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The Public Relations Profession in Institutional Communication in Light of Modern Trends in the Use of Artificial Intelligence Technologies

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Abstract. *The current study addresses the issue of public relations practitioners' attitudes toward the current use of artificial intelligence technologies within organizations and examines the extent to which public relations practitioners are prepared to deal with these technologies when performing their assigned organizational tasks. Accordingly, the study generally aims to explore public relations practitioners' attitudes toward the current and future use of artificial intelligence technologies within organizations. The study also seeks to achieve several specific objectives, including identifying the changes taking place in the public relations profession in light of the transition to the era of big data and artificial intelligence (AI), as well as identifying the opportunities and challenges facing public relations practitioners when using these technologies. The study adopts a descriptive methodology and reaches several conclusions, including the importance of AI for the public relations profession. The study also highlights the future skills that practitioners need to develop through education and training, particularly analytical and predictive skills and critical thinking.*

Keywords: *public relations, institutional communication, artificial intelligence, organizations*

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Süni intellekt texnologiyalarının tətbiqindəki müasir meyillər fonunda institusional kommunikasiyada ictimaiyyətlə əlaqələr peşəsi

Nabila Asmi

Xülasə. *Bu tədqiqat ictimaiyyətlə əlaqələr üzrə mütəxəssislərin təşkilatlarda süni intellekt texnologiyalarından istifadəyə münasibətini və peşəkar vəzifələrinin yerinə yetirilməsi zamanı bu texnologiyalardan istifadə etməyə hazırlıq səviyyəsini araşdırır. Tədqiqatın əsas məqsədi ictimaiyyətlə əlaqələr üzrə mütəxəssislərin təşkilati mühitdə süni intellektdən mövcud və gələcək istifadəsinə dair baxışlarını müəyyənləşdirməkdir. Tədqiqat, həmçinin böyük verilənlər və süni intellekt dövrünə keçid şəraitində ictimaiyyətlə əlaqələr peşəsində baş verən əsas dəyişiklikləri, eləcə də bu texnologiyaların tətbiqi ilə bağlı imkan və çətinlikləri müəyyən etməyə yönəlmişdir. Tədqiqatda təsviri yanaşmadan istifadə edilmiş və bir sıra nəticələr əldə edilmişdir. Əsas nəticələrdən biri süni intellektin ictimaiyyətlə əlaqələr peşəsi üçün artan əhəmiyyətidir.*

Tədqiqat, həmçinin mütəxəssislərin təhsil və təlim vasitəsilə gələcəyə yönəlmiş bacarıqlarını, xüsusilə analitik və proqnozlaşdırma bacarıqlarını, eləcə də tənqidi düşünmə qabiliyyətlərini inkişaf etdirmələrinin vacibliyini vurğulayır.

Açar sözlər: *ictimaiyyətlə əlaqələr, institusional kommunikasiya, süni intellekt, təşkilatlar*

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Introduction

Artificial intelligence (AI) has become an inevitable necessity in today's world. Its fundamental basis lies in its ability to imitate, and sometimes surpass, the way humans interact. It is therefore concerned with the capacity for advanced thinking and data analysis in a manner that allows human capabilities and contributions to be enhanced comprehensively.

As a result, artificial intelligence has had major impacts on society, and most businesses and industries have experienced significant changes in their operating, production, and management systems due to these modern digital technologies. Public relations is one of the key areas that has recently witnessed a major revolution driven by artificial intelligence, transforming it into a more interactive, productive, and advanced field. This transformation enables public relations practitioners to perform their assigned tasks more efficiently, rapidly, and intelligently.

In the context of efforts to keep pace with this technological movement, various aspects of public relations work have changed. The profession is witnessing significant transformations related to changes in the communication patterns of institutions. Public relations is considered one of the most important components of the administrative process in any sector, whether public or private. It has developed and adapted considerably in line with ongoing developments, modifying its organizational, scientific, and professional practices to meet the requirements of the current era. Artificial intelligence provides services and advantages, as well as challenges that contribute to restructuring the communication process.

Therefore, an institution is compelled to engage in communication as an activity necessary to ensure its survival, maintain its market share, and expand the scope of its operations. Such communication reflects in-depth thinking and strategic planning aimed at aligning the institution's mission with the changing conditions of its operating environment.

The activities of an institution cannot be effective unless they stem from the development of prior strategic plans that establish purposeful and continuous communication capable of conveying an image consistent with its established objectives. The institution must communicate its identity before providing detailed information about its products and services. This is precisely what corporate communication seeks to achieve, based on the organization's need to build a strong and attractive image, enhance its positive reputation, and establish relationships based on trust and loyalty with customers.

Based on the foregoing, the following research problem can be formulated:
Research Problem
"What is the current state of the public relations profession in corporate communication in light of modern trends toward the adoption of artificial intelligence technologies?"

Research Questions
To address this research problem, the following sub-questions are posed:

- What is meant by public relations, corporate communication, and artificial intelligence?
- What is the relationship between artificial intelligence and public relations in corporate communication?
- What challenges do public relations practitioners face as a result of adopting artificial intelligence, and what advantages and opportunities can it provide in corporate communication?

Objectives of the Study
This study aims to:

- Identify the aspects of change occurring in the public relations profession in light of the transition to the era of data and artificial intelligence.
- Identify the factors influencing public relations practitioners' acceptance or rejection of the use of artificial intelligence in corporate communication.
- Determine the opportunities and challenges facing public relations practitioners when using artificial intelligence.

Significance of the Study
The significance of the present study lies in the topic it addresses, given its particular relevance to the current state and future of the public relations profession and corporate communication in light of recent digital developments in artificial intelligence.
The importance of the study also stems from the integration of artificial intelligence into the public relations profession, particularly in view of the rapid changes taking place in its various tools and practices.

Methods

In order to comprehensively address the research dimensions and answer the research problem, the study adopts the descriptive-analytical approach, as it is considered the most appropriate approach for conducting this research. This approach is concerned with studying problems related to the human and social sciences. Accordingly, the researcher collected accurate information about the phenomenon under investigation and reviewed the existing scientific and academic literature addressing the topic, while providing an accurate and objective scientific interpretation.

The study is divided into two main sections:
Section One: A conceptual introduction to the study variables.
Section Two: Artificial intelligence and the public relations profession in corporate communication.

A Conceptual Introduction to the Study Variables
The Concept of Public Relations
When properly utilized, public relations can be regarded as a form of soft power through which an institution can achieve optimal outcomes that contribute to improving its corporate image and increasing its profits. According to Forsey (2018), public relations is "a strategic communication process through which organizations build mutually beneficial relationships with their publics," as well as with all stakeholders associated with the organization.

In light of the enormous revolution in the digital technology market, the need to use modern technology in public relations has become an urgent and inevitable necessity. These successive developments have made it necessary to reconsider public relations strategies… Communication strategies of public relations in various institutions, with the aim of increasing their efficiency, particularly since public relations activities are fundamentally based on communication. It can therefore be argued that public relations encompasses all communication activities carried out by the public relations department within an institution through electronic and digital technologies in order to achieve the organization's intended objectives (Ferhat, 2019, p. 113).

Based on market conditions and the nature of work in the new millennium, the International Public Relations website predicted that the public relations industry would be among the fastest-growing professions in the United States. Likewise, Public Relations Journal predicted in 1995 that the following hundred years would be the "century of public relations".

Digital public relations is viewed as an activity concerned with improving the communication process with the public through the Internet. In addition, digital public relations enables direct interaction with the public. In this context, digital public relations can also be regarded as the art of integrating traditional public relations with marketing content and social media (Khelouf, 2019).

The world has witnessed tremendous advances in communications and information technology, which have contributed significantly to the development of work and production systems, the advancement and growth of institutions, as well as their transformation and enhanced organizational performance. Technology has also contributed to motivating employees, developing their capabilities, and increasing their expertise. It should be noted that technological advancement has intensified competition among institutions and organizations and has led to changes in jobs and work relationships both inside and outside the institution. It has also enhanced the capacity for creativity and innovation, improved performance, and strengthened the relationship between the institution and its employees by enabling them, in light of recent developments, to access a wide range of information relevant to them. Furthermore, it has increased their participation in decision-making and in bringing about organizational change.

As a result of these developments, the focus of various communication activities has shifted toward what is happening and, more importantly, what will happen, rather than merely what has happened. Public relations is among the functions most deeply involved in this transformation. Numerous studies have indicated that the public relations function is significantly affected by technology, as it is one of the professional functions most influenced by the Internet as a communication medium (Khelouf, 2019, p. 21).

Communication Skills Required in Public Relations
Among the skills required by communication technology in the field of public relations are:

- Public relations practitioners need to have a comprehensive understanding of public relations as a profession and as an academic discipline, as well as knowledge of the procedures and new services that can be provided to the public.
- Analyzing websites, monitoring the number of visits, and identifying the types of audiences that visit them most frequently.
- Having knowledge of all communication tools available through the Internet.
- Managing websites and social media platforms (Ferhat, 2019, p. 206).

Corporate Communication

The growing importance of corporate communication encourages us to examine the concept of this type of communication and establish a clear definition of it by reviewing the theoretical literature concerned with the subject. Among the definitions are the following:

Blauw (1986) defined corporate communication as "an integrated approach to all communications produced by an organization and directed toward all relevant target groups," emphasizing that every element of communication should convey and reinforce the corporate identity.

Thomas and Klein (1989, as cited in van Riel & Fombrun, 2007, p. 25) also provided two early descriptions of corporate communication, as follows:

- All communications of an organization through which coordination is established, on the basis of an existing strategic plan, among the various communication disciplines and the resources they employ.
- All communications of an organization through which the organization itself, or some of its components, becomes the central focus rather than its products or services .

Libaert defined corporate communication as "the process of listening to and issuing messages and information to specific audiences, aimed at improving the organization's image, strengthening its relationships, and defending its presence within its field of activity" (Libaert et al., 2007, p. 25).

Corporate communication is not a random or abstract field that can be easily separated into distinct components. On the contrary, it represents a broad area that constitutes part of a comprehensive and systematic process aimed at meeting needs, achieving objectives, and fulfilling the mission entrusted to it through its position within the organization. It gives the organization an identity that represents its physical, moral, and procedural presence within its operating environment and enables it to be recognized by its various audiences. This is achieved through a coherent model encompassing the various expressive forms of communication associated with the organization, thereby establishing a unique identity that distinguishes it from its competitors .

Corporate communication is therefore characterized by a well-defined strategy that answers the questions: "Who are we?" (We = the organization), and "What are our relationships?" (Our relationships = our relations with audiences and with various actors, including individuals, bodies, and institutions) (Adary et al., 2018, p. 37).

According to the definition provided by the Fédération Nationale Entreprise et Performance, corporate communication is the voluntary act of sending and receiving messages within a system of signs exchanged within the organization and between the organization and its environment (Adary et al., 2018, p. 37).

It can therefore be argued that the concept of corporate communication refers to a set of activities concerned with managing and organizing all internal and external communications (Cees et al., 2007, p. 25), within a framework that combines internal administrative communication in its three forms—upward, downward, and horizontal communication—with communication between the organization and the external community surrounding it.

Such communication takes place between the organization's management and its various audiences, whether internal or external, as well as with its surrounding environment, including the pressures and policies within which it operates. It therefore flows in three directions—upward, downward, and

horizontally—and remains governed by the prevailing circumstances and available resources in a manner that contributes to achieving the desired success and benefits.

A careful examination of the definitions presented above reveals a degree of consensus among the researchers who have attempted to define corporate communication as a comprehensive form of communication encompassing all communications issued by the organization, through which it seeks to address its internal and external audiences in order to achieve a set of objectives established by the organization within its strategic plans.

However, the researchers did not clearly specify the precise nature of these communications. This has resulted in a degree of overlap between corporate communication and other activities undertaken by the organization that pursue approximately the same objectives, such as public relations, marketing communication, corporate marketing, and others. Consequently, it has become difficult to distinguish between them on the one hand, and to establish a unified designation for this type of communication as one of the organization's outputs on the other.

Some scholars use the term "corporate communication," while others use "organizational communication" or "communication of the organization." This confirms that these concepts remain insufficiently clear and are characterized by a certain degree of ambiguity (Rapeaud, 2016, p. 13).

Corporate Communication and Public Relations

Specialists in defining the concepts of corporate communication and public relations can generally be divided into two different perspectives. The first considers corporate communication and public relations to be two separate concepts, while the second views corporate communication as an extension of public relations.

According to the first perspective, corporate communication has always been, and continues to be, multidimensional in terms of its objectives, audiences, messages, and techniques, while remaining distinct in terms of its fundamental principles (Aim & Billiet, 2015, p. 225).

- Corporate discourse, which highlights the role of the organization, its position, and its responsibilities toward its environment and its various publics.
- Brand discourse, which offers a promise of expertise and experience to a community governed by relational criteria.
- Organizational discourse, which presents the organization as a productive entity, a workplace, and a space for professional relationships.

According to the proponents of this perspective, the two concepts can be distinguished based on the subject of communication. If the organization itself is the subject of communication—its identity and image—the communication is referred to as corporate communication (Araibia & Nouar, 2021, p. 58). However, if the subject is related to the public, it is referred to as public relations. Public relations is therefore the art of dealing with others while taking ethical values and social standards into consideration.

It can be argued that one of the most important roles of communication is to build the organization's reputation, establish trust with internal publics and customers, strengthen close relationships with stakeholders, communicate an accurate image of the organization's achievements, reinforce employees' job satisfaction with the organization and its policies, and promote interaction with and engagement in its projects. It also involves developing proactive plans for dealing with crises in order to control and manage them (Saidani & Dhiab, 2020, p. 87).

The proponents of the second perspective, however, argue that corporate communication originated from public relations and subsequently developed as a practice within industrial companies through attention to employees and investors and through the organization of relationships with other sectors, whether governmental, civil, or private. This development can be attributed to two main reasons.

The first reason, according to Mohamed Al-Massoudi (n.d.), is related to the emergence of a number of factors, including the development of the global economy, the expansion of internal and external target audiences, and the evolution of digital communication. These developments created a need for a model that integrates marketing and public relations under the broader concept of "corporate communication". Corporate communication constitutes an administrative umbrella encompassing advertising, public relations, marketing, marketing communication, internal and external communication, crisis management, and social responsibility.

The second reason is associated with the emergence of the stakeholder concept in the business world. This encouraged organizations to adopt the terminology and concepts of corporate communication as an administrative function that has become increasingly important in the contemporary era. It responds to the need to build and manage relationships with stakeholders on whom the organization depends economically and socially (Cornelissen, 2004, p. 32).

This development requires a broader and more strategic and managerial communication function compared with the tactical communication approaches adopted in the past. It also calls for redefining the public relations function so that it can respond to the realities of today's business environment, in which many of the concepts and tools traditionally used by public relations practitioners have become increasingly ineffective. This situation necessitates the development of new concepts and tools for effectively managing communication with stakeholders and understanding how communication can be strategically employed to achieve organizational objectives.

The proponents of this perspective further emphasize that, within the framework of corporate communication, communication with stakeholders is organized and managed strategically through the central concepts of identity and reputation. Corporate communication programs also link these concepts more explicitly to the organization's strategy and objectives, thereby demonstrating the adoption of the stakeholder model within strategic management in the business environment.

All these changes have contributed to the steady advancement of the term corporate communication in professional terminology as well as in job titles and administrative functions. The adoption of this terminology and its associated concepts is significant because it indicates the declining use of public relations as the primary descriptive and guiding term for the field.

Results

Corporate communication has consequently emerged as a preferable organizational alternative. However, this transformation is more than merely organizational or terminological. The central concepts of corporate communication—particularly stakeholders, identity, and reputation—have become increasingly prominent in professional practice and are now fundamental to contemporary communication management (Cornelissen, 2004, p. 32).

Concept of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Artificial intelligence (AI) has been subject to numerous definitions and interpretations, most of which do not provide a precise, clear, or comprehensive understanding of the concept. Indeed, artificial intelligence is defined and redefined continuously (Elish & Hwang, 2017). The term remains

subject to ongoing reconceptualization due to the rapid changes taking place in the digital technological landscape.

Artificial intelligence can be defined as the ability of a system to correctly interpret external data, learn from that data, and use the knowledge acquired from it to achieve specific objectives and perform particular tasks through flexible adaptation (Haenlein & Kaplan, 2019, p. 7).

It can also be defined as "a modern technology aimed at creating computer systems that provide intelligent behaviors capable of adapting to the types of problems encountered, with the ability to learn from different types of data, much like humans" (Zhao & Liu, 2019, p. 50).

Another definition describes artificial intelligence as a set of steps undertaken to solve a particular problem, achieve an objective, or produce a specific product. These steps fall between two extreme positions: at one extreme, the computer determines everything and operates with complete autonomy, disregarding human involvement; at the other extreme, the system operates under a high degree of human intervention, with humans determining the steps of the process (Diakopoulos, 2019).

In light of the above, it can be concluded that artificial intelligence is a field of science that seeks to understand the nature of human intelligence by developing computer programs capable of simulating intelligent human behavior. This is achieved through the ability of such programs to solve problems and make the necessary decisions. In other words, artificial intelligence refers to the ability of machines to imitate and simulate human physical and mental processes, including the way the human mind thinks, learns from previous experiences, and generates intelligent responses. It therefore represents an attempt to replicate human intelligence (Khalida, 2023, p. 317).

Artificial Intelligence in the Public Relations Profession within Corporate Communication
Applications of Artificial Intelligence in Public Relations during Corporate Communication
Media companies such as The Washington Post and The Associated Press use artificial intelligence to prepare earnings reports and write news articles. Public relations agencies have likewise adopted artificial intelligence and use it within organizations to predict media trends, convert speech into text, and monitor social media.

Discussion

In this context, Chen (2018) mentioned the Crenshaw Communication tool, which uses artificial intelligence to track where a brand is mentioned on social media and monitor how people perceive the brand. Similarly, Cohen (2018) identified several important applications, including:

Keyhole: Through artificial intelligence, this tool can identify crises and assess their magnitude within 24 to 72 hours. It also provides data that reportedly enables prediction with an accuracy ranging from approximately 80% to 90%.

BuzzSumo: This tool classifies articles according to topics and extracts phrases for classification purposes.

AirPR: It uses Natural Language Processing (NLP) and deep-learning technologies to process and analyze billions of data points on a daily basis. It also enables systems to understand texts, classify articles, and determine the relevance and influence of content concerning a particular brand.

TrendKite: It provides insights and recommendations based on data analysis, in addition to its ability to distinguish between different types of content.

Hootsuite: It uses big data to extract useful and relevant insights for clients.
Shift Communications: It uses artificial intelligence and machine learning for predictive analytics and text mining.

In the same context, Rogers (2019) discussed the Chinese chatbot program Xiaoice, which is used to present news for Microsoft. It is considered one of the latest innovations, as it helps address fake news published online and is also capable of completing reports.

Importance of Employing AI in Public Relations within Corporate Communication
Artificial intelligence provides public relations, within the context of corporate communication, with significant added value. Experts believe that the public relations industry has undergone substantial transformation in the era of artificial intelligence. Digital technologies and modern technological developments have created numerous opportunities and challenges regarding data management and utilization.

With its self-learning capabilities, artificial intelligence provides public relations specialists with a tool not only for extracting insights from big data, but also for independently responding to inquiries, complaints, posts, and other messages received through the organization's websites and digital platforms (Ristic & Ivan, 2018).

The use of artificial intelligence applications in public relations has also introduced three major benefits for public relations practitioners: automation, speed, and accuracy. Artificial intelligence makes public relations practices less costly, faster, and more effective, thereby benefiting organizations. Automation refers to reducing the amount of repetitive work that humans are required to perform. Speed refers to the ability to obtain the information needed more quickly, while accuracy means obtaining better and more precise answers than those that might otherwise be provided by humans (Caldana et al., 2021, p. 7).

Furthermore, employing artificial intelligence technologies in the public relations industry within corporate communication helps reduce errors attributable to human intervention, thereby increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of the work performed. Accordingly, the importance of employing artificial intelligence technologies in public relations and corporate communication can be summarized as follows:

Automation of Routine Tasks
Artificial intelligence technologies make it possible to automate routine tasks by simplifying them and executing them automatically. In addition, their ability to process complex datasets helps save users' time and allows them to devote greater attention to creative activities.

Data-Driven Public Relations Campaigns
New campaigns can be developed based on inputs generated through artificial intelligence. This helps public relations practitioners move away from guesswork and enables automation and machine learning to identify the factors most likely to contribute to the success of public relations campaigns. Since machines can process information faster than humans, organizations can make rapid and accurate decisions, which ultimately benefits the client concerned.

Amplification
Artificial intelligence and digital technologies enable the amplification and dissemination of various forms of content and promotional materials through digital platforms and social media. This also contributes to enhancing engagement between brands and their audiences.

Sentiment Analysis and Crisis Management
Artificial intelligence technologies can provide insights into the sentiment expressed in media coverage and issue alerts when negative news or unfavorable content emerges. This enables public relations practitioners to respond quickly and take appropriate action before the situation escalates.

Big Data Processing
Artificial intelligence technologies are capable of processing large volumes of data and identifying different patterns within big data. This enables organizations to better address potential risks and communication crises that could negatively affect their reputation.

Predicting Future Developments
The integration of big data, artificial intelligence, and advanced data-processing techniques enables public relations practitioners not only to understand and interpret information that has already emerged, but also to anticipate and predict what may happen in the future. This predictive capability can support more proactive communication strategies and enable organizations to prepare for potential developments before they occur.

Creative Decision-Making
Artificial intelligence helps public relations practitioners make creative, fact-based decisions in their public relations campaigns. It can support the decision-making process by determining, for example, the appropriate time to launch a campaign, adapting or generating content, selecting an effective communication channel for delivering a message, and other related decisions (Biswal, 2019, p. 171).

Relationship Between Artificial Intelligence and Public Relations in the Context of Corporate Communication
Public relations, like other branches of communication, has witnessed an increase in the use of artificial intelligence despite its relatively recent emergence. Artificial intelligence is still relatively new and controversial in the field of public relations. However, technological advances may encourage public relations practitioners to adopt it more extensively and frequently in their professional practices (Rogers, 2019).

Fundamental Functions of Artificial Intelligence in Public Relations
Artificial intelligence is changing the way technology is used and how data are understood and interpreted. With the enormous flow of data generated since the emergence of modern technologies, artificial intelligence has ultimately provided public relations specialists with the tools necessary to exploit and derive value from these data.

Public relations professionals should understand three fundamental functions of artificial intelligence:

- Speed: The ability to obtain the information needed more quickly.
- Accuracy: The ability to obtain more accurate and reliable answers than those that can be produced through human processing alone.
- Automation: Reducing the amount of work that must be performed by humans.

Public relations professionals should also:
- Learn the basic terminology of artificial intelligence and the fundamentals of corporate communication.
- Identify public relations tasks that could benefit from artificial intelligence. If a task is performed repeatedly, particularly more than twice, it may be a good candidate for automation.

- Prepare for the increasing use of artificial intelligence through learning, skills development, and continuous training.
- Develop realistic expectations regarding the use of artificial intelligence, particularly the need for fast, accurate, and logically consistent outputs.
- Identify technologies that successfully incorporate artificial intelligence into public relations practices.

American public relations expert Jenna Cook noted that artificial intelligence systems are being developed to perform tasks such as visual perception, decision-making, speech recognition, and translation across languages, including the interpretation of body language.

In this regard, Garrett (2018) identified several ways through which artificial intelligence technology can enhance the field of public relations, including.

Public Relations Campaigns
Automation can support public relations campaigns by enabling artificial intelligence to examine large amounts of data and identify the factors that contribute to campaign success. Accordingly, artificial intelligence can assist practitioners in determining the optimal time to launch a campaign and identifying the most urgent or relevant topics to address.

Identifying Actual Influence
Because artificial intelligence can rapidly examine publicly available information, it can help determine who influencers are communicating with, what they are saying, and where the communication is taking place. Such data can then be used to assess the actual level and scope of an influencer's impact.

Automation
The use of artificial intelligence can reduce errors associated with routine tasks by automating repetitive activities. This allows public relations practitioners to devote more time to strategic, analytical, and creative responsibilities.

Providing Accurate Insights
Artificial intelligence can analyze large amounts of data within a short period of time. This capability provides public relations practitioners with more precise insights and can contribute to improving the success rate and effectiveness of their activities.

Crisis Prevention
Artificial intelligence can help prevent public relations and reputational crises within organizations. Since online crises can spread rapidly in the contemporary digital environment, they are often difficult to manage appropriately once they have escalated.

Artificial intelligence can analyze hundreds of different factors, including social listening data, in order to identify and predict potential threats. This predictive capability gives public relations practitioners sufficient time to prepare appropriate response plans and take preventive measures before potential situations develop into full-scale crises.

The figure below illustrates the dynamics of artificial intelligence in the public relations profession from an institutional communication perspective.

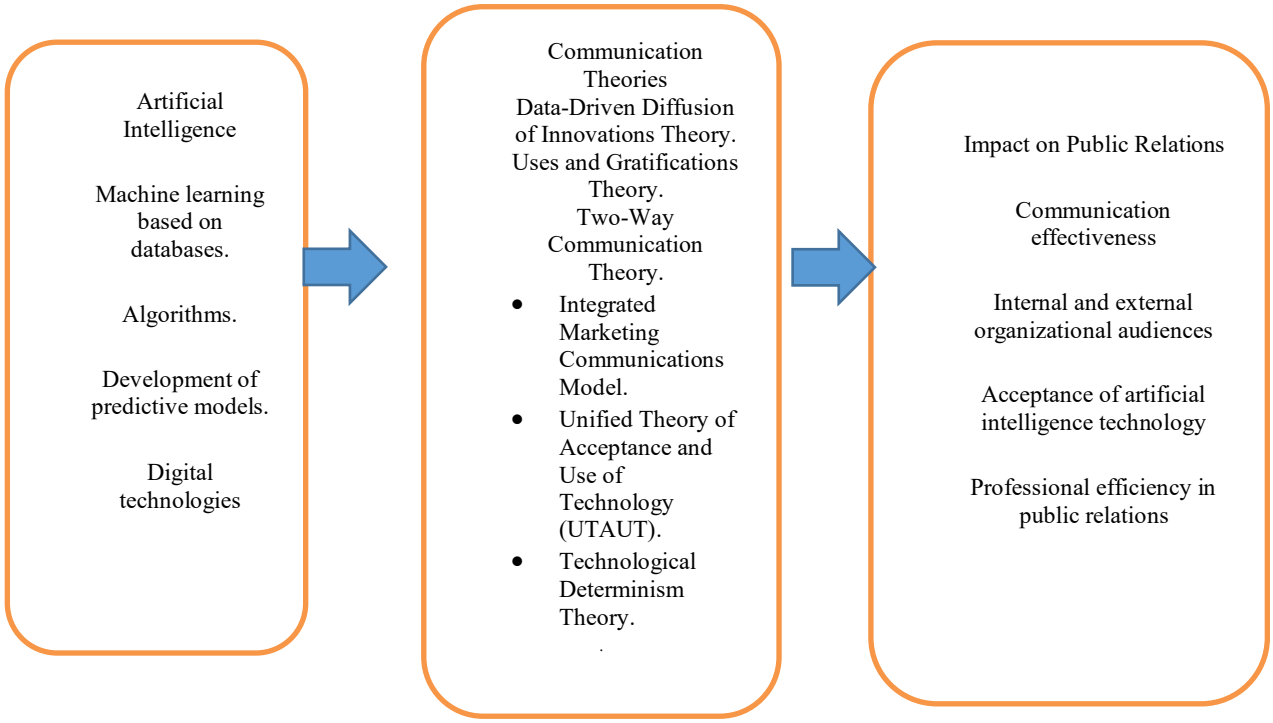


Figure 1

Dynamics of artificial intelligence in the public relations profession from an institutional communication perspective

Challenges of Employing Artificial Intelligence in Institutional Communication

Public relations professionals and practitioners involved in institutional communication face a range of challenges when employing modern digital technologies based on artificial intelligence. These challenges may limit the effectiveness of AI applications and hinder organizations from fully benefiting from them. The main challenges can be identified as follows:

- Differences in AI adoption between the public and private sectors: Some studies have shown that the private sector has taken the lead in adopting artificial intelligence technologies and possesses greater technical, managerial, and communication expertise compared with the public sector. Therefore, the public sector requires the development of policies and mechanisms for regular auditing and monitoring of AI implementation, as AI is considered one of the tools that can contribute to enhancing the effectiveness of institutional communication (Wirtz et al., 2018, p. 601). In addition, many governments and countries face difficulties in understanding how these technologies can be employed in institutional communication management, while knowledge of their social, economic, political, and ethical implications remains limited.
- Data availability and quality: Obtaining data rapidly and accurately represents one of the major challenges associated with the use of artificial intelligence. AI systems fundamentally depend on sufficient quantities of high-quality data. Poor-quality or inaccurate data may lead algorithms to produce biased or unreliable results, which can negatively affect the quality of decisions and communication outcomes (Gupta, 2019, p. 3770).
- Balancing human intervention and automated systems: The use of artificial intelligence raises the issue of determining the appropriate level of human intervention and the mechanisms for controlling decisions generated by intelligent systems. The integration of human factors into automated systems may affect their accuracy and efficiency, particularly when employees are not adequately qualified or trained to work with these technologies.
- Ethical challenges and privacy protection: The use of artificial intelligence raises numerous ethical issues that remain the subject of ongoing debate, particularly those related to protecting

customers' privacy and maintaining the confidentiality of their data. Another important concern is the limited ability of some AI systems to provide clear and understandable explanations for certain decisions they generate, which raises issues related to transparency, accountability, and trust in AI outputs.

- One of the challenges facing the use of artificial intelligence technologies in institutional communication lies in integrating AI with big data. This integration has contributed to transforming institutional communication by enabling organizations to personalize their interactions and automate critical administrative communication processes (Ouskou et al., 2024, p. 774).

As for the challenges facing the adoption of artificial intelligence technologies within organizations, they include:

Table 1

Challenges of employing artificial intelligence technologies in institutional communication

Type of Challenges	Challenges	Description
Technological Challenges	Algorithm Complexity	The need to master advanced machine learning models and data analysis techniques to optimize the use of artificial intelligence and big data.
	Infrastructure Requirements	The need for powerful servers and sufficient storage capacity to process large volumes of data and run artificial intelligence algorithms.
Human Challenges	Resistance to Change	Employees' reluctance to adopt new technologies, which may hinder digital transformation and requires effective change management strategies.
	Specialized Skills	The lack of data science and artificial intelligence skills within teams, requiring organizations to invest in training or recruit specialized talent.
Legal and Ethical Challenges	Data Privacy	Compliance with regulations, such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), to ensure the security and confidentiality of user data.
	Transparency	Concerns related to the lack of clarity surrounding decisions made by artificial intelligence algorithms, raising questions about accountability and trust among users.
Organizational Challenges	Implementation Costs	The financial investments required to acquire the technology, establish the necessary infrastructure, and train employees.
	Internal Process Adaptation	The need to modify communication processes to take advantage of new technologies, which may require internal organizational restructuring.

Source. Rachid ouskou and authers 2024, p. 3175.

Advantages and opportunities offered by artificial intelligence to the public relations profession in the field of institutional communication

Numerous studies have examined the potential advantages and opportunities associated with the use of artificial intelligence in the public relations profession, particularly in the field of institutional communication. The most significant advantages include the following:

- *Achieving a competitive advantage for organizations:* Artificial intelligence enables organizations to perform various organizational tasks, including automating communication, interacting with customers and conducting surveys, managing media relations, facilitating internal communication, maintaining customer relationships, and increasing brand loyalty (Sliwinski, 2019, p. 66).
- *Accurate and effective data and information processing:* Artificial intelligence systems can process large volumes of data within a limited period and with minimal human intervention through intelligent systems capable of rapid and accurate analysis and prediction. AI can also support participation and effective communication between public institutions and citizens, thereby contributing to greater public trust in government and improving the quality of public services provided (Fatima et al., 2020, p. 180).
- *Improving decision-making:* Artificial intelligence can contribute significantly to decision-making in tasks assigned to intelligent systems. These systems can support human resource management, marketing, administration, security, and risk management.
- *Enhancing workplace learning:* Artificial intelligence has the potential to support the development of individual competencies and organizational learning processes, thereby enhancing employees' ability to acquire and develop knowledge.
- *Enhancing effectiveness, efficiency, and productivity:* The integration of existing and newly acquired knowledge within organizations can continuously improve AI capabilities. Consequently, artificial intelligence can identify repetitive activities within business processes and support the optimal use of resources to improve organizational performance.
- *Influencing organizational behavior and communication dynamics:* The integration of artificial intelligence technologies can influence organizational behavior and communication dynamics. AI facilitates the transition toward data-driven decision-making and can contribute to improving organizational performance and job satisfaction (Gabelaia et al., 2024).

The future of employing artificial intelligence in the public relations profession and institutional communication

Artificial intelligence, like any other human-made technology, is far from perfect. Many AI applications, such as sentiment analysis, fraud detection, and automated news reporting, are subject to errors. In addition, the possibility of these technologies falling into the wrong hands may create risks and potentially cause harm to an organization's reputation and brand (Macnamara et al., 2018, p. 709).

Furthermore, public relations activities are based on building relationships with stakeholders through personal interaction. Such relationships cannot be fully established through artificial intelligence, as people tend to build trust with other people rather than with robots (Pribadi et al., 2021, p. 55).

A team of researchers at the Institute for Public Relations has also pointed out that, although humans possess critical thinking abilities, some public relations activities may be replaced by artificial intelligence in the future. Therefore, public relations practitioners need to strengthen their skills in various areas, including fundamental research, content development, program evaluation, and issue and crisis management. Public relations also requires creativity, which represents a way of thinking that machines cannot completely replace (Suciati et al., 2021, p. 30).

Accordingly, it is important to consider the future challenges that public relations may face with the increasing adoption of artificial intelligence technologies. These challenges include, for example:

- Unequal access to artificial intelligence technologies: Not all organizations will have equal access to AI technologies. Multinational corporations, governments, and wealthier countries are likely

to have greater capacity to employ artificial intelligence on a broader scale than small local organizations (Buhmann et al., 2022, p. 626).

- Limited AI expertise among public relations practitioners: Public relations practitioners' expertise in artificial intelligence remains considerably limited. Petrucci noted that a lack of education and training, as well as limited confidence in artificial intelligence, represents a major barrier to the adoption of AI in public relations practice (Petrucci, 2018).
- The risk of job displacement and machine control: Artificial intelligence is expected to affect certain occupations to varying degrees, depending on the nature of the job. Although AI may not currently replace public relations specialists entirely, its increasing capabilities may gradually transform the nature of their tasks and responsibilities.

At the present time, artificial intelligence does not necessarily represent a replacement for public relations practitioners; rather, it serves as a powerful complement to public relations activities. This is particularly important if professionals in the field learn how to use AI to their advantage (Liew, 2021, p. 26).

- Difficulty in monitoring unethical practices in the field of artificial intelligence: Organizations tend to maintain the confidentiality of their AI-related innovations and projects due to intense competition. Consequently, it can be difficult to monitor or identify potentially unethical practices. Therefore, public relations practitioners should continuously investigate and seek to identify any problems associated with marketers' AI innovations (Gouda et al., 2020, p. 7566).

The developments taking place in artificial intelligence will continue to influence public relations as organizations increasingly adopt AI rather than fear it. According to Rogers, AI should be viewed as a tool for public relations practitioners rather than as a threat. Its use in the profession can provide faster and improved results, enabling practitioners to achieve their objectives more efficiently than ever before. Artificial intelligence can also make public relations more effective in handling numerical and data-related tasks. Rogers therefore recommended that practitioners and professionals remain open to incorporating these modern digital technologies into their practices because of their potential benefits in terms of efficiency and productivity.

At the same time, Rogers emphasized that there are still many situations in which the human touch remains superior. Artificial intelligence cannot outperform humans when it comes to soft skills such as relationship building, strategy development, trust building, or tasks requiring creativity, empathy, critical thinking, artistic expression, or leadership capabilities. Thus, AI should be viewed as a tool that helps practitioners perform their work more effectively (Rogers, 2019).

Conclusion

Ultimately, public relations practitioners recognize the significant importance of artificial intelligence in institutional communication, both at present and in the future. The era of modern digital technologies has already begun, and this transformation is unlikely to be reversed. Therefore, organizations cannot ignore or completely discontinue the use of these technologies.

However, this does not mean that the human element can or should be completely eliminated and replaced by machines. Rather, a relationship of mutual dependence is likely to develop between artificial intelligence technologies and public relations practitioners in performing institutional communication tasks. Neither will completely replace the other. Instead, artificial intelligence can save public relations practitioners considerable time and effort, making them more productive within

their organizations and enabling them to communicate more directly and rapidly with organizational clients and stakeholders.

The study reached several conclusions, including the following:

- The study showed that public relations practitioners will need new skills for the future, which can be acquired through education and training, including analytical and predictive skills as well as critical thinking.
- The relationship between organizations and their clients is positively influenced by the adoption of artificial intelligence. Greater use of AI tools and the integration of additional AI-supported activities can further increase this positive impact.
- The public relations profession has clearly benefited from artificial intelligence, particularly in public relations campaigns and crisis management, through the rapid analysis and processing of data.
- The future of public relations is increasingly connected to artificial intelligence. Its adoption as an assistant to public relations specialists is largely a matter of time. Rather than posing an inherent threat to the profession, AI can provide significant added value.
- The main benefits of adopting artificial intelligence in public relations and institutional communication include increased efficiency, reduced time and effort, improved service quality, better understanding of clients, greater transparency, stronger trust, and increased customer satisfaction.

Recommendations

- Researchers should be encouraged to focus their future studies on the use of artificial intelligence in the field of public relations, in order to identify emerging trends and developments affecting the public relations profession.
- Students should be adequately trained in the use of modern technologies and kept up to date with rapid technological developments, so that their capabilities can be effectively developed and utilized and qualified graduates can be prepared to meet the requirements of the labor market.

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