



Full Length Research

## Media Convergence: Prospects and Challenges for Public Relations Practice in Nigeria

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**Abstract:** The impact of new media of communication is not felt only in the media space but across all strata of mass communication discipline. Public relations as an act of managing relationship between an organization and its various public depend largely on media of communication to succeed. As a result, the tactic, strategy and approach of public relations in terms of communication management largely depend on the media of communication. As such, the convergence of the traditional and new media has brought about drastic change in the public relations field. In Nigeria, public relations professionals are grappling with the new reality brought about by media convergence. This paper therefore explored the challenges the public relations practitioners are likely to encounter and how to surmount those challenges. The study argued that as a dynamic profession, public relations should embrace new skills in desktop publishing, multimedia communication and strategies. Convergence is 'digital creative economy' which comes with great opportunity for the practice of public relations. Convergence is about 'blurring of boundaries', Nigerian public relations practitioners should therefore adapt quickly to changes in the media sector in order to leverage on the opportunities in the convergence of the media.

**Keywords:** Convergence: Public Relations: Communication: Mass Media: Nigeria.

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### 1.0 Introduction of the Study

The evolution of human communication is anchored on the sophistication of technology. Technological advancements have bearing on human communication systems. From the ancient, crude, unsophisticated methods of communication to the development of movable type, offset lithography, desktop publishing, and digital publishing, technology has been central to all phases of developments in human communication system. The consistent transformation experienced in media of communication is in a bid to adjust to challenges posed by time and space. McQuail (2010) observed that constant changes in media of communication in any given society are to satisfy the need of time and space. Harold (1986) said the significance of media to civilization is encapsulated in the concept of time and space. The elasticity of media in relation to time determined its durability. Innis however argued that "media that emphasize space are apt to be less durable and light in character, such as papyrus and paper." (p. 5). To surmount this challenge, the traditional print media is converging with the digital technology to be durable. Since the emergence of digital technology, the traditional media outlets are adjusting and adopting the new technology in their daily operations. These adjustments are not only affecting the operations of the media but also the quality of their contents distribution and production. The internet revolution has brought about nonstop information flow.

News consumers are bombarded with avalanche of information sporadically from different media platforms. Aside that, it has broken the monopoly hitherto enjoyed by both media practitioners and public relations professionals (Achor et al., 2015; Arango-Forero et al., 2016). Communication between the media and the public is rather horizontal now than vertical. Content production and distribution is now two ways. This development is as a result of internet revolution. To adapt to changes, the traditional media have to converge with the new media in order to surmount not only the challenges of time and space, but to also leverage on the fluidity and relative advantages of the new media. The focus of this chapter is therefore on how the changes in media industry -specifically, media convergence - are impacting on public relations practice. Media husbandry is pertinent to public relations practice. Achor et al. (2015) posited that public relations practitioners must be acquainted with knowledge of the workings of the media and maintain mutual relationship with them. So, as the media industry changes, PR professional ought to adjust to the change. This is because any change in the media industry directly impact on public relations strategy and practices. Similarly, the internet revolution is also having a direct impact on the PR industry. Some of the models of public relations developed by Grunig and Hunt are failing courtesy of the internet. Press Agency, Public information, and two-way asymmetry models seem to be fading out. Public relations professionals holding up to these models might be out of touch with reality because the audience determine PR strategy. Where and how to meet the audience is paramount to any PR endeavour. So far large demography of the audiences is on the internet, messages target at them must be carried on the internet. So, basically, as the media is converging, so should public relations. In essence, media convergence, its prospect and challenges to public relations practices will be discussed (Achor et al., 2015; Arango-Forero et al., 2016).

## **2.0 The Concept of Media Convergence**

Media convergence is a trend in communication revolution encapsulated in the utilization of digital technologies in the production and dissemination of media content. It involves the admixture of interconnection of information and communication technologies with media content. Though, Wirth (2006) opined that the concept of media convergence has different delineations. Scholars have made conscious efforts to give a lucid interpretation and definition of what the concept really connotes. Jenkins (2006) defined media convergence as “the flow of content across multiple media platforms, the cooperation between multiple media industries, and the migratory behaviour of media audiences who will go almost anywhere in search of the kind of entertainment experience they want.” McPhillips and Merlo (2008) describe it as the “ability to deliver different media channels via one digital platform.” Hitherto the arrival of the internet, print and broadcast media contents are distributed using the traditional long and short waves for radio, hardcopy papers for magazines and newspapers. But, with the advent of internet and digital publishing, content production and distribution have gone digital. Dal Zotto & Lugmayr (2016) said the convergence of media content can also create consumption divergence, which means, convergence encompasses not only technological shift but also industrial, cultural, social and global.

**a) Technological convergence:** This is the product of World Wide Web, smart phones, desktop publishing, among others, which made production, dissemination and accessibility to media content digital based. It is the digital revolution that eases the sharing of media and peer-to-peer content throughout one single platform (Manovich, 2006) cited in (Arango-Forero et al., 2016). However, Jenkins (2001) described technological convergence as the cross-platform digital information flow created by the Internet and how content and our relationship to it are always expanding. The operation of media organizations has gone beyond the simplistic, one-way production of content and distribution, to multiple and multimedia content production and distribution. Broadcast media now produce content in text on their websites while print media used audio-visual where necessary, aside that, they have other facilities such as hyperlinks, access to archives, and instantaneous feedbacks. Technological convergence is more apparent in the social media phenomenon. Social media has changed communication and media industry. It enables one-on-one interaction, social activities and services, group and interpersonal communication, less censored content production and distribution, in fact, the world of communications is quickly migrating in a digital direction and those who comprehend this transformation will communicate much more effectively than those who do not (Wright & Hinson, 2009).

**b) Industrial and economical convergence:** This has to do with the merger of media conglomerates with tech giants for the maximization of profit. Media conglomerates such as Viacom, Disney, NBC, Time Warner, etc, for economic reasons formed alliance with corporations such as Paramount, ABC, CBS, Universal and America online (AOL) respectively to form new digital media giants. These alliances are for business and profit making purposes. Albaran (2010) described economic convergence as the mergers, acquisitions and strategic management alliances made during the first decade of the twenty-first Century between traditional media companies (print, radio, TV, film) and new media firms focused on the Internet and online markets. While, Jenkins (2001) found that as the horizontal integration of the entertainment industry and the definition of new value chains.

*c) Social convergence:* Jenkins (2001) defined social convergence as the multi-screen multitasking environment created by device ecosystems or the connectivity between different groups of users. It mirrors astronomical modification in audience interaction, engagement, response, across different digital media platforms, with both personal content flow and media (Jenkins et al., 2013). Social convergence focuses on changes in social practice, phenomena such as trans-media storytelling, content and genres that are used across channels and platforms (Fagerjord & Storsul, 2007). Conventional media platforms now break news on their social media handles before going to press.

*d) Cultural convergence:* This is seen as novel formats and platforms for creativity using various media technologies across different industries and consumer groups (Jenkins, 2001). There is close relation between social and cultural convergence. In fact, some scholars treat them as single entity. Fagerjord & Storsul (2007) opined that discourse about socio-cultural convergence falls within the prism of rhetorical, cultural, socio-functional, receptional and spatial convergence, and as convergence culture. Cultural convergence focuses on the impact of convergence on popular culture, how it affects learning, interaction and drive toward participatory culture, change from passive consumers to active producers of contents or producer and consumer simultaneously (Bolter & Grusin, 2000; Cancel et al., 1997; Dal Zotto & Lugmayr, 2016; Deuze, 2011).

*e) Global convergence:* This is described as the experience of being a citizen of the global village (Jenkins, 2001) focuses on the interconnection of people from nooks and crannies of the world. Through the internet, people from different continents transact, interact and establish relationships. Most recently, the #EndSars became one of the leading topics globally on major social media platform courtesy of Twitter. This phenomenon gives a clear picture of how problem in one continent is gaining traction in other continents as result of the internet. #Blacklivesmatter detailing police brutality in the United State of America, #BringBackOurGirls campaign for the safe return of abducted Chibok girls by Boko Haram and similar other campaigns gained global attention as a result of social media. Though arguments about what constitute convergence is ongoing, its advent has not displaced the traditional media. In fact, just like the advent of broadcast media posed a threat to the print media, on a long run, neither has succeeded in deposing the other. Both have succeeded in creating different audience base and also interrelate in competitive but harmonious ways. The digital media is also predicted to not depose the traditional media rather, the traditional media will absorb the features of the digital media to its advantage. Deuze (2011) suggested that media convergence should be viewed as ‘cooperation and collaboration’ between old and the new media.

### **3.0 Public Relations**

Public relation is the business of communication. It is a process of managing communication for the actualization of organizational goals. Jefkins (1988) described public relations as “consists of all forms of planned communication both inward and outward between an organization and its publics for the purpose of achieving objectives concerning mutual understanding”. This definition shows that public relations is a conscious, deliberate, and systematic efforts geared towards a multifaceted communication endeavour, for the purpose of achieving mutuality. One important point that will be dissected from this definition is the concept of ‘inward and outward’ communication. Inward communication refers to internal communication while outward is external. Essentially, communication in PR is target at these two audiences, internal and external. However, reaching these two audiences is partly dependent on ‘uncontrolled media.’ Large organizations with the needed resources have both control and uncontrolled media. Though, it is hard to come by any organization in Nigeria that doesn’t outsource its media engagement (McPhillips & Merlo, 2008; Mcquail, 2010; NBS 2018; Nkwocha, 1999). Naturally, the need to reach the target audience at a given point in time is sacrosanct to any PR activity. Organizations without the resources are left with no options than to outsource. In this case, mutuality between PR practitioner and media is paramount.

Media relation is a crucial aspect of public relations practice. Public relations practitioners strive to establish cordial relationship with the media. Nkwocha (1999) said it is essential to “establishes and maintains mutual understanding, goodwill, co-operation, respect and support between an organization and the mass media practitioners/owners” in order to have good publicity and achieve PR objectives. The relationship between the media and PR is two-ways, symbiotic and mutually beneficial. PR relies on the media for coverage while the latter depends on the former for content. The media provides both platform and audience which public relations need while PR supply the materials needed by the media audiences. For years, these have been the circle of relationship between media and public relations. However, the advancement in communication technology is changing this trend. Previously, both media and public relations partly possess the power of ‘agenda setting’ and ‘gatekeeping’ by determining what goes to the publics (Fagerjord & Storsul, 2007; Innis, 1986). With the advent of new media and media convergence, the circle is changing. The top-down vertical approach of communication is being substituted with horizontal, two-ways, audience centred and ‘prosumer’ (producer and consumer) approach. The interlock between public relations and

media convergence lies in the adaptation of public relations to the reality of advancement in communication technology.

#### **4.0 Nexus between Media Convergence and Public Relations**

Public relations are a dynamic field. It changes and adapts to trends in the society generally and media industry in particular. The working of public relations is largely anchored on the communication mechanism. Changes in communication technology and media industry no doubt affect public relations practices (Mcquail, 2010; NBS 2018). Communication is paramount in public relations. Media provide the appropriate platform to communicate. Since the media is embracing convergence, public relations have no option but to embrace same. Communication is one of the peculiarities of public relations and media convergence. Both fields are in the business of communication. While public relations communicate to establish mutual relationship, the media communicate to inform, educate and entertain the public. Communication in PR is goal oriented. However, both coexist in a symbiotic relationship as we can see in the later part of this chapter. McPhillips & Merlo (2008) stressed that communication in public relations is two ways, internal and external. PR practitioners must communicate promptly. Before the advent of new media, internal communication is mostly done through memos, newsletters, internal publications etc, but online media platforms such as mails, Facebook, twitter, WhatsApp, websites, blogs etc have supplanted some of the traditional means of communication in organizations. This astronomical change brought by technology is not only changing communication in the PR industry but redefining the relationship between PR and the media (Nkwocha, 1999).

Though, the instrument of communication, especially to external audiences, in most part, still remained the mass media. However, with the media convergence taking place, public relations no longer communicates only with the conventional media, it has to communicate with journalists, bloggers, social media influencers, employees, etc. It is more about strategic communication than top down approach as it is in the past (Fagerjord & Storsul, 2007; Innis, 1986). Social media have no doubt created a user generated platforms for public relations as well as media practitioners to use. This is breaking the monopoly of the conventional media. Public relations practitioners can now communicate directly with their audiences through social media, thereby, bypassing the conventional media (Nkwocha, 1999). Though the conventional media is still strongly patronized, but no doubt, social media have given PR professionals something to leverage on. Public relations are about meeting the audience where they are. According to the National Bureau of Statistics, there are 92,975,282 GSM users in Nigeria and 93,263,436 internet users (NBS, 2017). These data show that media audiences are moving online, and public relations practitioners can easily meet with their audiences directly through the social media. Where then do the traditional media stand?

The truth is, despite the enormous internet penetration, conventional media are still patronized by public relations practitioners. The new media are being embraced as additional platforms or channels to reach new audience demography by public relations practitioners. McLuhan (1964) postulated that 'the medium is the message' actually encapsulates this argument. Though McLuhan also argued that the advent of new media renders old media obsolete, nevertheless, newspapers, radio and television have imbibed new technology to its advantage. Conventional media can be accessed online (McLuhan & Powers, 1986). Probing the argument of McLuhan et al. (2000) opined that every new communication medium reconfigures pre-existing formats and contents as they follow a logic of permanent communication which feeds on repetition and reconfiguration, remixes and mash-ups, shares and retweets. Also, media convergence is also affecting public relations in the aspect of media relations. The advent of new technology is changing the relationship between media practitioners and public relations professionals. Sixty percent of the role and functions of public relations depend largely in the dissemination of information and the media is a channel through which this information is conveyed. The level of understanding and mutuality between a public relations practitioner and the media determine the success of the public relations activities. The media are treated as an indispensable ally by public relations practitioners. Grunig & Hunt (1984) quoted Jeff Greenfield that:

*"The press must be treated as a dangerous, but potentially valuable animal. You must house it, feed it, pet it once in a while. You must never show it fear or it will turn on you. You must gently, but firmly guide it in the way you want to go"*

The job of media and public relations practitioners is interdependent. According to Marshall & Kingsbury (1996), public relation has become one of the most important external influences in journalism as it is now practiced." Johnston (2004) also stressed that:

*"But while public relations practitioners may rightly see their role as vital to the media, it is not a one-way relationship. Just as public relations provide information to the media, so too does the media provide information to the public relations profession. This is done through the simple task of media monitoring: reading, watching and listening to the media every day - a simple, yet vital form of research..."*

The practitioner will use the media in their role of issues management, monitoring trends, government policy and legislation, debates and opinions. In daily monitoring of the news media, a range of areas should be covered to gauge public opinion and trends. These include the news and features pages, the editorial or leader, columns, letters to the editor, talkback, radio and television panel and review programmes (cited in Nwodu, 2007).

The public relations practitioners and the media are partners who relate on a symbiotic level. Though, approach and objective might defer, one cannot do without the other as Lattimore et al. (2009) claimed that both the media and public relations practitioner “in dealing with each other, are caught between the demands of the organizations they represent and the demands of the opposite party”. They sum up the relationship between the media and the practitioners as that of “mutual dependency”. However, this relationship is being redefined by convergence in media industry. The traditional role of the media and public relations is undergoing changes. The media landscape in the country is fast changing. There is fast adoption of online media by conventional media. Virtually, every national dailies and broadcast stations have online platforms (Mcphillips & Merlo, 2008; Mcquail, 2010; NBS 2018; Nkwocha, 1999). This is because no single newspaper in Nigeria today sells up to one million copies daily while some online media platforms generate an average of four hundred thousand to one million visitors per day. Premium Times (an online newspaper) for instance has over one million followers on Twitter alone. The media market is moving online.

However, Public relations practitioners in Nigeria do not really jettison old media or replace it with new media. Professionals tend to adopt media mix (Achor et al., 2015). Since one can be listening to radio while surfing the internet, watching television while chatting on social media, it is easy for both new and old media to coexist. The choice of media by PR practitioners depends on audience and dynamism of the practitioner. Studies have shown that public relations practitioners in Nigeria used both new media and old media concurrently (Sule, 2018; Inya, 2017). It is imperative from this argument that there is close relationship between media and public relations. So, if the media is converging, definitely public relation strategy has to change.

## **5.0 Prospects of the Study**

Every innovation has its own good and bad. As a dynamic field, public relations are fluid and imbibing new techniques. The practice keeps on changing in the face of innovation. It accommodates new developments like the proliferation of social media and media convergence (Nwodu, 2007; Wirth, 2006; Wright & Hinson, 2009). Media convergence has triggered a new form of creativity among public relations practitioners. The multimedia nature of content, courtesy of convergence is changing public relations copywriting style. Media contents are now targeted at different varieties of media platforms. Press releases are written with supporting information such as audio, video, images and hyperlinks for follow up information. Also, contents aimed at a particular medium are packaged in different formats for their consumption in convergent systems (Sule, 2018). This trend has motivated new set of skilled professionals in multimedia production. Knowledge of desktop publishing is now paramount. Similarly, Public relations agencies have started exhibiting new form of creativity by creating strategic mix. This is done through expanding media relations beyond relationships with conventional media. Social media influencers, bloggers, story tellers on social media are being courted to trend topics, promote idea or political candidates, market products in a systematic and strategic manner. Achor et al. (2015) suggested that public relations now have access to direct content production and distribution. Social media have created platforms where content can be produced and distributed without going through the conventional media. Public relations officials are now publishers. There is a direct link between the audiences and the organization.

Convergence is ensuring effective two-way communication between organizations and audiences. Organizations and the public's can now interact in a participatory form of communication. Audience read information on official twitter handles, Facebook pages, blogs, websites, LinkedIn, among other online platforms of the organization, reply to that information and get immediate response from the organization. Orozco Gomez (2007) said in a convergent communication environment, audiences have participated further and maximize the opportunities brought by new media technologies. In a sense, technological changes are more than just instrumental changes for communication (they are true transformations) which slowly draw new boundaries to a communication culture which was before segmented by bound media. Internal and external communication is now instantaneous, prompt and continues. Studies have shown that the use of Facebook and WhatsApp is rampant among public relations professionals for internal communication (Sule, 2018). Though emails are also used for internal communication but in most cases,

mails are used for external communication i.e communication with media. Since journalists now source information from the social media handles of organizations, twitter specifically has been a good source of sending information across to the public. Tweeting and thread making on twitter is now the trend. Continues use of twitter by the American President, Donald Trump is a clear example. Information coming from the official handles of government officials are now treated as policy statement and government information.

Public relation is about relationship building. Media convergence has also aided this cardinal responsibility of PR. Through continues communication between organization and the public, trust and confidence are created (Nwodu, 2007; Sule, 2018; Wirth, 2006; Wright & Hinson, 2009). Media convergence has assisted in creating dialogical communication between organizations and their publics. This in turn assists in creating mutual relationship. With media convergence, evaluation of public relations campaign becomes easier. Also, it is easier to monitor public opinion about the organization. New media provide instant feedback mechanism. Analysing the feedbacks will give the organization perspective about its reputations, audience perception, and success of it campaign. McAllister & Taylor (2007) buttressed this point that the Internet gives public relations practitioners an exceptional opportunity to collect information, monitor public opinion on issues, and engage in direct dialogue with their publics about a variety of issues. It is also actualizing the postulations of contingency theorists. Media convergence is partly modifying public relations models. Contingency theory was developed in order to make public relations practice more efficient, and to be able to surmount the challenges posed by ever changing political environment and technology (Cancel et al., 1997). According to the theorists, the theory is propounded “to offer a structure for better understanding the dynamics of accommodation and advocacy, the ethical facets of accommodation, as well as the efficacy of accommodation in public relations practice.”

They argued that “the practice of public relations is too complex, too fluid, and impinged by far too many variables for the academy to force it into the four boxes known as the four models of public relations (McAllister et al., 2007; McLuhan, 1964). It fails to capture the complexity and multiplicity of the public relations environment.” Contingency theory of public relations sought to give public relations strategies a new look. It focuses on multi-faceted approach to the practice of public relations rather than sticking with strategies encapsulated in the four models. So far convergence is changing media landscape, public relations therefore need to adjust to the change. However, the strategies enshrined in the four models are fast losing their grip. Therefore, for public relations objectives to be achieved, different approaches and communication strategies need to be deployed. Already, practitioners are adapting to this trend with the use of social media platforms. In fact, it is safe to say that public relations as a field is also at the stage of convergence. Its strategy is changing to accommodate new innovations (Lapham, 1994; Powers, 1986). As stated earlier, media mix or coexistence has been the trend in media selection of public relations in recent times. Communications are designed for multimedia purposes. Even in terms of new media selection, most professionals used two or more social media platforms to communicate simultaneously.

## **6.0 Challenges in the Study**

Every innovation comes with challenges. Public relations practitioners can either adapt to changes or fade out. The industry is changing. Only those creative enough can stand the heat. Some of the challenges are anticipated while others are not. Jenkins et al. (2013) argued that the concept of global convergence is breaking barriers. It is creating an unprecedented information flow. Escalation of information - be it positive or negative- is astronomically high. We are in an era of global citizenship or ‘netizen’. Public relations should be aware of the ubiquity of this trend and should acclimatize themselves with the operation of the new technology. However, despite the rapid rate of using the new technology, there are some challenges facing public relations as a result of media convergence. First, the country has low level of internet and technological penetration. Though, internet users are increasing daily. As at July 2017, there were about 19.6million internet users in Nigeria (NCC, 2017). Also, there is astronomical increase in mobile devices ownership. In a nationwide study of Internet access and GSM ownership in Nigeria, NBS reports that there are 92,975,282 GSM users in Nigeria and 93,263,436 internet users respectively (NBS, 2017). These figures, though high on it’s own, but when compared to the population of the country, what it shows is that more than half of the country is yet to have internet services. That explains why the conventional media still remained the leading choice in some part of the country. The Director of the Hausa Service of China Radio International, Mr. Chen Lining said the station has five million Nigerians listening on its Hausa Service (PMN, 2017). This is just one out of the numerous conventional media platforms in the country. The point really is, though the convergence of the traditional media with new media is in vague, large part of the public relations publics lack access to internet service. Also, the supposed converged media platforms too still relay services to these public through the convention media such as transistor radios among others. So, it becomes difficult to discountenance the challenge posed by lack of internet access.

Media convergence is also stripping public relations the power of shaping public opinion. Before now, public relations have monopoly over what goes to the public sphere. Previously, journalists are the ones suspicious of public relations, now, citizens, bloggers, opinion leaders, social media influencers, and most members of the public's are skeptical of information emanating from public relations officers and the journalists (Inya, 2017; Jefkins, 1998; Jenkins, 2001). The publics now hold the power to steer conversation in the public sphere. With the power to produce and distribute content in the hands of the untrained publics, PR practitioners are now facing the herculean task of remaining relevant, adapting to change, protecting their organization against fake news capable of damaging the organization's reputation, grapevines, negative reporting among others. Anybody with a mobile device with internet facility now assumes the role of journalist or content developer. There is absence of fact checking or any form of gate keeping. Any obnoxious content can make it to the public sphere without any known origin. Most importantly, WhatsApp remains one of the leading platforms where fake news and obnoxious content are concocted, refined, cooked and rebroadcasted without any form of verification (Inya, 2017; Jefkins, 1998). There are many examples to buttress this point. The wildly practiced salt-water bath and consumption to prevent Ebola virus that killed some Nigerians was popularized on WhatsApp. Fake gory images and videos of attacks supposedly by herdsmen, unattributed press statement on islamization of Nigeria by herdsmen, etc are going round on WhatsApp.

Jenkins et al. (2013) posited that numerous other dangerous and hateful contents are still flowing all over on the platform. These are some of the challenges public relations have to face because of lack of censorship and gatekeeping on new media, public relations practitioners must be accustomed with all the media platforms and be informed about happenings on them. Media convergence has brought the challenge of learning, unlearning, and relearning. Public relations practitioners who still operate within the four models of public relations which are; press agency/publicity, public information, two-ways asymmetric and two-ways symmetric might find it difficult to adjust world of media click bait. These four models have their strengths and weakness (Jenkins, 2001; Jenkins et al., 2013). However, with proliferation of new media which has broken the hegemony of traditional media couple with the different dimensions which problems needing public relations input come with, there is a need for an inclusive, continues and cyclical approach or paradigm to the practice of public relation. Public relations practitioners are forced to learn new techniques such as desktop publishing, get more creative, unlearn some style of writing, relearn how to write for multimedia platforms and stay afloat in the industry. Those adapting to change are switching toward Contingency approach in Public Relations activities.

## **7.0 Conclusion of the Study**

The emergence of media convergence has no doubt given rise to new thinking in public relations field. As a dynamic profession, public relations are breeding new set of professionals adept and vast in desktop publishing, multimedia communication and strategies. The professionals see convergence as 'digital creative economy' which comes with great opportunity for the practice of public relations. Since convergence is about 'blurring of boundaries' while public relations is a fluid discipline which adapt quickly to changes, so, PR is fast closing the communication gap between organizations and the public using media convergence. Communication between organizations and the public's is now a nonstop continuum. There is no doubt that the media industry has influence on public relations. Any change in the media affects public relations strategy. Since the media is converging, public relations managers have to acclimatize themselves with the knowledge. Though, changing old ways is not always easy. But, what media convergence has brought is an opportunity to combine both new and old media together in public relations activities. However, public relations professionals must face the challenges that come with the new trend in order to enjoy its full potential. That means being fluid, dynamic, and conversant with the new media management and know how to combine both the knowledge of old and new media for optimum maximization of their benefits. This is because media convergence does not in any way displace the conventional media or limits its relevance. It was claimed that every new media retrieves elements from an old media. For example, the websites combined both features of print and broadcast to form textual and visual contents on the web. Basically, what we are experiencing is the rise of media-mixture, or media coexistence in public relations strategy. This coexistence is leaning towards contingency.

## **8.0 References of the Study**

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