstanding, Herbst (2014) explored how digital media and technologies contribute to a company's global relationship management with its stakeholders. The social media accounts of some selected companies in Germany were analysed. The research findings showed that through the models of integration, accessibility, connectedness, and interactivity, digital media and technology made a distinctive contribution to global relationship management. The research findings also showed that the two most crucial factors for managing global relationships were connection and interaction. Additionally, the study identified that social media platforms have created opportunities for PR strategies, allowing businesses to meet new stakeholders and interact about the goods and services they provide.

In Africa, one study by Oyedele and Popoola (2018) examined the use of social media in public relations practices in Nigeria. The study found that organisations in Nigeria are increasingly

using social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to engage with their stakeholders and build relationships. The study also found that organisations are using social media to disseminate information, manage crises, and enhance their reputation.

Another study by Mpinganjira and Duh (2019) looked at the use of digital public relations in South Africa. The study found that organisations in South Africa are using digital platforms such as websites, blogs, and social media to communicate with their stakeholders. The study also found that organisations are using digital public relations to build relationships, manage their reputation, and engage with their stakeholders.

In Ghana, one study by Boateng and Okoe (2018) explored the use of digital public relations in the banking sector in Ghana. The study found that banks in Ghana are using digital platforms such as websites, social media, and mobile apps to communicate with their customers and enhance their reputation. The study also identified the benefits of digital public relations, including increased reach and engagement with stakeholders.

Another study by Agyemang and Osei (2019) examined the use of social media in public relations practice in Ghana. The study found that organisations in Ghana are increasingly using social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to engage with their stakeholders and manage their reputation. The study also highlighted the challenges faced by organisations in effectively using social media for public relations, including limited resources and expertise.

### 2.2.3 Twitter as a Public Relations Tool

Twitter has been identified as one of the most successful relationship-building tools by public relations professionals and scholars. (Evans, Twomey, & Talan, 2011). Corporate organisations, like individuals, can network on Twitter. Many organisations leverage this social application to engage with their publics online when they follow their Twitter accounts. This allows their publics to respond whenever the company's account tweets by leaving comments, quoting, and retweeting their content.

Evans, Twomey and Talan (2011) explored the use of Twitter in communications campaigns in the United States. After in-depth interviews with 12 executive-level public relations professionals at the level of managing director, the study found that professionals in public relations saw Twitter as a helpful tool for a campaign's social media strategy. Twitter according to finding, provides a method of communication that other social media platforms do not, and experts predict that Twitter will remain a crucial component of an integrated communications strategy in the field of public relations.

Himelboim, Golan, Moon and Suto (2014) investigated the role of Twitter in mediating the US State Department's public relations efforts with its international publics. They employed network and content analysis to gather the Twitter posts of the State Department. The findings indicated that the Department used both official and informal approaches to maintain relationships with its publics. The formal approach to interaction occurred with different US government agencies, whereas the informal approach occurred with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and other individuals. The Department frequently used Twitter to serve as a conduit for interaction with its stakeholders in different parts of the world.

In another study, Sancar (2013) examined the effective use of Twitter in the public relations activities of the president of the Republic of Turkey and two political leaders, of Turkey's Grand

National Assembly. Sancar (2013) examined the leaders' Twitter accounts by evaluating their posts, the trends they followed, their replies to messages from their followers, retweets, and the regularity with which they used Twitter. The study uncovered that only the two leaders used Twitter effectively. They engaged in conversation and returned the favor by following their followers. The president, by contrast, was a less effective Twitter user, although he had the most followers. Despite this, he was the fancied.

Moyo (2015) investigated whether South African organisations' tweets adhered to Western public relations standards. The study focused on understanding how commercial brands in South Africa communicated with their publics through Twitter. The tweets of 12 organisations were analysed based on the two models of Grunig and Hunt (1984). The findings indicated that the organisations posted a variety of content, primarily informational (996%) but also occasionally promotional (50%). The results also demonstrated that South African public relations strategies were influenced by the west because tweets created using the model's produced results that were similar to those of Grunig and Hunt's (1984) two models.

In their study, Rodriguez and Chalmeta (2020) examined how businesses utilise Twitter as a platform for communication and CSR management. The researchers chose the Twitter accounts of 50 top European blue-chip businesses (EuroStock 50). The researchers examined 127,811 tweets by using both automatic and manual content analysis. The study indicated that there was no two-way collaborative communication approach on Twitter. It was rather used for informational reasons. Besides that, the businesses were underutilising Twitter for CSR initiatives.

Also, Oyedele and Adebayo (2019) study aimed at examining how organisations in Africa utilise Twitter as a public relations tool and its impact on their communication strategies. The study involved a survey of 100 organisations across various industries in Africa, analysing their Twitter

usage, engagement with followers, and the effectiveness of their PR campaigns. The study found that organisations in Africa are increasingly using Twitter as a key platform for public relations, with a focus on building brand awareness, engaging with stakeholders, and managing crises effectively.

In Nigeria, the study of Adekunle and Okonkwo (2020) aimed to explore the specific strategies and tactics used by Nigerian organisations on Twitter for public relations purposes. The study conducted in-depth interviews with PR professionals from leading organisations in Nigeria, analysing their Twitter campaigns, content strategies, and engagement metrics. The study revealed that Nigerian organisations leverage Twitter for real-time communication, customer service, and reputation management, with a strong emphasis on building relationships with key stakeholders.

In Ghana, the study of Agyemang and Boateng (2018) sought to examine how organisations in Ghana use Twitter as a public relations tool and its impact on their communication strategies. The study involved a survey of 100 organisations in Ghana, with a focus on their Twitter usage, content strategies, and engagement with followers. Interviews were also conducted with PR professionals to get their perspectives on Twitter as a PR tool. The study found that organisations in Ghana are increasingly using Twitter as a primary medium for their public relations efforts., with a focus on building brand awareness, engaging with stakeholders, and managing crises.

However, there were challenges identified in terms of measuring the effectiveness of Twitter campaigns and maintaining consistent engagement with followers.

Additionally, Mensah and Osei (2019) study assessed the effectiveness of Twitter as a public relations tool for organisations in Ghana and identify best practices for maximising its impact. The study involved a content analysis of tweets from 50 organisations in Ghana, focusing

on their messaging, engagement levels, and follower interactions. Surveys were also conducted with followers to gauge their perceptions of organisations' Twitter presence. The study found that organisations in Ghana that actively engage with followers and provide valuable content on Twitter are more successful in building relationships and enhancing their brand reputation. However, there is a need for organisations to invest in social media monitoring tools and training for staff to effectively leverage Twitter for PR purposes.

### **2.3 Implications of the Study to the Body of Literature Reviewed**

In the rapidly evolving landscape of public relations, the integration of digital platforms has become essential for organisations to effectively engage and communicate with their target audiences. This study aims to analyse how Ghanaian organisations utilize Twitter as a tool for PR communication and engagement with their stakeholders. The digital space, particularly social media platforms like Twitter, has provided organisations in Ghana with new avenues to reach their audiences, share information, and build relationships. Gaining insights into the shifting nature of public relations techniques in Ghana requires a thorough understanding of the tactics and methods used by Ghanaian organisations on Twitter.

Furthermore, the study seeks to determine whether the Twitter posts of selected Ghanaian organisations align with the models proposed by Grunig and Hunt (1984) in the field of public relations. By examining the content shared by these organisations on Twitter, researchers can assess whether the communication strategies employed reflect elements of the one-way and two-way symmetrical models. This analysis will shed light on how Ghanaian organisations approach communication on digital platforms and whether they prioritise engagement, dialogue,

and relationship-building in line with contemporary PR theories. Understanding how these organisations navigate the digital space can provide valuable insights into the state of public relations practice in Ghana and the implications of digitisation on communication strategies.

## 2.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the theoretical framework and literature review. The theories that were discussed under the framework were Grunig and Hunt's (1984) models of public relations and the relationship indicators by Hon and Grunig (1999). The reviewed literature on the other hand, discussed three themes which were the role of public relations in organisations, digital public relations and Twitter as a public relations tool.



## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### 3.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research design and the procedures for the gathering of data for the study. Included in this chapter are a description of the population, sample, sampling technique and the analysis of data for the study.

#### 3.1 Research Design

The study employed a content analysis design that drew on both qualitative and quantitative elements. The qualitative analysis involved the development of theories or hypotheses (Wimmer & Dominick, 2013) whereas the quantitative analysis involved the use of numerical measures such as frequencies, engagement metrics, and statistical summaries to capture patterns in the organizational use of Twitter (Wimmer & Dominick, 2013).

Fundamentally, the qualitative content analysis catered for analysing and making meaning of the tweets of the selected organisations whilst the quantitative content analysis was used to analyse the numerical data of the tweets.

#### 3.2 Population

The population for this study was all the tweets posted from 14<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> February 2022 on Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC), TV3 Ghana, Consolidated Bank Ghana (CBG) and Fidelity Bank Twitter pages. This particular time frame was selected for the study because the early days of February saw the country and the world at large recovering from the Covid19 pandemic. Several organisations actively engaged their audiences throughout the pandemic and continued to do so

during this period. The researcher was interested in examining how banks and the media dealt with their publics.

Moreover, another reason for selecting the organisations was that their Twitter account needed to have a large following base of at least 10,000 users. The researcher was interested in active pages that had existed for the past year. This was done to eliminate the possibility of including any inactive pages in the study.

### **3.3 Units of Analysis**

The units of analysis for this study are Twitter posts from the four organisations selected for this study. This study is concerned with tweets that include texts as well as pictures, memes, and videos. To gather additional data on the public relations strategies, engagements between the companies in terms of comments, likes, replies and retweets were critically considered.

### **3.4 Sampling Technique**

The sampling technique adopted was the purposive sampling technique. The purposive sampling technique is a non-probability sampling technique in which not all members of a population have an equal chance of being selected as samples for the study. Under this technique, samples are selected based on the subjective judgment of the researcher rather than a random and systematic selection approach. This technique allowed the researcher to select the specific Twitter platforms that meet the study's objectives.

The four institutions included in this study, Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC), TV3 Ghana, Consolidated Bank Ghana (CBG), and Fidelity Bank were purposively selected based on several criteria. First, each organization has a strong and consistent digital presence, particularly on Twitter, which ensured a sufficient volume of content for meaningful analysis. Second, these

institutions record some of the highest levels of public engagement within their respective sectors, making them influential voices in shaping public discourse. Third, their reputational weight and visibility within Ghana's banking and mass media industries made them suitable representatives of broader sectoral practices. Finally, practical considerations such as accessibility of data, organizational activity during the study period, and comparability across institutions also informed their selection. Taken together, these factors ensured that the chosen cases were both informationrich and aligned with the objectives of the study.

In comparing the use of mass media versus banking institutions in this context, the researcher considered the following key differences:

1. Audience engagement: Mass media organizations typically have a larger and more diverse audience compared to banking institutions. This means that they may use Twitter to share news, updates, and information with a wide range of followers. On the other hand, banking institutions may use Twitter to engage with customers, provide customer service, and promote their products and services to a more targeted audience.

2. Content strategy: Mass media organizations may focus on sharing breaking news, articles, and multimedia content to keep their audience informed and engaged. Banking institutions, on the other hand, may use Twitter to share financial tips, promote their services, and provide updates on banking regulations and policies.

3. Brand image: Mass media organizations may use Twitter to build their brand and establish themselves as a trusted source of information. Banking institutions may use Twitter to build trust with customers, promote their financial products, and showcase their commitment to customer service.

4. Crisis communication: In the event of a crisis or negative publicity, both mass media organizations and banking institutions may use Twitter to address concerns, provide updates, and manage their reputation. However, the tone and approach may differ based on the nature of the crisis and the organization's communication strategy.

In conclusion, the use of mass media and banking institutions as selected organisations in this study provided valuable insights into how different types of organizations leverage social media platforms like Twitter to communicate with their audiences. By comparing and contrasting these two types of organizations, the researcher sought to establish a better understanding of the uniqueness of each sector in this digital age.

Table 3.1 presents the list of sampled organisations for the study.  
**3.1: List of Organisations in Sample**

**Table**

Name of Organisation	Twitter ID	Type of Organisation	Number of Followers
Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC)	@the gbcghana	Mass Media/ Public	73.900
TV3 Ghana	@tv3newsghana	Mass Media/Private	1.3 million
Consolidated Bank Ghana (CBG)	@CBGBankLtd	Finance/ Public	29.600
Fidelity Bank	@fidelitybankgh	Finance/Private	44.400

### 1.5 Method of Data Collection

The study utilized both qualitative and quantitative content analysis as the data collection and analysis methods for the study. It involves collecting and analysing both numerical (quantitative) data, such as statistics and survey results, as well as non-numerical data (qualitative) such as text,

images, and audio. According to Edman (2010), a content analysis can be used to investigate the features of communication material and make deductions about the personality of the communicator.

The quantitative content analysis was used to analyse the Twitter homepages and tweets of the selected organisations, and to assess the frequency and other descriptive and inferential statistics. On the other hand, the qualitative content analysis supported the interpretation of the quantitative data. Beyond frequency, it provided specific instances of how the organisations used Twitter to interact with their audiences. By highlighting the actual language of the organisations' tweets, the qualitative content analysis was able to highlight similar themes that arose from the data.

Using Twitter homepages and tweet analyses as data is justifiable due to the following reasons:

**Real-Time Insights:** Twitter provides researchers with real-time updates on organisational activities and thoughts. This immediacy allows for capturing recent trends and reactions swiftly (Gruzd et al., 2013).

**Rich Data Pool:** Twitter offers a diverse range of content types, such as text, images, links, hashtags, and retweets. This variety provides a comprehensive view of an organisation's online presence (Jansen et al., 2009).

**Publicly Available Data:** Twitter data is usually publicly accessible, eliminating the need for special permissions and subscriptions for researchers to gather information (Boyd & Crawford, 2012).

**Engagement Metrics:** Metrics like retweets, likes, and replies on Twitter can provide insights into audience engagement and sentiment towards organisational content. This data helps in evaluating the effectiveness of the messaging strategies deployed by organisations (Petrovic et al., 2010).

**Comparative Analysis:** By analysing tweets from multiple organisations, researchers can compare and contrast their content strategies, engagement levels, tone, and topics. This approach facilitates a more in-depth and comparative analysis of organisational communication practices (Gruzd et al., 2013).

**Accessibility of Big Data Analysis Tools:** Various tools and techniques, including natural language processing and sentiment analysis, are available for analysing large volumes of text data from Twitter. These tools enable researchers to derive meaningful insights from the extensive tweet datasets (Boyd & Crawford, 2012).

### **3.6 Data Collection Instruments**

Two coding sheets were used as data collection instruments. Coding sheet one was designed to measure the numerical data of the Twitter account and tweets of the organisations. Coding sheet one also had the categories of the organisations' Twitter account profiles, organisations' followers, and other Twitter activities.

Coding sheet two had categories that were used to describe the nature of each tweet of the organisations. The coding sheet two had categories that described the number of tweets, the number of comments and replies on a particular tweet in relation to Grunig and Hunt's (1984) two models of public relations and Hon and Grunig's (1999) relationship indicators.

### 3.7 Data Collection Procedure

The principal researcher with the help of two research assistants reviewed the homepages and tweets of organisations between 6 AM and 11 PM each day within the period (14<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> February 2022) of data collection. The data was mined manually from the Twitter account of the four selected organisations. Data was collected by scrolling through and observing posts for the time frame. After this procedure, the data was gathered by reviewing the posts according to the categories on the coding sheets. The category under which each post fell was recorded

### 3.8 Inter-coder Reliability Test

Inter-coder reliability test was employed to test the agreement between the quantitative variables of the data collected. The simple agreement and Scott's pi were used for this test. Apart from the researcher being the primary coder, two additional coders were employed. The two coders analysed Twitter account of the selected organisations. A random selection of 10% of the data was analysed by the coders. Multiple training sessions were done to enhance the coders' capacity to detect and characterise the various types of tweets sent by the organisations during the reliability testing process. Intercoder reliability calculations were done to ensure consistency and accuracy in the coding process. This involved comparing the coding results of the principal researcher and the two-research assistants to identify any discrepancies and resolving them through discussion and consensus.

### 3.9 Data Analysis

Content analysis was used to analyse the data in this study. Content analysis can be expected to produce equivalent data to a survey of an organisation's publics by examining the content of messages, such as text, images, or videos, to identify patterns, themes, and sentiments (Riffe, Lacy, Fico, & Watson, 2019). Through content analysis, the researcher would be able to analyse

a large volume of textual data to understand public opinion, attitudes, and behaviors towards an organisation (Macnamara, 2005). When analysing tweets, for example, the principal researcher looked at the language used, the frequency of certain keywords, the sentiment expressed, and the engagement levels (such as likes, retweets, and replies).

Relationship outcomes was measured through content analysis of tweets by looking at factors such as: sentiment analysis (that is, determining whether tweets express positive, negative, or neutral sentiments towards the organisation can provide insights into the strength of the relationship), engagement levels (analysing metrics like likes, retweets, and replies can indicate the level of engagement and interaction between the organisation and its publics), and thematic analysis (that is, identifying recurring themes or topics in tweets can help understand what aspects of the organisation are most prominent in public discussions).

The quantitative data were cleaned and coded in accordance with the specifications that were laid down in the coding sheets. The Twitter data for analysis was captured using a data scraping tool. This tool allowed the researcher to extract tweets, retweets, likes, and other relevant data from the Twitter pages of selected organizations in Ghana. The data scraping process involved specifying the Twitter pages to be analyzed and setting parameters for the type of data to be collected. Coding was done in real time by the researcher who monitored the Twitter pages of selected organizations in Ghana. The principal researcher with the help of two research assistants were responsible for capturing data such as the number of tweets, retweets, likes, and comments on each post.

In terms of the processes involved in the data analysis, the researcher employed SPSS (Version 23.0) to replicate and produce data summation and other mathematical values for description as specified. The study measured the numerical data by using frequencies and other

descriptive statistics of the organisations' Twitter homepages and tweets. according to the established categorization stated in the coding sheets. For this study, two code sheets were developed, with the first code sheet measuring the descriptive elements of the Twitter homepages. The code sheets were developed twice; first at the start of the observation- 6:00 AM on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2022 and lastly on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2022, 6:00 AM at the end of monitoring/observation of the homepages. The first code sheet was used to highlight changes in the organisational Twitter homepages during the observation period, and also contained the code for basic organisational information such as organisational ID, following, followers and number of tweets. The homepage coding sheet relied extensively on the qualitative aspect of the homepage, even though some relevant quantitative description was considered suitable. Some of the categories considered under this code sheet were the time (time and date of tweet) and some descriptive elements which included types of companies, company's name, Twitter ID, number of followers and number of following (Twitter account the organisations also follow). Using Scott's pi and simple agreement, we tested intercoder reliability. All of the variables had a simple agreement of 100% and a Scott pi of 1- thus a perfect Scott pi. From the data extracted and analysed, the researcher structured this section of the code sheet in such a way that gave a comprehensive overview of the Twitter audience and the degree of interactivity with respect to how frequently the various organisations use their Twitter account to enhance corporate communication. The elements covered within this section of the code sheet were the names of the organisation (encoded as, NO), Twitter ID (encoded; ID), and Account creation date, that is the date the organisation first set up its Twitter account (encoded as, ACD), Following, that is the number of other Twitter account the organisation follows (encoded as, Ff), Followers, representing the number of Twitter account that follows the organisation's Twitter account.

Furthermore, the section also reviewed the average tweet per day (AT) of each of the accounts examined. The purpose of this was to examine the frequency with which organisations used their Twitter account on daily basis as a corporate communication tool (the formula utilised was  $TT/(ACD.year-2022 \times n)*30$ . The variables are explained in the code sheet (reference Appendix Two). Finally, the study also assessed the total tweets (TT) of the organisation from the date of account creation (ACD) to Monday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2022 at 6:00 AM. The results were projected in tables and graphs (both line and bar graphs) to aid visualisation.

In terms of Twitter Account Interaction, this was to appraise the degree of interaction and organisations' engagement on their respective Twitter account. This category of the code sheet used a qualitative expression to underscore the level of interaction on the organisation's Twitter account. The keys/ variables used to express the degree of interactivity were low, medium, and high. The determinant for the assignment of these qualitative values was achieved by assessing the average number of tweets per day, the mean value of retweets (encoded as RT), replies (encoded as R), and tweet links (encoded as TL). A low variable was assigned to Twitter post that did not include a reply and other external features such as a link. Posts that fundamentally comprised of only the original post were assigned a low interactivity label- One tweet which exemplifies a low interactivity was from the **Consolidated Bank Ghana**; *“Just never ends at CBG, and that’s why we are readily available to serve you across our 114 branches nationwide”*.

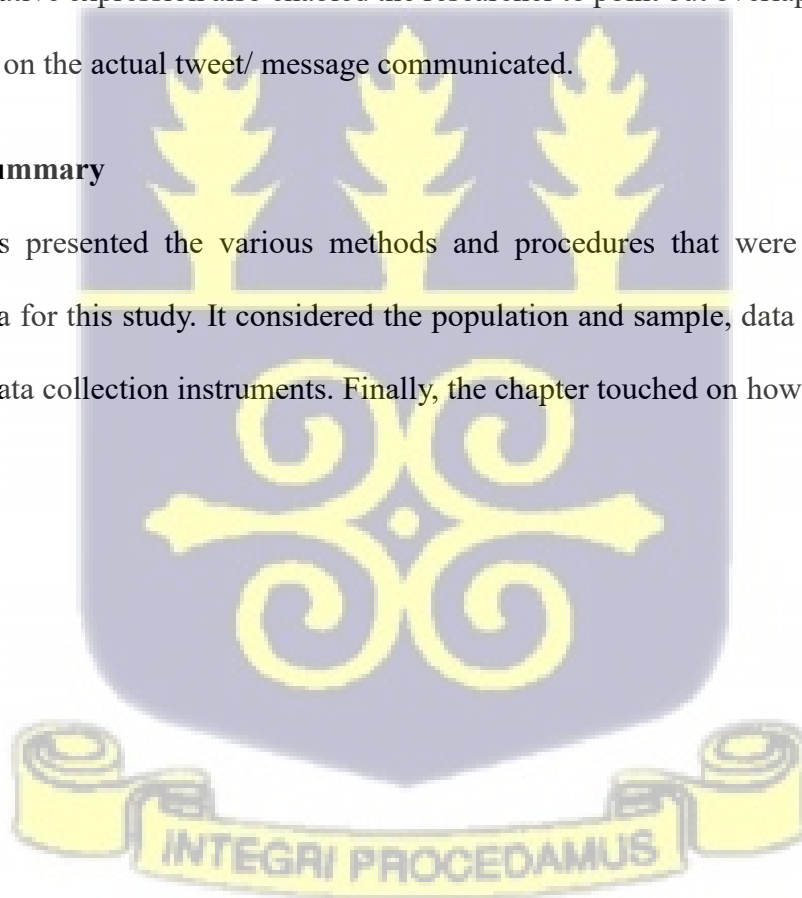
Twitter posts that were labelled with medium interactivity comprised of posts with links to pictures, videos, websites, blogs and other external reference sources along with the original tweet. A practical illustration of such a tweet is a tweet post from Ghana Broadcasting Corporation Twitter handle (@the gbcghana) posted on Sunday, 18<sup>th</sup> February 2022, at 6:42 PM, captioned; *“Kwabena Yeboah bemoans lack of proper football management in Ghana”*, with an image and a

URL link to the story on [gbcghanaonline.com](http://gbcghanaonline.com). On the other hand, tweets that were a reply to other Twitter account users (@replies, encoded as R) and retweets with comments (encoded as RT) were considered as meeting the mark for the high interactivity label.

The qualitative data on the other hand, was analysed thematically based on Grunig and Hunt's (1984) models and Hon and Grunig (1999) relationship indicators, respectively. The qualitative approach was employed to give expressive meaning and a relational understanding of the various variables and attributes used in the study. The study intended to look beyond the statistical figures to give concrete illustrations of the communication content of the organisations. The use of qualitative expression also enabled the researcher to point out overlapping themes from the data to focus on the actual tweet/ message communicated.

### **3.10 Chapter Summary**

The chapter has presented the various methods and procedures that were employed in the collection of data for this study. It considered the population and sample, data sources, sampling technique, and data collection instruments. Finally, the chapter touched on how the collected data were analysed.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

#### 4.0 Introduction

This study employed a qualitative and quantitative content analysis to assess the ways in which selected organisations leverage Twitter for PR purposes. Four companies Twitter account were sampled for the study and observed for seven days, starting from Monday 14<sup>th</sup> February 6:00 AM to Monday 21<sup>st</sup> February 6:00 AM. For purposes of highlighting the organisational uniqueness and specificities of each organisation, the data obtained were first segregated and analysed separately. This was to help readers of this study to appreciate the individual efforts and contributions of each organisation to the aggregated findings. The data is further aggregated to produce a comprehensive overview of the organisations' adaptation to using Twitter to achieve their public relations goals.

Even though Hon and Grunig (1999) favored the use of a questionnaire for the measurement of the relationship indicators of public relations, the researcher's choice of content analysis stems from its idealness for measuring media messaging or communication in general.

This study, apart from assessing how Twitter is used by organisations as a digital public relations tool, also interrogated how this digital mode of public relations conforms to Grunig and Hunt's (1984) two theoretic models and Hon and Grunig's (1999) relationship indicators.

This chapter consists of two sections. The first section presents the findings of the study after the analysis of the data collected. The second section discusses the findings in relation to the literature that was reviewed. Moreover, the chapter is concluded with a summary.

## 4.1 Presentation of Findings

This section presents the findings of the study.

### 4.1.1 Details of Corporate Twitter Accounts

From the analysis, Tv3 Ghana created its Twitter account in May 2014. Tv3 Ghana had the highest number of followers (1.3 million) with cumulative corporate tweets of 149,000. The daily average tweets of Tv3 were 53. Conversely, Tv3 Ghana also had the lowest number of following (244) which is the number of Twitter account the television station follows.

Ghana Broadcasting Corporation created its account in June 2011. It had the second highest number of followers (72,800), with a total of 69,100 tweets and an estimated average daily tweet of 18. Additionally, the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation had the second lowest number of Twitter following; that is 473 following.

Fidelity Bank created its account in June 2010. The bank had the third highest number of followers (44,300) and following of 668. The Bank recorded total tweets of 9,925 and an average daily tweet of 2.4.

Consolidated Bank Ghana had 29,600 followers as against seven 776 following. The Consolidated Bank throughout the almost nine (9) years (created its account in April 2013) it has existed on Twitter had a total of 1,335 tweets and an average daily tweet of 1. Table 4.1 presents the list of sampled organisations' twitter profile.



**Table 4.1: Sampled Organisations Twitter Profile**

Organisation	Twitter ID	Account Creation Date	Following	Followers	Average Tweet Per Day	Total Tweets as of 21 <sup>st</sup> February
Tv3 Ghana	@tv3_gh	May 2014	244	1,300,000	53	149,000
Ghana Broadcasting Corporation	@thegbcghana	June 2011	473	72,800	18	69,100
Fidelity Bank	@fidelitybankgh	June 2010	668	44,300	2.4	9,925
Consolidated Bank Ghana Limited	@CBGBankLtd	April 2013	776	29,600	1	1,355

#### 4.1.2 Twitter Account Interaction

From the analysis of tweets between the 14<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> of February from the various Twitter account of the organisations selected, the results showed that for high interactivity, Tv3 Ghana had an interactive rate of 38.3%, GBC had 11.1%, CBG had 1.5%, whilst Fidelity Bank had 0.3%. On the account of medium interactivity, GBC had an interactive rate of 16.9%, followed by TV3 with a rate of 14%, then CBG with 3.7%, and finally, Fidelity Bank with 3.2%. In terms of low interactivity, Fidelity Bank had 96.5% interactive rate, CBG had 94.8%, GBC had 71%, whilst

TV3 had 47.3%. Table 4.2 presents the Interactivity of Twitter Accounts.

**Table 4.2: Interactivity of Twitter Accounts**

Organisation (NO)	Twitter ID (ID)	@Reply (R)	Retweet (RT)	Tweet with Link (TL)	Low interactivity (LI)	Medium interactivity (MI)	High interactivity (HI)
GBC		13%	11%	21%	71%	16.9%	11.1%
TV3		18%	24%	26%	47.3%	14%	38.3%
CBG		6%	5%	3%	94.8%	3.7%	1.5%
Fidelity Bank		4%	7%	2%	96.5%	3.2%	0.3%

**4.1.3 Comparative Organisational Measurement of Interactivity**

The study established that comparatively TV3 Ghana had the most interactive Twitter communication amongst the three other organisations selected for this study. The results indicated that TV3 had 58.8% interactivity ratio vis-à-vis the other organisations, hence returning an ordinal ranking of 1. Far behind TV3 on the interactivity log was GBC with an interactivity ratio of 31.5%. Both Fidelity Bank Ghana and CBG had cumulative interactivity ratios of less than 10% and were respectively ranked third and fourth on the ordinal ranking catalogue. Table 4.3 presents the Comparative Organisational Measurement of Interactivity.

**Table 4.3: Comparative Organisational Measurement of Interactivity**

Rank	Organisation	Interactivity Percentage
1	TV3	58.8%
2	GBC	31.5%

3	CBG	5.8%
4	Fidelity Bank	3.9%

#### 4.1.4 Mode of Corporate Twitter Interaction

The data depicts that out of 1004 tweets recorded across the Twitter account of the four organisations from Monday 14<sup>th</sup> February to Monday 21<sup>st</sup> February, 816 were original tweets representing 81% of all tweeting activities. 74 representing 7% were retweets, whilst 114 representing 12% were replies (@reply). As expected, based on their higher interactivity ratio, TV3 had the most activities on its Twitter account, followed by the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation, with Fidelity Bank having the least activities on its page. Table 4.4 presents the Mode of Corporate Twitter Interaction.

**Table 4.4: Mode of Corporate Twitter Interaction**

Organisation	Original Post	Retweet	At Reply (@reply)	Total
TV3	557	49	64	670
GBC	246	25	48	319
CBG	11	0	2	13
Fidelity Bank	2	0	0	2

#### 4.1.5 Twitter Responsiveness

The study further assessed how responsive the organisations were with respect to responding to tweets they were mentioned in (encoded as M), comments requiring a response, replying to tweets (R) and retweeting (RT). The responsiveness dealt with responding, answering, or replying to engagement, calls, or queries. The responsiveness dealt with the degree to which

organisations reply or respond to tweets. From the data analysed, TV3 Ghana retweeted 49 times and replied 64 times. GBC had a total retweet of 25 with 48 replies. Both CBG and Fidelity Bank had no retweets and replies. From the table below, Fidelity Bank had the lowest responsive rate, followed by CBG, whilst TV3 had the highest responsive rate, also trailed by GBC. Table 4.5 present the Media Responsiveness of the sampled organisations.

**Table 4.5: Media Responsiveness**

Organisation	Retweet	@reply	Total
TV3	49	64	113
GBC	25	48	73
CBG	0	2	2
Fidelity Bank	0	0	0

#### 4.1.6 Grunig and Hunt’s Two Models by Twitter ID

The research strived to group the various corporate tweets into the two public relations theoretical models advanced by Grunig and Hunt (1984) to enhance understanding of how social media communication can be tailored to achieve public relations strategies. Grunig and Hunt's (1984) two theoretical models have been credited with shaping the strategies used by communication and public relations experts to execute successful information distribution and interactions with publics.

For instance, the study ascertained how corporate tweets fit into the two models as propounded by Grunig and Hunt (1984). The relevance of this study was expected to aid the researcher to answer the research questions with respect to how Twitter messages or posts reflect Grunig and Hunt’s (1984) models. This contributed to a better understanding of how Twitter communication can be utilised to achieve the same scope and focus as any other traditional public

relations tool. For purposes of enabling individuality of the various categories, in situations where some tweets fall within more than one category of the two models, the researcher decided on the categories that best fit the tweets.

The researcher identified a tweet as press agency/ publicity when the tweet demonstrates characteristics of propaganda and/ or attempts to persuade the audience of the organisation to accept or subscribe to or buy a particular product of the organisation or its associate. Other key considerations for assigning tweets as press agency were the use of one-way communication liaised with biased words/ expressions- an example is promotional/ marketing campaign tweets (such as tweets that promote or market products or services). These types of tweets did not utilise @reply communication. Some of the tweets that depict press agency included;

TV3: *We're on [#GhanappelaTonight](#) this evening with [@alfred\\_3fm](#) at 10PM. [#3NewsGH](#)*

GBC: *KABAKA Foundation pays thousands of Cedis in outstanding medical bills of Mothers and Babies in intensive care.*

CBG: *Why queue to receive your monies while you can easily do this at any of our 114 Branches across the country.*

Fidelity Bank: *You'll love banking with our Mobile App! Transfer money, top up airtime, pay bills and more.*

Twitter posts that exhibited no biases and organisational prejudice but with the clear intention to inform, educate and entertain were coded as public information. This type of communication adopted a one-way communication with succinct and objective remarks. Examples of these were tweets about an event (such as an award scheme), a news item and blogs. Tweets

with @reply (that is tweets sent as a reply) do not qualify for this category because they will fall within a two-way communication instead. The tweets that depicted public information included;

TV3: *Southern Ghana will be variably cloudy this morning becoming sunny later with periodic clouds. There is a possibility of rain later in the day particularly over areas within the forest zone.*

[#TV3NewDay](#)

GBC: *Galamsey takes over rice farms in Upper Denkyira East.*

CBG: *The [#ValsdaywithGHc220](#) contest has come to an end and we have a winner! Our winner for Twitter is [@Supremos\\_world](#) who is going home with a cash price of GHS 1,000. We want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who participated.*

Fidelity Bank: *In accordance with the Bank of Ghana's notice No. BG/GOV/SECO1, issued on the 19th of January 2022, we entreat all our customers to visit the nearest branch to update their records today.*

For two-way asymmetrical, the researcher focused on posts that primarily inculcated feedback (an example is a @reply post) and also suggested a product or service for the audience. Twitter posts that fell within solicitation to buy or subscribe to an organisation's product and at the same time allowed feedback qualified for this classification. Some of the two-way asymmetrical tweets included;

CBG: *Sometimes we never know the value of the moments we've created until they become memories. We can't get enough of our [#LoveAtCBG](#) moments with our staff and our lovely customers as seen in this recap.*

Fidelity Bank: *Let's see what you can do with GHc 500.*

Two-way symmetrical also used a two-way communication system (that is tweets allowing for feedback and @reply tweets) which served the public good by promoting information sharing and content details to ensure the understanding of a subject matter. Tweets that also aimed at building a beneficial relationship with the public (such as tweets to solicit opinions on the services of the organisations) were coded in this category. Some of the tweets that reflected the two-way symmetrical communication are;

TV3: *How has the economy affected your eating pattern? [#3FMSunrise](#) A. Morning - 1, Afternoon - 0, Evening - 1 B. Morning - 1, Afternoon - 0, Evening - 0 C. Morning - 0, Afternoon - 1, Evening - 1 D. Morning - 0, Afternoon - 1, Evening - 0*

GBC: *According to Asamoah Gyan. Do you think our midfielders are not feeding the strikers enough balls?*

The researcher segregated the various tweets of the four organisations studied into each of the four categories. The researcher obtained a total of 1,004 tweets from the organisations' Twitter handles as being the aggregated tweets: comprising original tweets, retweets and @reply for the period starting from Monday, 14<sup>th</sup> February to Monday, 21<sup>st</sup> February. The researcher further examined the number of tweets that were one-way communication (tweets crafted in a way that did not promote or encourage feedback) and those that fit into a two-way communication (consult tables 4.8 and 4.9 for expressive details of the segregation of tweets into the Grunig and Hunt's (1984) two models and one-way/ Two- way communication respectively).

The researcher compared the mutuality between one-way communication and two-way communication as well as the tweets reported by industry (the focus of industry in this context is expected to help the researcher appreciate the communication preferences and the style of the

various industries- to find out whether or not the type of industry favored a particular communication style). The media industry had 989 tweets of which 18 representing 1.8% were one-way communication, whilst 971 of those representing 98.2% were two-way communication. The banking industry had total tweets of 15, whereby 11 of those tweets representing 85% were one-way communication, whilst four (4) tweets representing 15% were two-way communication.

The treatment of the models according to the industry an organisation belonged to highlight the banking industry's communication as structured in such a way that often did not encourage feedback as compared to the media organisations. On the contrary, the media organisations incorporated a high level of feedback into their communication as per the tweets reviewed. About 92% of tweets fell within two-way communication which indicates that the communication style of media organisations on Twitter is very engaging and intends to solicit views or opinions from their audiences.

Just like the banking industry, public information (Grunig and Hunt's (1984) model) dominated the communication purpose of the media organisations; 799 out of a total of 989 tweets recorded by the media industry were public information. This represents 80.7%. Press agency with respect to the media industry's tweets was 1%, whereas two-way asymmetrical communication was 9.7% of the total tweets for the media. Two-way symmetrical was also 8.7% of the total tweets. Table 4.6 presents the Evaluation of Grunig and Hunt's Two Models by Organisational Tweets



**Table 4.6: Evaluation of Grunig and Hunt’s Two Models by Organisational Tweets**

Organisation	Press Agency	Public Information	Two-Way Asymmetrical	Two-Way Symmetrical	Total
TV3	9 (1.34%)	512 (76.4%)	86 (12.8%)	63 (9.4)	670
GBC	0	287 (90%)	8 (2.5)	24 (7.5)	319
CBG	1 (7.7%)	9 (69%)	3 (23.1%)	0	13
Fidelity Bank	0	2 (100%)	0	0	2
Total	10 (1%)	810 (80.7%)	97 (9.7%)	87 (8.7)	1004

The data shows that only Fidelity Bank did not have any tweets with the intention of feedback. CBG had 69% of its Twitter communication being one-way communication and 31% being two-way communication. GBC and TV3 on the contrary had around two percent (2%) of their Twitter communication being one-way communication and about 98.4% being two-way communication.

Evaluation of Grunig and Hunt’s Two Models by Organisational Tweets. Table 4.7 presents the Classification of Tweets into One-way and Two-way Communication by the sampled organisations.

**Table 4.7: Classification of Tweets into One-way and Two-way Communication**

Organisation	Total Tweets	One-way Communication	Two-way Communication	Total
TV3	670	11 (1.6%)	659 (98.4%)	1340
GBC	319	7 (2.2%)	312 (97.8%)	638

CBG	13	9 (69%)	4 (31%)	26
Fidelity Bank	2	2 (100%)	0	4
Total	1004	28 (2.8)	976 (97.2%)	2008

The researcher further examined Grunig and Hunt's two models to determine the public relations trends used by the industries. Per the organisational aggregation done, public information dominated across both industries except that in terms of percentage, it constituted 80.8% and 73.3% of the total public relations activities of the media and banking sectors, respectively. The banking industry's public relations strategies did not reflect any two-way symmetrical trend. The media industry only did about 1% of press agency. Table 4.8 presents the Evaluation of Grunig and Hunt's Two Models by Industry Tweets.

**Table 4.8 Evaluation of Grunig and Hunt's Two Models by Industry Tweets**

Industry	Press Agency	Public Information	Two-way Asymmetrical	Two-way Symmetrical	Total
Media	9 (0.91%)	799 (80.8%)	94 (9.5%)	87(8.8%)	989
Banking	1 (6.7%)	11 (73.3%)	3 (20%)	0	15
Total	10	810	97	87	1004

#### 4.1.7 Corporate Tweets and Relationship Indicators (Hon and Grunig Indicator)

Hon and Grunig (1999) propounded a relationship indicator which aims to evaluate the efficiency of public relations by heavily relying on the quality of interpersonal interactions. Hon and Grunig argued that organisations should aim to establish a sense of communal relationship

with the public. The purpose of this section was to ascertain how organisations' tweets corroborate the indicators formulated by Hon and Grunig, and to provide the factual basis for discussing the third research question in this study (Are the Twitter posts of the selected Ghanaian organisations able to reflect Hon and Grunig's (1999) relationship indicators).

For purposes of this study, the researcher considered the following relationship metrics, control mutuality, trust, satisfaction, commitment, communal relationship, and exchange relationship. The second code sheet (code sheet 2B) contains the coding details for this analysis. Each of Hon and Grunig's relationship indicator was coded separately to help identify the existence or otherwise in the organisational tweets. There is a likelihood that one tweet may fall within all relationship indicators of Hon and Grunig or may not fall within any indicator. Tweets that were considered as falling within the parameters of the control mutuality indicator were tweets that attempted to create a conversation around the organisation and its products. The code used a Boolean value (that is, a yes or no value) for each of the indicators examined. Table 4.9 presents the Code Sheet Variables Relationship Reliability Test.

Practically, most of the @reply tweets fell within control mutuality indicator as well as tweets that were gathered from audience feedback, information and opinions about the organisation, and its related services. For purposes of emphasis, tweets that qualified for categorisation under control mutuality were to be related to the organisation and its services/products.

With regard to commitment, the tweets were to demonstrate an action/ intention to build a business or some sort of brand association with the public. Tweets that answered users/ audience questions (@reply tweets), informed audiences about an event of the organisation, appreciation tweets, tips and guides that aimed at solving audience/clients' problems were considered suitable

for consideration. On the other hand, satisfaction was coded to recognise tweets/ posts that confirmed an account user's patronage, loyalty and product/ service rating. An expression of positive expectation and more particularly retweets (RT) were considered as customer satisfaction.

Tweets that demonstrated trust ranged from reposting/ retweeting (RT) of the organisations' original posts by Twitter users. It portrayed the credibility of the organisation and the confidence of users in the organisation. These tweets were not necessarily about the organisation or its products.

Finally, the third category of the second code sheet (Code Sheet 2C in the appendix) examined the relationship indicators, whether a tweet depicted a communal or exchange relationship. Tweets that were acknowledged as communal relationships depicted the desire of the organisation to pursue charitable actions. In addition, the researcher coded for communal relationship if the posts demonstrated that “both parties provide benefits to the other because they are concerned for the welfare of the other – even when they get nothing in return” (Hon & Grunig, 1999, p. 3). These posts included helpful information directing users to appropriate people to talk to about complaints, etc. Most customer service tweets fit under a communal relationship.

On the contrary, tweets related to exchange relationships were largely marketing in nature. Tweets that sought to assist Twitter users (providing information, tips and guideline, support system etc.) gave an advantage to the organisation (such as the user subscribing to the organisational product in future) and fell under an exchange relationship.

An intercoder reliability test was also evaluated for the other variables of the second code sheet aside from the test earlier conducted for the corporate identity information (refer to Table 4.11). Like the previous test, a simple agreement and Scott's pi were considered convenient and

comparatively apposite. 11 variables were tested in all. These were press agency, public information, two-way asymmetrical, two-way symmetrical, one-way communication, two-way communication, control mutuality, commitment, satisfaction and trust.

All 11 variables had a simple agreement between 90.3% and 99.3% signaling a highreliability ratio. Scott's pi value also fell within the ranges of .829 to .982 which are also satisfactory and highly favorable margins of reliability taken together with the simple agreement test.

**Table 4.9: Code Sheet Variables Relationship Reliability Test**

Code Sheet Variables	Simple Agreement	Scott's Pi
Press Agency	97.8%	.982
Public Information	96.2%	.930
Two-way Asymmetrical	87.6%	.677
Two-way Symmetrical	90.3%	.829
One-way Communication	98.5%	.894
Two-way Communication	99.3%	.959
Control Mutuality	94.8%	.907
Commitment	93.1%	.953
Satisfaction	90.4%	.896
Trust	96.7%	.918
Communal and Exchange Relationship	98.4%	.934

#### 4.1.8 Relationship Indicators by Organisations

An exchange relationship is a measure of how much information and opinion companies share with their clients/ audience over the internet. Consequently, the idea of an exchange relationship was assessed by the relevance of the information and the number of visitors who returned to the site as recommended by Park and Reber (2008). Public relations practitioners, according to Hon and Grunig (1999), should aim to build this relationship.

From the data collated, even though Fidelity Bank had the lowest number of tweets over the one-week observation period (that is, only two tweets). It had the highest percentile value of communal relationship as against exchange relationship. On the other hand, Ghana Broadcasting Corporation had a slightly higher ratio of communal relationships (93%) over TV3. This indicates an attempt to build a communal relationship with its audience as compared to TV3 which had a value of 92%. Consolidated Bank Ghana followed with 85% communal relationship ratio. In terms of nominal values, TV3 had the highest number of tweets (925) that portrayed communal exchange, followed by GBC (616), CBG (11) and Fidelity Bank (2). Table 4.10 presents the Communal vs. Exchange Relationship

**Table 4.10 Communal vs. Exchange Relationship**

Organisation	Communal Relationship	Exchange Relationship	Total
TV3	616 (92%)	54 (8%)	670
GBC	296 (93%)	23 (7%)	319
CBG	11 (85%)	2 (15%)	13

Fidelity Bank	2 (100%)	0	2
Total	925 (92%)	79 (8%)	1004

## 4.2 Discussion of Findings

This second section of chapter four presents a discussion of this study's findings in relation to the literature that was reviewed and the theories that underpinned the study. The findings are discussed according to research questions that were raised in the study.

### 4.2.1 How do organisations use Twitter to engage and communicate with their publics?

The study revealed that the organisations use Twitter in one of the following ways; as a publicity and propaganda medium, information dissemination tool, and also as a relationshipbuilding or networking platform to build their organisational brand. With respect to the mode of communication, organisations interact with their publics by posting original tweets (that is posts originating from the organisation), retweets (that is share tweets made by either another Twitter account user or tweet earlier posted by the organisation) and replying to other tweets (@reply).

Twitter has consolidated its position as an interactive interface that links organisations with their audience as well as bringing organisations closer to their stakeholders. The banks examined portrayed low interactivity and engagement. However, the media organisations leveraged Twitter, just like other digital media to gain the goodwill of their audience- customers and potential customers.

This finding is consistent with the findings of Herbst (2014) who explored how digital media and technologies contribute to a company's global relationship management with its stakeholders in

the practice of public relations. Herbst's (2014) findings showed that through the models of integration, accessibility, connectedness, and interactivity, digital media and technology make a distinctive contribution to global relationship management. Additionally, social media platforms including Twitter have created opportunities for PR strategies, allowing businesses to meet new stakeholders or clients, interact, and share thoughts about the goods and services they provide.

This current finding is also consistent with the findings of Evans, Twomey and Talan (2011) who explored the uses of Twitter in communications campaigns as far as public relations is concerned in the United States. The researchers found that professionals in public relations saw Twitter as a helpful tool for a campaign's social media strategy. Twitter provides a method of communication that other social media platforms do not, and experts predict that Twitter will remain a crucial component of an integrated communications strategy in the field of public relations.

#### **4.2.2 How do the Twitter posts of selected Ghanaian organizations align with Grunig and Hunt's (1984) models of public relations?**

The study revealed the organisations' tweets that conform to the two models of Grunig and Hunt (1984). The study revealed that the organisations' advertisement and marketing campaigns often conformed to press agency. Public information dominated the organisations' tweets. This implies that most of the tweets were to pass on relevant information, state of affairs and the occurrence of events (this can largely be associated with the domination of tweets from the media organisations whose primary business is to post news, share links to blog post or tweet about an event).

The third model is the two-way asymmetrical which Grunig and Hunt (1984) suggest focuses on communication that keeps the organisation in perspective with the possibility of feedback. On the other hand, the two-way symmetrical model also incorporates feedback but

unlike the asymmetrical model that exhibits a bias toward the organisation, its products and brand, the symmetrical model promotes public information and communication that advance the general good of the public. The adaptability of Twitter posts to the conventional system of public relations prompted several organisations to increase their digital presence. The study confirms that tweets in whichever form; be it an original tweet, retweet or @reply met the established standards of public relations. As has been succinctly enumerated in the data analysis, Grunig and Hunt's (1984) models are highly integrated with Twitter activities and identification/ or association with Twitter posts is easier.

This finding supports the findings of Moyo (2015). Moyo (2015) examined whether the tweets of South African organisations followed the western practices of public relations. After analysing the tweets of 12 organisations based on the two models of Grunig and Hunt (1984), the findings indicated that the organisations post a variety of content, primarily informational but also occasionally promotional.

#### **4.2.3 To what extent do Twitter posts from selected Ghanaian organizations adhere to relationship indicators outlined by Hon and Grunig (1999)?**

The study found Hon and Grunig's (1999) relationship indicators reflected in the organisations' Twitter posts. These relationship indicators that conformed to the tweets of the organisations included control mutuality and this dealt with power and influence balance. An effective way to examine this was to identify the type and number of reactions of each tweet/ retweet/ @reply received from followers. Another relationship indicator was commitment; it expresses how parties' interests were maximised. To determine the existence of a commitment relationship in the form of Twitter activities, an examination of the language use, reaction to tweets and the degree of interactivity were considered.

An exchange relationship is a measure of how much information and opinion companies share with their clients/ audience over the internet. Consequently, the idea of an exchange relationship was assessed by the relevance of the information and the number of visitors who returned to the site (Park & Reber, 2008). Moreover, the communal relationship depicted the desire of the organisations to pursue charitable actions.

This current finding is consistent with Edman (2010) who examined how corporations use Twitter as a communication and relationship-building tool in the United States. Results showed that the majority of corporates' tweets showed a willingness on the part of the firms to develop community ties with users, and most of the tweets adhered to the two-way symmetrical model of public relations. Additionally, the most often employed relationship indicators were control mutuality and trust. Finally, the statistics show that corporations post higher interactive tweets, utilising the "at reply" function to converse with the publics.

#### **4.3 Chapter Summary**

This chapter presented and discussed the findings of the study after the collection and analysis of data. The findings revealed the ways in which the organisations use Twitter to interact with their audiences based on the tweets or posts that conformed to Grunig and Hunt's (1984) models of public relations and the relationship indicators of Hon and Grunig (1999).



## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0 Introduction

This final chapter of the study presents a summary of the major findings uncovered by this current study. Included in this chapter are the conclusions and the limitations of this study. Finally, recommendations are drawn based on the study's limitations.

#### 5.1 Summary of Key Findings

These are the study's main findings:

1. The study found that that the organisations use as a publicity and propaganda medium, information dissemination tool, and also as a relationship-building or networking platform to build their organisational brand. The sampled banks examined portrayed low interactivity and engagement. However, the media organisations leveraged Twitter, just like other digital media to gain the goodwill of their audience- customers and potential customers.
2. The study also discovered that Twitter posts conformed to some of Grunig and Hunt's models of PR. The majority of the organisations' tweets depicted press agency and public information.
3. Twitter posts of the organisations also reflected Hon and Grunig's (1999) relationship indicators. The wordings employed in the text, the images or the videos posted carry meanings associated with at least one of the relationship indicators. The majority of the organisations' tweets conformed to control mutuality, commitment, exchange relationship and communal relationship.

## 5.2 Limitations of the Study

The study had limitations. The study focused on only one social media platform (Twitter) without taking into consideration the implementation of public relations on all social media platforms. The researcher gathered data from the Twitter account of organisations with integrated opinions and knowledge of public relations practitioners on the utilisation of Twitter as a tool for public relations. The study focused on only four organisations which were categorised as media and banking industries. Therefore, the findings lack generalizability to organisations across different industries other than organisations in both the media and banking industries.

## 5.3 Recommendations

In line with the first objective's findings, the study recommends that organizations continue to actively utilise Twitter to enhance their public relations efforts for engagement and connection building with their audiences. By consistently engaging with followers and building a community on Twitter, organisations can enhance their social capital skills and achieve their PR goals. We suggest that organisations regularly assess and analyse their Twitter engagement strategies to ensure they are effectively meeting their goals. Additionally, it is recommended that organisations should consider investing in resources and training to maximise the impact of their Twitter presence and ensure that they are effectively connecting with their target audience.

In line with findings of the second objective, it is recommended that to effectively drive public relations efforts, organisations should align their Twitter usage with the principles of a oneway communication model (press agency and public information). This may involve creating attention-grabbing and promotional content that highlights the organisation's achievements and key messages, as well as providing timely and accurate information to the public. Organizations

can enhance their public relations strategies, effectively communicate with their intended audience and establish positive relationships on Twitter by following these established models.

The third objective's findings suggest that organisations should prioritise control mutuality, commitment, exchange relationships, and communal relationship indicators in their communication strategies. By incorporating these indicators into their communication practices, organisations can establish trust, credibility, and mutual understanding with their stakeholders. This can lead to stronger relationships, increased support, and ultimately, organisational success. Organizations should also implement regular communication channels like feedback mechanisms, open forums, and surveys to maintain control and mutuality. Furthermore, there is a need for organizations to foster an exchange relationship by offering value to the public in exchange for their support, such as discounts, promotions, or exclusive access. It is recommended that organisations foster a communal relationship by fostering a sense of community and shared values with the public through events, partnerships, and shared initiatives. Last but not least, it is important that organisations monitor and measure the effectiveness of these strategies through key performance indicators such as engagement levels, satisfaction surveys, and feedback mechanisms.

#### **5.4 Recommendations for Future Studies**

Future studies can expand the scope of this study by including other social media platforms that have been highly effective for public relations practices. It is recommended that researchers and scholars expand the study's scope by soliciting the views and knowledge of public relations practitioners on how Twitter is effective for public relations practices.

Moreover, the scope of this study can be expanded by investigating the use of Twitter as a public relations tool in other industries other than the media and the banking industries.

## 5.5 Conclusion

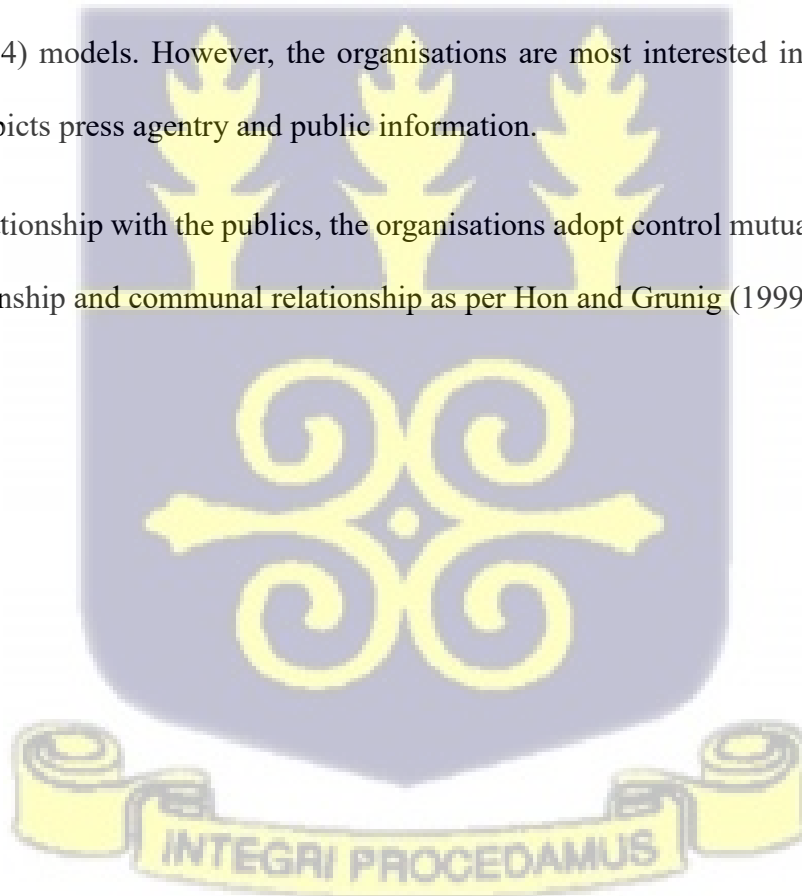
The following conclusions were drawn from the study's findings;

Twitter is being used by the organisations as a daily tool for engagement and connection building with the publics. These organisations' followers create a community on Twitter that helps them to develop their social capital skills and accomplish their PR goals at the same time.

Organisations' usage of Twitter to drive public relations sits well within the established Grunig and Hunt's (1984) models. However, the organisations are most interested in practicing public relations that depicts press agency and public information.

To establish relationship with the publics, the organisations adopt control mutuality, commitment, exchange relationship and communal relationship as per Hon and Grunig (1999).

Indicators.



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## APPENDIX A

### Codebook for Code Sheets

This code book comprises two code sheets. The first code sheet contains the coding details and key variables for the analysis of the Twitter homepage of the selected organisations. The second code sheet is made up of several code sections that address specific analytical details of the corporate Twitter accounts and organisational Twitter activities examined for this study. The purpose of this code book is to serve as a guide to easily identify relevant information and data necessary to answer the research questions.

#### Code Sheet 1A- Organisational Account Profile

1. Name of Organisation
2. Organisations' Twitter account name
3. Account Creation Date
4. Type of organisation (Media or Bank)

#### Code Sheet 1B – Company's Twitter Audience

1. Number of Organisational Followings
2. Number of Organisational Followers
3. Organisation's Target Audience:
  - a. Prospective Customer
    - Yes
    - No

- b. Current Customers

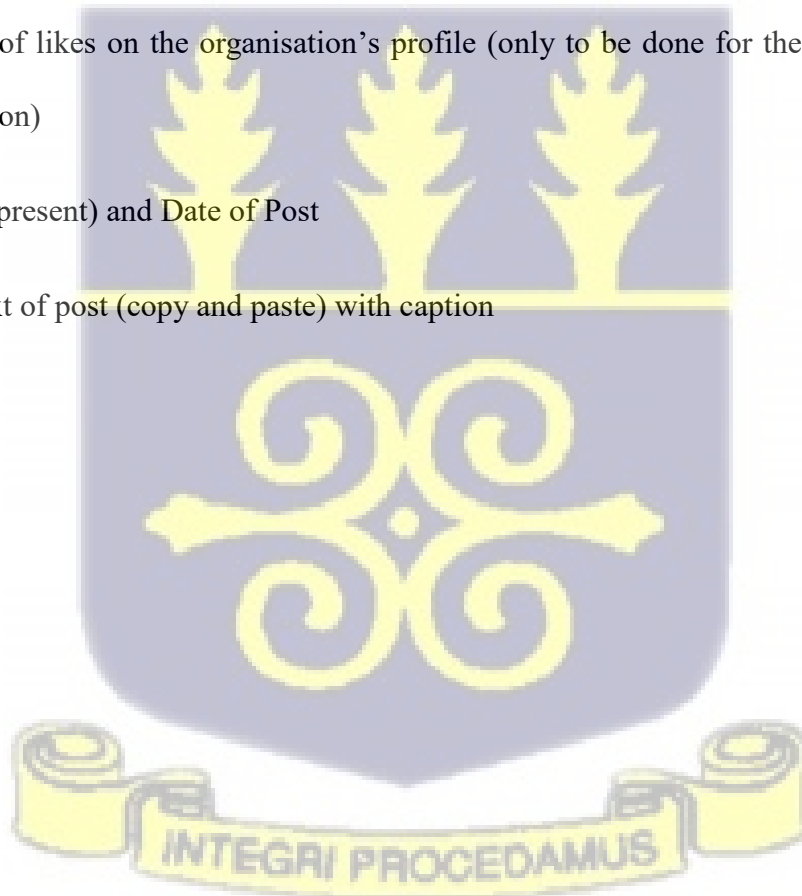
- Yes
- No

c. General Public

- Yes
- No

### Code Sheet 1C- Corporate Account Activities

1. Total Number of Tweets
2. Date of last tweets.
3. Number of likes on the organisation's profile (only to be done for the first post of each corporation)
4. Time (if present) and Date of Post
5. Exact text of post (copy and paste) with caption



## Appendix B

### Code Sheet Two

#### Code Sheet 2A- Organisational/ Corporate Tweets

This code sheet was utilised to identify the type of organisational tweets, whether an original post, retweet or @replay and also for the analysis of each tweet within observation period. The elements included in this code sheet are:

1. Twitter ID
2. Date of Tweet
3. Time of Tweet (coded to return one of three values: morning, afternoon, or evening)
4. Type of Tweet (whether an original tweet, retweet, or @reply)
5. External Link (whether the post contains a link that redirect users to an external url)
6. Images or Video (Return yes if the tweet contains an image or a video and no if it doesn't contain either of these)



## Code Sheet 2B- Grunig's Two Theoretic Models of Public Relations

This code sheet determines which of the two models (press agency/publicity, public information, two-way asymmetrical, and two-way symmetrical) the posts belong to. As models may overlap, it is okay to limit it to just one if feasible. If the post matches the model, select yes; otherwise, select no.

Press Agency/Publicity (one-way)

a. Yes

b. No

(If yes, copy and paste the post that depicts this)

2. Public Information (one-way)

a. Yes

b. No

(If yes, copy and paste the post that depicts this)

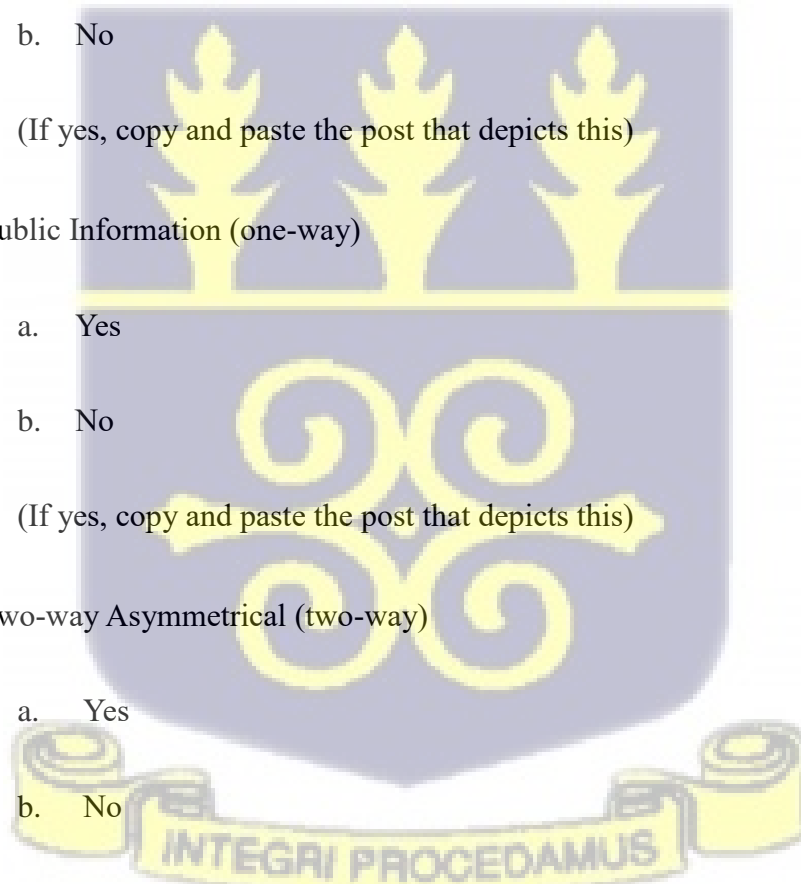
3. Two-way Asymmetrical (two-way)

a. Yes

b. No

(If yes, copy and paste the post that depicts this)

4. Two-way Symmetrical (two-way)



- a. Yes
- b. No

(If yes, copy and paste the post that depicts this) **Code Sheet 2C- Relationship Indicators**

**1. Demonstrates control mutuality**

Posts that portray ‘control mutuality’ usually establish a desire to create a conversation around the organisations or the customers. Control mutuality includes timely, pertinent, and genuine responsiveness in discussions. It also include messages that implore ideas, information about customers experience with the corporation’s services or products. a)

Yes

b) No

(if yes, copy and paste the post that depicts this)

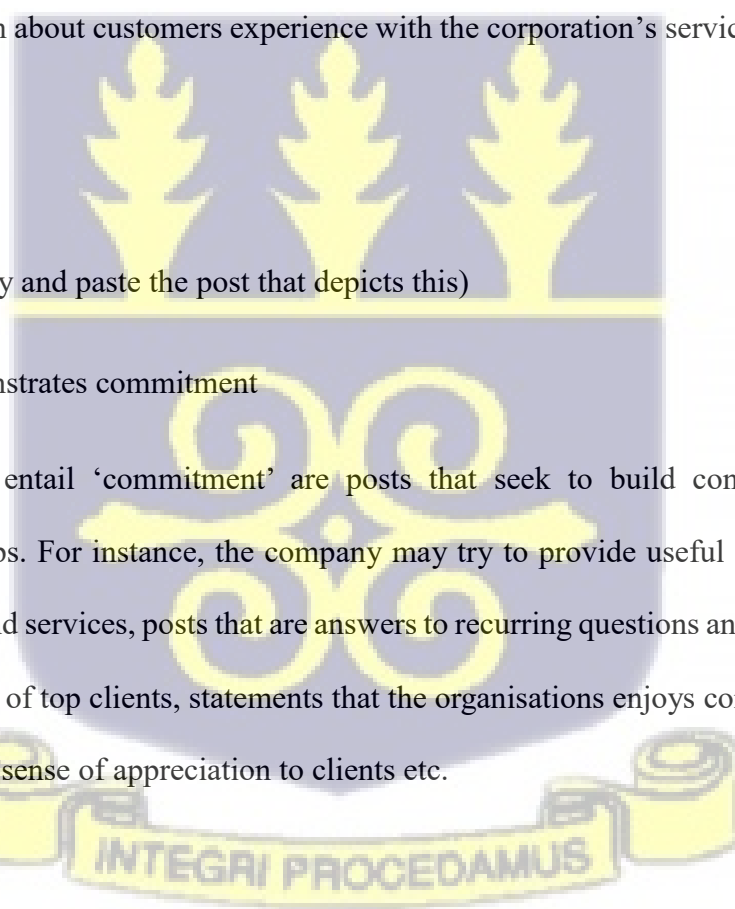
**2. Demonstrates commitment**

Posts that entail ‘commitment’ are posts that seek to build continuous customer relationships. For instance, the company may try to provide useful information about products and services, posts that are answers to recurring questions and complaints, tips, celebration of top clients, statements that the organisations enjoys communicating with customers, sense of appreciation to clients etc.

a) Yes

b) No

(If yes, copy and paste the post that depicts this)



**3. Expressed/Desired satisfaction**

This is concerned with the review posts usually written by clients in relation to their satisfaction with services. (Please watch out customers' posts and other comments on the homepages that depict this). This may also include posts that are retweeted by the organisations from other clients. Communication that seek to correct defects or mistakes and also links to or directions appropriate places for positive customer experience would also be considered a desire to ensure customer satisfaction.

a) Yes

b) No

(If yes, copy and paste the post that depicts this)

**4. Expressed Dissatisfaction**

Posts that seek to express discontentment with a client's post or attitude toward other clients within the company's homepage.

a) Yes

b) No

(If yes, copy and paste the post that depicts this)

**5. Attempts to achieve trust**

Posts that show trust will demonstrate the corporation's desire to protect brand integrity. This may include disclaimers on misleading information or post or fake news, post that allay fears of clients.

- a) Yes
- b) No

(If yes, copy and paste the post that depicts this)

