



**EXPLORING THE EFFECTS OF DIGITAL PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICE ON THE
BRAND IMAGE OF THE LEBANESE EMBASSY IN GHANA.**

BY

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF MEDIA, ARTS, AND
COMMUNICATION, INSTITUTE OF JOURNALISM, IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF A MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE IN
PUBLIC RELATIONS WITH MARKETING**

DECEMBER 2025

DECLARATION BY STUDENT

I hereby declare that this research is a result of my original research and that no part of it has been presented for another diploma in this university or any other higher education institute. I further declare that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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CERTIFICATION BY SUPERVISOR

This project work has been prepared and presented under my supervision according to the guidelines for supervision and formatting of Project Work laid down by the UniIMAC- IJ

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the impact of digital public relations (PR) practices on the brand image of the Lebanese Embassy in Ghana. With the growing reliance on digital platforms for diplomatic communication, this study examines how embassies leverage these tools, specifically Facebook and Instagram, to shape public perception and foster relations between Ghana and Lebanon. The study was conducted using qualitative research design and a combination of content analysis of the embassy's digital platforms with interviews from both embassy personnel and Ghanaian audiences to gain insights into the effectiveness of its digital communication strategies. The research addresses three main objectives: to evaluate Ghanaian perceptions of Lebanon and its diplomatic presence, to assess how the embassy's digital PR efforts influence its brand image, and to examine the role of digital storytelling in public diplomacy. The findings reveal that the embassy actively promotes cultural and educational initiatives through its social media platforms, contributing to a largely positive public image. However, limited audience engagement and a lack of interactive communication suggest missed opportunities for deeper connection and dialogue. The study concludes that while digital PR can enhance diplomatic branding and improve bilateral understanding, its impact depends on the adoption of two-way communication, culturally relevant content, and responsive engagement strategies. It offers practical recommendations for improving digital diplomacy and contributes to scholarly discussions on PR, development communication, and international relations in the African context.

DEDICATION

To the Almighty God, to the Lebanese Embassy and Community in Ghana for their educational sponsorship and support. To my parents, especially my late mom, Cecilia Donkor, and Mary Banyimanyae, Matthew Tiborimor, Stephen Tiborimor, to my siblings, Doris, Cecelia, Ebenezer, James, Gabriel, Gloria, and Graham Tiborimor, to my friends Abubakari Saeed Mashuud, Aisha, Racheal Amokwandoh, and Rosemond Betty Abakah, and my colleagues from the UniIMAC – IJ public relations class of 2023.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to all my lecturers, especially to my supervisor, Dr. Paul Herzuah, Department of Media Studies, UniMAC – IJ, for his selfless dedication, patience, understanding, and guidance throughout this experience. Also, I am sincerely grateful to H.E. Maher Kheir for his assistance through this journey.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

The rapid advancement of technology and the continuous expansion of the internet are transforming how people live and work. In Ghana, for example, mobile technology has significantly improved financial accessibility, with mobile money transactions totaling over \$36 billion by 2020 (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2023). Similarly, across the African continent, the rise of digital healthcare systems—such as telemedicine and electronic health records—is streamlining service delivery and reducing burdens on healthcare providers (Osei, 2023). These changes demonstrate the critical role that digital innovation and connectivity play in modern societies. To respond effectively to the evolving expectations of their audiences, organizations in sectors like education, health, politics, economics, and diplomacy are turning to digital communication tools. These tools—ranging from social media and blogs to websites—enable the creation, sharing, and engagement with content across vast and diverse publics (Susha, Grönlund, & Janssen, 2015). Public relations (PR) have also evolved in this context, becoming an integral part of daily life (Bossman, 2023). People often engage with PR messages—whether intentionally or not—through various media platforms (Babaian, 2014). Organizations use PR strategies to build lasting and mutually advantageous relationships with their target groups. In the current digital environment, digital public relations (DPR) have emerged as a key approach. DPR involves the purposeful use of digital channels—including websites, blogs, social platforms, and online news releases—to shape perceptions and create meaningful interactions with audiences (Broom, Sha, & Glade, 2017). Clear and targeted communication is essential for organizations aiming to influence or inform their audiences. This is especially important for embassies, which are responsible for managing diplomatic interactions and maintaining favorable relationships between countries. Lebanon, a country in Western Asia, is represented in Ghana through its embassy in Accra. The Lebanese Embassy is responsible for supporting Lebanese nationals, showcasing Lebanese culture, and engaging in cooperative activities such as scholarship funding and economic support. Sustaining this relationship depends on ongoing collaboration and understanding between the two nations. This research is therefore focused on the Lebanese Embassy in Ghana. It seeks to evaluate the embassy's digital PR strategies and assess how these efforts influence Lebanon's image within Ghanaian society

1.1 Problem Statement

The strategic role of public relations (PR) in enhancing diplomatic communication has become increasingly relevant in today's digital-driven world. As digital technologies and internet connectivity rapidly evolve across Africa, the way institutions—particularly embassies—communicate with their stakeholders is undergoing a fundamental transformation. In Ghana, the growth of digital tools and platforms has led to a reconfiguration of public engagement, where embassies are now expected to go beyond traditional diplomatic channels and adopt modern, interactive, and accessible digital communication strategies (DataReportal, 2024; Statista, 2024). The Lebanese Embassy in Ghana, like many other foreign missions, has incorporated digital platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and its official website to maintain visibility, share updates, and engage with the public. However, while this marks a progressive shift from conventional diplomacy, the effectiveness and impact of such digital public relations (DPR) strategies on shaping the public image of Lebanon in Ghana remain insufficiently studied. With the growing importance of digital engagement, there is an urgent need to assess how embassies like that of Lebanon utilize these tools to foster mutual understanding and build meaningful relationships with their host communities (Adesina, 2021). In the context of digital diplomacy, there is a shift from "Homo economicus"—where communication is transactional—to "Homo dialogicus," which promotes mutual dialogue and relationship-building (Kent & Taylor, 2017). This ideological evolution underscores the importance of redefining PR practices in line with audience expectations in a digital space. McAllister-Spooner (2015) also stresses the significance of dialogic principles in internet communication, highlighting how organizations can build stronger public connections by actively inviting interaction, transparency, and responsiveness. Despite advancements in digital public relations and communication technologies, many embassies continue to miss the opportunities to deepen relationships with their stakeholders through engaging and interactive digital content. Babaian (2014) asserts that to ensure the effectiveness of public relations, it must extend beyond mere information dissemination and move toward relationship-building and mutual understanding. Yoon and Jeong (2018) argue that measuring the impact of DPR efforts is essential to refining strategy and ensuring that communication efforts align with organizational goals. In the case of the Lebanese Embassy, it is unclear how its digital strategies are evaluated or whether they contribute positively to public perception in Ghana. Additionally, while research in areas like healthcare (Osei, 2023) and governance in Ghana

has acknowledged the transformative power of digital platforms, very little empirical work has been done on the public relations practices of diplomatic institutions within the Ghanaian context.

1.2 Research Objectives

1. To examine the digital public relations communication strategies deployed by the Lebanese embassy in Ghana.
2. To ascertain Ghanaians perception of Lebanese community and the Lebanese embassy as a result of the digital public relations strategies they employ.
3. To assess the brand image of the Lebanese embassy via their digital public relations communication with Ghana.

1.3. Research Questions

1. What public relations strategies does the Lebanese embassy employ to communicate with the Ghanaian public?
2. How does the Ghanaian public perceive the Lebanese community and embassy based on the digital public relations strategies used by the embassy?
3. How does the digital public relations communication of the Lebanese embassy impact its brand image among the Ghanaian public?

1.4. Scope of Study

This aim of this study is to examine the impact of digital public relations practices on shaping the brand image of the Lebanese Embassy in Ghana. The brand image of an organization reflects its identity and influences all its relationships. Embassies, as representatives of their countries, have their brand image significantly affecting diplomatic relations both within the host country and internationally. Public relations are crucial departments for any organization and with the world increasingly going digital, organizations need to establish a robust digital presence and leverage it effectively. This research investigated the digital public relations strategies employed by the Lebanese Embassy and the brand image it has developed for the Lebanese community in Ghana. The study incorporated analysis of the Embassy's website, blog, online press releases, Instagram, and Facebook pages, along with in-depth interviews with three employees from the communication or public relations department.

1.5. Significance of the Study

The findings from this study will be beneficial to academia, diplomatic bodies, and stakeholders. Several studies have been conducted on embassies in Ghana; however, there have been few works on the digital public relations practices of embassies in Ghana and the brand image the PR practices creates for the embassies. The findings will help fill the gap in the knowledge of digital public relations. The findings will help embassies build effective public relations communication strategies in accordance with the opinions and perceptions of the Ghanaian community about the embassy. This will help add knowledge to digital public relations practice and brand management. Organizations will continue to operate successfully if they have a good relationship with their stakeholders. The citizens of Ghana are key stakeholders that embassies need to have a good relationship with. The Lebanese embassy and other embassies understand their stakeholders. It will help them adapt to the changing media landscape and improve their digital public relations practice and communication strategies to strengthen their relationship with their stakeholders. The host nation, Ghana, embassies, and other diplomatic bodies will gain insight into the need, usefulness, and practice of digital public relations in building and strengthening diplomatic ties and relations, which will help build better mutual corporations.

1.6 Methodology

Research methodology refers to the systematic process through which a research problem is addressed, with particular emphasis on the procedures used for data collection and analysis. Creswell (2011) describes research methodology as a theoretical framework that guides the selection and application of research methods within a specific field of study. In this research, the methodology outlines the research approach and design, the study area and population, the sampling procedures, sources of data, data collection methods and instruments, techniques for data analysis, as well as ethical considerations. This study will employ a qualitative research method. Qualitative research, according to Shank (2002), is “a form of systematic empirical inquiry into meaning.” The study will use an interview technique (interview guide) to gather data from key informants in the Lebanese embassy, like the PRO, communication officer, Brands Manager, and social media Manager. Content analysis will be used to assess the digital public relations strategies, the engagement and interactions between the embassy and the Ghanaian public. It will also use content analysis to ascertain the perception of Ghanaians about Lebanon through the actions and comments on the digital

platforms. The study is exploratory research. Exploratory research is any research that is done to investigate a problem that has not been clearly defined. According to Saunders et al. (2007), exploratory research is appropriate in situations where there is insufficient prior knowledge of a phenomenon and the research problem remains unclear. The study area and population of this study will be key employees of the Lebanese embassy, working in the communication and public relations departments of the Embassy, also, digital media platforms of the embassy, which are their websites, blogs, online press releases, Instagram, and Facebook page. The study used a purposive sampling technique where specific employees in the communication and public relations department of the embassy for their expertise in the strategies the embassy is employing in their digital public relations practice. The study will also abide by all research ethics guiding research work. It will also employ thematic analysis to gather and analyze data.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

This study is guided by two theories. The excellence theory and Agenda setting theory. The excellence theory is a communication theory propounded by James E. Grunig. The theory explains the role of PR in relationship building and emphasizes on two way strategic, and transparent communication (Grunig et al, 2002). The theory will help understand the Lebanese Embassy's DPR communication strategy and the perceived brand image of the Embassy by the Ghanaian public. The Agenda Setting theory was propounded by McCombs and Shaw and argues that the media have the power to shape public perception and influence what the public deem as important (McCombs & Shaw 1972). The theory helped understand how the Lebanese embassy DPR practice is shaping the brand image of the Embassy by the Ghanaian public.

1.8 Chapter Summary

Chapter one introduced the topic: exploring the effects of digital public relations practice on the brand image of the Lebanese Embassy in Ghana. The chapter has an introduction and problem statement, which gives a brief overview of digital public relations communication strategies and practice, and the effects digital public relations practice has on the brand image of the Lebanese embassy. The chapter had a section on research objectives, from which research questions are deduced. Also, it focused on the scope of study which focus on content analysis of the website, blog, online press releases and Facebook channel of the Lebanese embassy as well as in-depth interviews of three employees of the embassy either in the

communication or public relations department to ascertain the communication strategies deployed by the embassy, their interaction with the Ghana public, and public image. There is also a section for the significance of the study, which the findings will help fill the knowledge gap in academia about digital public relations practice and brand management. The findings will also help diplomatic bodies better mutual relationships and corporations. The chapter outlines the methodology of the study, which is qualitative, and the instruments for data gathering are an interview guide and a content analysis guide. It also makes provision for a theoretical framework where the excellence theory and agenda setting theory are used to explore the excellent communication strategies used by the embassy, their interaction with the public, the agenda they are setting about Lebanon for public discourse, and their brand image.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

The chapter reviews existing literature related to this study. The Chapter discusses key concepts, theories, empirical reviews and highlight gaps that justify the need for this study.

2.1 Conceptual Review

The study's conceptual framework offers a thorough summary of the fundamental components that support comprehension of how digital PR practice affects the reputation of embassies in Ghana, with a particular emphasis on the Lebanese Embassy. Digital Public Relations Practice, Brand Image, and Public Relations Practice in Ghana comprise the three subsections of this section.

2.1.1 Overview of Public Relations

Public Relations practice, according to Macnamara (2016), is a two-way communication, dialogue, and relationship between organizations and their publics. Public Relations practice as a profession dates back to the 20th century, in Edward Bernays' concept of crystallizing public opinion, Ivy Lee published the principles that his publicity firm would operate on. (Lynn M. Zoch, 2014). And when functionalists began promoting business-centered practices instead of journalism practices (Suárez-Monsalve, 2022). Bernays in 'Crystallizing Public Opinion' coined 'engineering of consent', which is referred to as public relations. Bernays' concept of PR has psychology as a fundamental pillar. Bernays argued that it is important to influence public perception and sentiment through persuasive communication strategies. He argues that PR practitioners, to influence public sentiment, would have to be open, honest, transparent, do research and analysis on their publics, and foster two-way communication between them. Propaganda is a powerful tool that can do good or bad, but practitioners would have to serve public interest rather than personal interest. (Bernays, 1947). The field of Public Relations has evolved, and as Hallow (1999) states in his review of the evolution of public relations definitions state that the idea of "*using communication to build and hold goodwill*" has been dominant in the first 30 years of the 20th century. As stated in (Toledano, 2013). In Europe, Public relations practice emerged

in the United Kingdom during World War I when Basil Clark, an officer who served as the first official press officer, saw the need to strategize and manage information and perception during crisis. (Evans, 2013). Public relations professionals create, establish, and preserve relationships and connections that are mutually advantageous to the organizations and their publics (Broom & Sha, 2013). A study by Fitch and L'Etang (2017), found that PR history is predominantly shaped by Western perspective, selective, limited and influenced by power structures which marginalized other voices and results in underrepresentation of the field. Fawkes (2018) finds that public relations research has evolved from a narrow, practice-focused and Western-dominated field into a more critical and interdisciplinary area of study. PR has shifted from purely managerial and functional approaches toward ethical, cultural, and socially responsible perspectives. Overall, the study highlights that public relations research is becoming more reflective, theory-driven, and responsive to global and societal changes.

2.1.2 Public Relations Practice in Ghana

Technology, the internet, and new media are changing the way of doing things in all professions and aspects of life. Due to the rapid growth of technology, organizations, institutions, and professions are growing and changing, as well as public relations (Bossman, 2023). The origins of public relations in Ghana, as well as most parts of Sub-Saharan Africa, are closely linked to the British Colonial Administration (Amoakohene, 2015). During this period, public relations primarily functioned as a tool for disseminating information to the general public and for building relationships with influential community and opinion leaders (Blankson, 2009). Communication was mainly one-way during the colonial era, serving the colonial authorities' administrative needs (Ansu-Kyeremeh, 2018). A change occurred during the post-independence era, when public relations began to play a more strategic part in the process of nation-building. Early public relations initiatives in Ghana were characterized by initiatives run by the government with the goal of promoting unity and national identity. As the country became a democratic state, the evolution persisted, with a greater focus on discourse and two-way communication (Ansu-Kyeremeh, 2018). This historical trend is indicative of a more widespread movement in the world toward interactive and participatory communication models. Public relations has developed into a core part of organizational communication in modern-day Ghana. Significant growth and recognition of the field have been observed in a number of sectors, including corporate entities, non-governmental organizations, and government institutions (Dzorgbo & Amuwo, 2019). PR as it currently

exists is characterized by the dynamic interaction of traditional and digital communication tactics. Ghana's public relations scene is evolving to keep up with international trends, with a focus on ethical communication, reputation management, and stakeholder engagement. Today, public relations practitioners engage more actively in shaping public opinion and establishing relationships with a range of stakeholders, in addition to their traditional role of conveying information (Dzorgbo & Amuwo, 2019). Although public relations has been practiced in Africa for over fifty years (Skinner, 2013), scholarly work from the continent remains limited. Akpabio (2009), as cited in Nutsugah and Bossman (2023), argues that the low visibility of both practice and research has led to Africa's contributions being largely unacknowledged. Similarly, Nutsugah and Anani-Bossman (2023) observe that public relations research in Ghana is still developing and is constrained in terms of both scope and quantity. The study shows that existing research is largely influenced by Western theories and models, with a strong focus on organizational and managerial perspectives. There are gaps in indigenous, culturally grounded scholarship and limited theoretical innovation, hence the need for more context-specific, critical, and practice-oriented public relations studies that reflect Ghana's socio-cultural and institutional realities. Ghanaian public relations practices are guided by fundamental principles that prioritize ethical behavior, accountability, and transparency. The Public Relations Society of Ghana (PRSG) is a key player in establishing best practices and industry standards. Principles like honesty, integrity, and respect for cultural values in communication efforts are outlined in the PRSG's Code of Ethics (Quarshie, 2017). In Ghana, practitioners navigate the country's diverse cultural landscape while upholding these principles. Given the great ethnic and linguistic diversity of the nation, cultural sensitivity is essential. In order to promote inclusivity and prevent unintentional cultural misunderstandings, PR professionals work to ensure that communication strategies are effective with a variety of audiences. PR has expanded in Ghana, but practitioners still encounter unique difficulties. The implementation of comprehensive communication strategies is hindered by limited resources, including financial and technological ones (Dzorgbo & Amuwo, 2019). The difficulties faced by PR professionals are exacerbated by political meddling and the requirement to negotiate nuanced cultural differences. These difficulties do, however, present chances for development and creativity. Through innovative and economical digital techniques, practitioners can overcome resource constraints in the digital age. Social media platforms have become effective instruments for interacting with a

wide range of audiences, giving practitioners a chance to spread their messages and deal with the difficulties posed by the media landscape's fast change (Mensah et al, 2021).

2.1.3 Digital Public Relations Practice

A paradigm shift in communication strategies is represented by digital public relations (DPR), which includes the strategic use of digital channels to improve stakeholder communication and foster relationships (Grunig & Hunt, 1984). DPR consists of content creation for digital platforms, social media management, online reputation management, and the incorporation of technology-driven tools to improve the efficacy and efficiency of communication. Digital PR is distinguished by its interactive quality, which enables companies to have discussions with stakeholders in real time. It incorporates a dynamic and interactive communication approach in addition to traditional media relations (Smith, 2013). The tactics used in the field of digital public relations change along with the digital environment. In order to stay relevant and effective, public relations strategies must embrace and incorporate digital platforms. Like many other places in the world, social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Twitter have become essential for communication in Ghana (Akakpo, 2020). These platforms' accessibility and immediateness present chances for organizations to establish direct connections with their target audiences. Social media is not the only digital platform that people are adopting. A comprehensive digital communication strategy includes the use of websites, blogs, podcasts, and email newsletters. A growing number of virtual events and webinars are being held, which enables organizations to interact with stakeholders in real time across geographic boundaries (Friesner et al, 2021). Many international organizations have used digital public relations to accomplish their communication goals with success. The Dove "Real Beauty" ad is one notable instance. Dove fostered a positive brand image and audience engagement by challenging conventional beauty standards through a combination of social media, online videos, and interactive content (Murray, 2013). The "We Accept" campaign by Airbnb is another excellent example. Airbnb responded to political developments by utilizing digital channels to convey its dedication to inclusivity and diversity. Strong messaging on social media and a dedicated website were used in the campaign, which resonated with people all over the world and reinforced the brand's values (Fenichell, 2021). The growing internet penetration and smartphone usage in Ghana demonstrate the importance of digital PR (Friesner, 2021). Social

media is an essential communication channel because young people, in particular, use it a lot (Greenhow & Robelia, 2009). Digital platforms are an efficient way for organizations, including embassies, to connect and interact with their target audiences. Digital public relations encompass more than just social media; it also includes email marketing, website management, and multimedia content creation. The popularity of virtual events and webinars has grown, giving organizations the chance to disseminate information, engage in outreach, and promote deep connections (Friesner et al, 2021). Digital PR is still relevant in Ghana because it can spread messages, encourage direct interaction, and change with the times to meet changing communication needs.

2.1.4 Brand Image

The opinions, associations, and feelings people have about a specific brand are referred to as its brand image (Keller, 1993). It includes both concrete components like the brand's visual identity and intangible components like its reputation and overall experience. When it comes to embassies, the host nation and the global community's perception of the diplomatic mission are greatly influenced by the brand image of the institution. Beyond their usual diplomatic role, embassies need to consider their brand image. Effective diplomatic relations are facilitated by an embassy with a positive brand image, which raises its legitimacy and influence (Kim & Rhee, 2011). In addition to public diplomacy, cultural exchange, and economic promotion, embassies play a role in the interconnected global landscape (Han & Lee, 2018). The embassy can perform these varied tasks more effectively when its brand is well-received. The efficacy of communication strategies, cultural diplomacy initiatives, and the embassy's involvement with local communities are among the factors that impact the public's perception of an embassy's brand image (Han & Lee, 2018). The digital era has made embassies' online presence a crucial determinant of their brand image. The information disseminated on social media, the communication style, and the embassy's promptness in responding to online inquiries all influence how the public views it. Strategic communication initiatives and the embassy's operations work together to shape how people perceive and form an impression of an embassy's brand. Delivering a concise, upbeat story that is consistent with the cultural norms of the destination nation is a crucial component of effective communication tactics. Cultural diplomacy endeavors, encompassing events, educational initiatives, and partnerships, aid in the development of a favorable brand perception (Han & Lee, 2018). Positive effects on their brand image are produced by embassies that actively participate in public events and engage with local communities. Furthermore, the public's

perception of the embassy is influenced by its ability to respond promptly to crises, both domestically and abroad. During difficult times, having an open and honest line of communication helps foster resilience and preserve a positive brand image. Because diplomacy is a complex field, managing an embassy's brand presents special challenges. The reputation of the embassy may be impacted by political unrest in the home and host countries (Cull, 2008). Maintaining a positive brand image is made more difficult by misinformation, cultural misunderstandings, and geopolitical developments. In the digital age, misinformation can spread quickly through online channels, which embassies have to deal with. The velocity of information dissemination and the possibility of online disputes present difficulties for diplomatic missions trying to effectively manage their brand image. An embassy's reputation can be affected both immediately and over time by political developments in both the home and host countries (Smith and Jones, 2020). Successfully navigating these obstacles calls for a proactive approach to resolving emerging issues, a sophisticated understanding of the digital landscape, and effective crisis communication techniques. The intricacies of the digital age require embassies to constantly modify their communication strategies in order to stay in line with diplomatic priorities. A thorough grasp of the major components influencing the study is given by the above-described conceptual framework. Understanding Ghanaian public relations' past development is necessary to comprehend the field's present conditions, trends, tenets, and user difficulties. A reflection of the changing nature of communication strategies, particularly in a globalized digital environment, is the integration of digital public relations into this framework (Smith and Jones., 2020). The definition, elements, case studies, and particular application of digital PR in the Ghanaian context are explored in order to highlight the relevance of this medium. A key component of the conceptual framework, digital PR highlights the significance of this medium for modern communication strategies. The framework's importance in the context of embassies is highlighted by the discussion of brand image, which adds a critical dimension to the framework. The foundation for comprehending how public perceptions are shaped by diplomatic missions is provided by the definition, elements, and factors influencing brand image. The analysis of the impact of digital public relations on the brand image of embassies in Ghana, with a particular focus on the Lebanese Embassy, will be informed by the integration of these elements as the study advances (Smith and Jones., 2020). The theoretical frameworks that will be covered in later chapters will enhance the investigation even more by offering different perspectives on the dynamics that are at work at the nexus of embassy communication and digital public relations. The

empirical review will build on this conceptual foundation, identifying gaps in existing literature and setting the stage for the study's contribution to the field.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Excellence Theory

The Excellence Theory, developed by Grunig and Hunt (1984) and expanded in Grunig's *Excellence in Public Relations and Communication Management* (1992a), provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the strategic role of public relations in organizations. It asserts that public relations is not merely a communication tool but a critical function that contributes to organizational effectiveness by fostering trust, credibility, and mutually beneficial relationships with key stakeholders. The theory is structured around four communication models—goal attainment, systems, strategic constituencies, and competing values—which offer different perspectives on how organizations interact with their environments and stakeholders. In addition, it identifies four principles of PR practice: press agency, public information, two-way asymmetrical and two-way symmetrical communication (Browning, 2010). Among these, two-way symmetrical communication is considered the ideal model, promoting dialogue, understanding, and ethical engagement between organizations and their publics. Central to the Excellence Theory is the notion that organizational behavior should prioritize the development and maintenance of relationships that benefit both the organization and its audiences, highlighting PR's role in strategic decision-making, reputation management, and long-term organizational success (Grunig & Grunig, 2008; Kim et al., 2013). Grunig and Hunt (1984) developed excellence theory, which highlights the function of PR in creating and preserving relationships that are mutually beneficial between organizations and their audiences. It asserts that companies that engage in open, dialogue-driven, two-way symmetric communication attain excellence in public relations. Strategic communication, stakeholder engagement, and ethical practices are among the central tenets of excellence theory (Grunig, 2001). It is recommended that organizations pay attention to the opinions of their stakeholders, integrate their input into decision-making procedures, and give precedence to enduring partnerships over transient profits. The excellence theory's tenets are more applicable in the digital age. Because digital platforms are interactive, stakeholders can be engaged in real time, which is consistent with excellence theory's recommendation for two-way symmetric communication (Grunig & Grunig, 2008). Digital PR tactics that place a high value on communication and openness are consistent with

the general objectives of excellence theory. Although excellence theory has shaped the public relations industry, it is not without its detractors. Certain academics contend that the theory might be excessively sanguine regarding the possibility of symmetric communication in every organizational setting (Grunig & Grunig, 2008). Other schools of thought, scholars and researchers have criticized the applicability, reliability, validity, ethicality and two-way symmetric communication is considered as the most effective model public relations practice (Muphy, 1991; Leichty and Springston (1993); Leichty (1997) and Browning 2010)

2.2.2 Agenda Setting Theory

The agenda-setting theory, is traced back to 1922 when Walter Lippman expressed concern on how the media can set and influence an image on the public's mind. Lippman gave instances that people who due to war could be enemies are able to live harmoniously if they are not informed about the war. The theory was later developed by McCombs and Shaw in 1972 and that was the first introduction of the term agenda setting theory. They assert that by emphasizing particular issues and topics, the media has a substantial impact on shaping the public agenda. According to the theory, audiences prioritize certain issues based on the choices and attention given to them by the media (McCombs and Shaw, 1992). The agenda-setting theory is pertinent to PR because it emphasizes how crucial media coverage is in influencing public opinion. In order to shape the agenda and guarantee that important messages are in line with company objectives, public relations professionals actively interact with the media (Bentele & Scharf, 2016). Social media contribute to agenda setting in this digital age. The channels via which agenda-setting takes place have increased in the digital age. Although social media platforms allow a wider range of voices to participate in agenda-setting, traditional media outlets still play a critical role (Meraz & Papacharissi, 2013). Digital platforms are a strategic tool that public relations professionals can use to control the narrative and set the agenda surrounding their organizations (Woelinam, 2022). Digital media and platforms allow for agenda setting and sets agenda faster and quicker than the old and traditional media (Zain, 2014). As diplomatic organizations, embassies set agendas to shape public opinion and media representation of them. To shape the narrative surrounding its operations, an embassy might, for instance, purposefully use digital platforms to showcase cultural events, community engagement programs, and diplomatic accomplishments (Buhmann & Ingenhoff, 2015).

2.3 Empirical Review

This chapter's empirical review explores previous studies that examine how digital public relations affects embassy brand image. This section offers a thorough summary of pertinent research, including study titles, goals, methods, and important conclusions. It also points out gaps in the body of knowledge and clarifies how the current study attempts to fill these gaps. The discussion also looks at how results from other studies might be applied to the particular setting of the Lebanese Embassy in Ghana.

2.3.1 Review of Related Studies

Numerous scholarly investigations have delved into the convergence of digital public relations and corporate reputation, providing insightful perspectives into the wider domain of digital communication. A study by Li and Su (2019) looked into how social media affects an organization's reputation. Using a mixed-methods approach, the study combined qualitative insights from stakeholder interviews with quantitative analysis of social media metrics. According to their findings, social media participation significantly influences how the general public views organizations. The study found a strong correlation between positive social media engagement and favorable organizational reputation. Stakeholder perceptions were influenced by the type of content shared on social media platforms. Smith and Jones (2020) examined Twitter engagement as a measure of public opinion in a similar manner. The study looked at the relationship between public perceptions of organizations and Twitter activity using a quantitative analysis approach. The findings demonstrated how crucial it is to actively participate on social media platforms in order to shape public opinion. Organizations with a proactive and engaging Twitter presence were more likely to be viewed positively by the public. Wolf and Archer (2018) find that digital communication has shifted public relations toward technical tasks, weakening its core strategic and relational competencies. The study concludes that public relations must refocus on relationship building, ethics, and strategic communication to remain effective in the digital era. Although these studies offer insightful information about the wider dynamics of reputation management and digital public relations, there is a clear deficiency in the body of research that focuses on embassy brand image. A targeted investigation is necessary due to the distinct challenges and opportunities presented by the diplomatic content.

2.3.3 Research Gaps

The studies by Smith and Jones (2020) and Li and Su (2019) offer insightful analyses of the dynamics of digital reputation management and public relations, but there is a noticeable lack of research on the particular context of embassy brand image. Embassies function within a distinct communication domain wherein public perception is significantly shaped by diplomatic considerations, cultural subtleties, and geopolitical factors. The unique opportunities and challenges faced by embassies in the digital age are not adequately covered by the research that is currently available. The identified gap is the need for more research that focuses on the precise ways in which digital public relations practices affect embassies' brand image. While organizational reputation is a common focus in the existing literature, the diplomatic context introduces additional layers of complexity that require specialized attention.

2.3.4 Relevance of the Present Study

By conducting a thorough investigation into the impact of digital public relations practices on the brand image of embassies, with a focus on the Lebanese Embassy in Ghana, this study aims to address the noted gap. The study aims to provide a thorough understanding of the dynamics at play in embassy communication by employing a qualitative research approach, including a content analysis of reactions to the digital and social media posts of the Lebanese Embassy in Ghana, as well as interviews with key staff members of the embassy's communication department. Taking into account elements like cultural diplomacy, geopolitical influences, and the particulars of diplomatic engagements, the research design recognizes the particular difficulties faced by embassies. The study seeks to contribute not only to the academic understanding of digital public relations but also to offer practical insights that can inform the strategic communication practices of embassies in the digital age. Although Li and Su's (2019) and Smith and Jones's (2020) studies may not specifically address embassy brand image, their results can provide insightful information that is relevant to the diplomatic setting. These studies have shown a positive correlation between positive public perception and active participation on social media, indicating that embassies can gain from having a proactive and interesting online presence as well (Li and Su., 2019). The objectives of embassy communication are in line with the values of openness, stakeholder involvement, and strategic communication that are emphasized in the larger body of research on digital public relations. Embassies can use the findings to create communication plans that

connect with a range of audiences, foster goodwill, and successfully negotiate the difficulties presented by the digital sphere. But it's important to understand that embassy communication is different, and that specific strategies may be needed due to diplomatic sensitivities. In order to enhance understanding of digital public relations in the diplomatic sphere, the study attempts to contextualize and broaden the applicability of previous findings to the unique opportunities and challenges faced by the Lebanese Embassy in Ghana. A gap in the literature has been found by the empirical review concerning the impact of digital public relations on the image of embassies. By conducting a thorough and context-specific investigation, the current study aims to close this gap and builds on the knowledge gained from earlier studies in the larger fields of organizational reputation management and digital public relations.

2.4 Chapter Summary

The Lebanese Embassy in Ghana was the subject focus of this literature review, which also explored the conceptual and theoretical frameworks supporting the study of the effects of digital public relations on embassy brand image. The investigation of Ghanaian PR practices brought to light how communication tactics are always changing within a dynamic and diverse cultural context. It was made possible to comprehend the special opportunities and difficulties faced by embassies in the digital age thanks to the conceptualization of digital public relations and brand image. Analysis of the impact of digital public relations on perceptions was facilitated by theoretical frameworks such as agenda-setting theory and excellence theory. The agenda-setting theory illuminated the media's role in shaping public agendas, with implications for embassy communication strategies, while excellence theory stressed the significance of two-way symmetric communication. The empirical review pointed out a gap in the body of knowledge and emphasized the need for further studies that concentrate on the effects of digital public relations on the perception of embassies. By using a qualitative method to collect data, the current study seeks to close this knowledge gap and offer a thorough understanding of the dynamics at work. These theoretical and conceptual underpinnings will guide the research methodology and analysis as the thesis progresses, assisting in a comprehensive investigation of the research topic. The literature reviewed in this chapter lays the groundwork for a more thorough examination of the strategic approaches' embassies use to improve their brand image in Ghanaian contexts by utilizing digital communication

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodological approach adopted to examine the effect of digital public relations practices on the brand image of the Lebanese Embassy in Ghana. The purpose of the methodology chapter is to describe and justify the research design, methods, and procedures used to collect and analyses data in order to address the research objectives and questions.

3.1 Study Approach

According to Kabir (2016), research is the systematic process of enquiry and investigation and scientific approach of searching, searching and researching to generate new knowledge, and find solutions to problems with the ultimate goal of helping make meaningful and informed decisions. Researchers can explain individuals' behaviors; including how people think and act in certain ways through the research they conduct (Kabir, 2016). Researchers uses three methods; qualitative, quantitative and mixed method to study and understand human behavior and suggest solutions to solve human and social issues. This study employed qualitative research and exploratory research approach. Qualitative research according to Hennink and Bailey (2020) is an approach that allow researchers to examine and understand research participants from the participants point of view. It helps researchers understand, give meaning and interpretations to the behaviors and actions of people from the participants point of view. Qualitative studies investigate deeper into real-world problems and dig further to understand human perceptions, experiences, and behaviors to answer why and how questions instead of how much and how many as done by quantitative. It asks open-ended questions requiring deeper and insightful explanations to form themes and patterns for interpretation to understand issues that cannot be quantified. (Tenny et al, 2017). Qualitative research employs many techniques such as focus group discussion, biography, case study, content analysis, interviews among others. For the purpose of this study, interviews and content analysis will be used to gather and analyze data. An Interview is a qualitative method of collecting data by asking questions. Interviews involve an interviewer (s) and an interviewee (s) where the interviewer asks the interviewee question in other to get an in-depth understanding of the phenomena. Interviews according to Tenny et al, 2017, is used to gather data on sensitive topics and topics in need of an in-depth exploration.

Interviews can be structured, unstructured, and semi-structured. This study employed semi-structured interviews and they are a blend of both structured and unstructured interviews. Semi-structured interview questions are open-ended which allows for flexibility.

3.2. Research Design

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2002) define ‘research design as the design which is concerned with how social reality or phenomenon’ can be studied and Kothari (2004) argues that ‘research design is the conceptual structure within which research is conducted; it constitutes the blue print for the collection, measurement and analysis of data.’ In this study, an exploratory design was employed. Exploratory research is any research that is done to investigate a problem that has not been clearly defined. This research is done to gain insight and better understanding of an already existing issue or problem that has not been effectively studied and defined. It does not provide a conclusive result. Exploratory research is undertaken when there is limited knowledge about a phenomenon and when the research problem has not yet been clearly defined. As Saunders et al. (2007) note, it is conducted “when enough is not known about a phenomenon and a problem that has not been clearly defined.” This type of research does not aim to provide definitive answers but instead “explores the research topic with varying levels of depth” (Brown, 2006). Even in such preliminary studies, exploratory research can “form the basis for more conclusive research and determine the initial research design, sampling methodology and data collection method” (Singh, 2007).

3.3. Area of Study

Study area are interdisciplinary fields of research and scholarship pertaining to particular geographical, national/federal, or cultural regions, specific sector, time period, virtual space, and cultural context. This study aims at exploring and understanding how the Lebanese embassy make use of digital public relations strategies and the brand image the practice create in the mind of Ghanaians about the embassy or the perception Ghanaians have about the embassy. The study area includes the Lebanese Embassy in Ghana and the digital and social media platforms of the embassy. The Lebanese Embassy in Ghana is the consular and diplomatic representation of the Lebanon Republic and the Lebanese community in Ghana. The embassy is in charge of all the Lebanese diplomatic missions in the Ghana. The Embassy is located at F864/1 off Cantonments. The Lebanese embassy has Facebook, and Instagram social media accounts.

The Lebanese embassy in Ghana was chosen for this study because it represents the Lebanese community in Ghana and are an independent diplomatic body in Ghana.

3.4 Target Population

According to Dalowar et al (2023), target population is the group of individuals that the researcher needs to study, is interested in and can reach. For this study, the researcher selected the Lebanese embassy because the embassy is the only diplomatic mission in Ghana. It is the umbrella body of the Lebanese community in Ghana and represent the people of Lebanon both in Ghana and in the Lebanon. The Lebanese embassy is located with the study Area which is in the Greater Region of Ghana (Accra). Three communication officers and or PROs of the embassy are selected for an interview section to gain more depth and insight on the digital public relations the embassy practices and the strategies they deploy to communicate and build the image of the embassy in the Ghanaian community. They are selected because they create, coordinate and execute the communication plan of the embassy. They come up with strategies and tactics that build the brand image of the embassy. The communication officers and PROs are in charge of building the image of the embassy hence they have the knowledge about the topic and are in the best position to provide more insight about the topic under study. Facebook, and Instagram are the main social media platforms that the embassy operates and communicate with Ghana public. In today's digital era, the social media image of an organization represents the brand image of the organization. Institutions are able to communicate directly with a mass audience and attract massive eye balls on social media. The Lebanese embassy is the face and body that represent the Lebanese community in Ghana and the diplomatic relationship between Ghana and Lebanon. The embassy through their social media platforms is able to communicate with the Ghanaian public. Social media allows for interaction between an account owner and their audience; hence the Ghanaian community is able to interact and share their opinions and perceptions about the embassy on these platforms. The Facebook, and Instagram social media platforms are selected for this study because Ghanaians are able to voice their perception and opinions about the Lebanon community in Ghana there. The social media platforms are selected because doing a content analysis on those platforms will help know the perception of Ghanaians about the embassy, Lebanon and the Lebanese community in Ghana hence knowing the kind of image the Ghanaian public have about the Lebanese community in Ghana.

3.5. Sampling Procedure

This study employed purposive sampling technique to select the target participants of this study. Purposive sampling was used to select the communication officers and or PROs and Facebook, and Instagram social media platforms of the Lebanese Embassy because of their knowledge and expertise in the research topic and how much they can contribute to get rich data and information to meet the objectives of the study.

Mugenda (2011) observes that ‘purposive sampling method is a technique that makes it possible for an investigator to study cases with required information’. The subjects and social media platforms are hand-picked for the sole reason that they have the required characteristics to provide the adequate data needed for this study.

3.6 Data Source

Data source is the location where data that is being used for a research study originates from.

In this study, data will be obtained from two communication officers and or PROs of the staffs of the Lebanese embassy specifically the head of communications and their assistant head and also, actions, responses and reactions of Ghanaians on the Facebook and Instagrams pages of the Lebanese Embassy in Ghana. A semi-structured interview was conducted with the head and assistant head of communications of the department of communication of the Lebanese embassy in Ghana. Also, a content analysis was conducted on the Facebook, and Instagram social media platforms of the Embassy to gather adequate data to analyze and understand the perception of Ghanaians about the Lebanese community and embassy in Ghana. The interview section with the communication officers will be recorded with the permission of the officers and transcribed for easy analysis and understanding.

3.7 Data Collection Method and Instrument

In line with the University of Media Arts and Communication - Ghana Institute of Journalism’s (UniMAC – IJ) regulations on ethical research, the researcher obtained ethical clearance from the Directorate of Research, Innovation and Development. Following that, introductory letters were obtained from the Academic Affairs Directorate of the Institute in imploring respondents from the communication department of the Lebanese Embassy in Ghana to participate in the study. Invitations were extended to the embassy’s staffs through

introductory letters to volunteer to partake in semi-structured interviews. The researcher arranged a meeting with the staffs of the embassy to brief them on the nature of the study and the specific assistance the researcher needs to complete the study. The data for the study was collected using both semi-structured interview guide and content analysis. The semi-structured interview guide allowed participants to submit their own answers to the questions in order to meet the research's objectives. The participants who were selected for the interview were interviewed to get a better insight and information of the research topic under study. The key informants were assured that their responses would only be used for academic purpose. The audio recordings of the interviews were later transcribed for data analysis. The interview guide was the main research instrument that was used to gather data for this study. An interview guide was designed and administered as a means of obtaining information from respondents in semi-structured interviews. The interviews took the form of interaction in which the researchers asked questions and the participants provided in-depth information. The interview guide was used to gather data pertaining to the digital public relations and communication strategies the Lebanese embassy in Ghana is using to build their public image and the image they are building for themselves. Content Analysis was used to gather data pertaining to the perception Ghanaians have about the Lebanese embassy in Ghana. A content analysis guide was used to analyze Ghanaians reactions on the Facebook, and Instagram pages of the Lebanese embassy in Ghana to understand their perception of the Ghana.

3.8 Data Analysis

The research employed qualitative tools and techniques in gathering and analyzing data from the field for easy presentation of the findings. The data for this research was derived essentially by the use of interview guides from two staff members from the communication department of the Lebanese Embassy in Ghana and the reactions and responses from Ghanaians on the Facebook and Instagram platforms of the Lebanese Embassy. The analysis was done using qualitative techniques. The texts were read repeatedly for familiarization, then organized and categorized into themes for presentation.

3.9 Ethical Issues

Research ethics is generally concerned with the moral conduct of knowledge seeking. It emphasizes that it should be carried out in accordance with the right and not wrong principles. The right and wrong principles, which mean morality, is defined as a set of moral values that inform people what they should and shouldn't do or be. According to Bryman

(2008), “Research should be designed, reviewed and undertaken in a way that ensures integrity and quality.” In this study, an introductory letter was acquired from the Academic Affairs Directorate of the UniMAC- IJ to seek institutional permission from the embassy. They were well informed about the purpose and intended uses of the investigation. Both times. Anonymity was ensured in that identities of participants were kept confidential and no personal information about participants was made available in the study. Additionally, the participants were identified with codes. All sources cited were also acknowledged by means of complete referencing both in-text and at the end. According to Hennink and Bailey (2020), informed consent, anonymity, confidentiality and all ethic adherence in research helps minimize harm, protect participants and manage the gathered data. This research adhered to all ethical issues governing research studies. The interview sections were recorded and the participants were mad aware and known that the interview section is been recorded. The recording took place with the permission of the participants. Finally, the entire study was conducted in conformity to the ethical clearance procedures of UniMAC-IJ. The researchers applied for, and received ethical clearance before data collection.

3.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter contains the method that was used to gather data, how the data was analyzed, the participants for the research and how they were selected and then all the ethical issues that were considered. The research employed qualitative research method whereby semi-structured interviews and content analysis were used to gather data. After gathering the data, the recorded audios were transcribed and the data was analyzed using thematic analysis. The research participants were selected using purposive participant selection approach for the research. The identity, anonymity, confidentiality, and informed consent of all the participants were fully implemented before and after the data was gathered.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from the content analysis of the Lebanese Embassy in Ghana's digital public relations (PR) strategies. It also incorporates insights from the interview responses of participant A, a resource person at the Lebanese Embassy. The analysis is structured according to the study's objectives: (1) to examine the digital PR communication strategies deployed by the Lebanese embassy in Ghana, (2) to ascertain the Ghanaian public's perception of Lebanon due to these strategies, and (3) to assess the brand image of the Lebanese embassy via their digital PR practices. The analysis is framed within the Excellence Theory and Agenda-Setting Theory to provide a theoretical framework for understanding the embassy's communication strategies.

4.1 Background to the Lebanese Embassy's Digital PR Strategies

The Lebanese Embassy in Ghana has actively engaged in digital PR to shape its brand image, promote cultural diplomacy, and foster positive diplomatic relations between Lebanon and Ghana. The embassy has leveraged social media platforms, primarily Facebook and Instagram, to communicate its activities, share updates, and interact with the Ghanaian public.

Historically, Lebanon has maintained a strong presence in Ghana through its business community, cultural ties, and diplomatic efforts. The embassy's digital PR strategies align with Lebanon's broader diplomatic agenda of fostering goodwill and strengthening bilateral relations.

The Embassy's digital PR campaigns encompass various initiatives, including cultural events, scholarship programs, diplomatic engagements, and community outreach activities. The Excellence Theory of PR suggests that effective PR strategies should be two-way and symmetrical, fostering dialogue and engagement with stakeholders (Grunig & Grunig, 2008). In contrast, the Agenda-Setting Theory highlights how institutions influence public discourse by prioritizing specific narratives (McCombs, 2004). The Lebanese Embassy's PR efforts reflect elements of both theories, though gaps exist in audience interaction and crisis communication.

4.1.1 The Digital PR Strategy of the Lebanese Embassy

The Lebanese Embassy's digital PR strategy seeks to highlight and celebrate Lebanon's cultural and diplomatic presence in Ghana through a series of strategic communication initiatives. This approach emphasizes Lebanon's commitment to fostering international relations and cultural exchange while enhancing the visibility of Lebanese contributions to Ghana's socio-economic landscape. Through digital campaigns and online engagement, the embassy aims to position itself as a bridge between the two nations, promoting mutual understanding and collaboration (Grunig & Grunig, 2008).

4.1.2 Social Media Engagement and Messaging

The embassy utilizes social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram for its PR efforts. Excellence Theory suggests that PR efforts should facilitate interactive communication; however, real-time audience interaction remains limited (Grunig & Grunig, 2008). Messaging is primarily centered on diplomatic relations, cultural promotions, and community engagements, framing Lebanon as a positive and influential entity in Ghana (McCombs, 2004).

4.2 Content Analysis of Facebook and Instagram

The findings from the content analysis of Facebook and Instagram posts by the Lebanese Embassy in Ghana are categorized into key themes to understand how digital PR strategies are used to shape the embassy's brand image and public perception. The table below presents the key themes identified from the content analysis.

Combined Facebook and Instagram Content Analysis

TABLE 1

INSTAGRAM CONTENT ANALYSIS

SOURCE	THEME	SUBCATEGORY	FOCUS AREA	DATA
Instagram	Perceptions of the Lebanese Community	Cultural Representation	Lebanese culture, traditions, and heritage.	Post of Lebanese Independence Day celebration with music, dance, and portrayal of

				<p>traditional wear. #lebaneseindependence day. “Ghana at QATAR EXPO with the Lebanese Students of Accra Community School” showcases dance, music, and the national flag. “On the Occasion of Saint Maroun Day The Lebanese Embassy will be closed on Friday 09/02/2024. Happy Saint Maroun Day.” #stmarouchurchaccra</p>
		Community Engagement	Lebanese community events and collaborations with Ghanaians	<p>The Lebanese Community in Ghana awarded 12 UG Law students scholarships.</p> <p>The Lebanese Community attends the Accra Reparations Conference 2023. Lebanese Ambassador meets with the Foreign Affairs Minister Hon. Shirly Ayorko Botchwey to discuss bilateral and regional</p>

				issues.
		Sentiment Analysis	Comments and feedback from Ghanaians about Lebanon and its community	Florence_75 'Thank you for your support,' Lebanese Ambassador attends Efua's Sing - A - Thon. Prince David Osei - 'Happy Independence Day Lebanon.'

SOURCE	THEME	SUBCATEGORY	FOCUS AREA	DATA
Instagram	Digital Communication Strategies	Content Style and Tone	Nature of Messaging (formal, engaging, educational)	Educational content informing the public about the Embassy's diplomatic works, collaborations and activities. The Embassy uses formal, reserved and neutral tone in diplomatic posts. Informal, engaging and modern tone are used in informal content. Hashtags are majorly used instead of write-up captions. The contents are visually focused.
		Visual Branding	The use of visuals such as photos, videos, images	The contents posted are visuals with photos dominating and videos covering the remaining contents. The face of the Ambassador is majorly presented in the majority of the posts.

		Frequency and consistency	Regularity of post and updates	Posts are made regularly with daily posts of new and different content dominating and the longest maximum post interval is three days.
		Audience Targeting	Content directed at specific demographics	

SOURCE	THEME	SUBCATEGORY	FOCUS AREA	DATA
Instagram	Public Engagement and Feedback	Engagement Metrics	Likes, shares, comments and other user interactions	With 2,418 followers, the likes are averagely low. The height of a post is 1,182 and 34 comments from a Ghana National Activity (Efua Aduonu Sing-A-Thon) Lebanese Independence day post had 205 likes and 4 comments. The likes are averagely high compared to comments. The heights comments are 4 and the lowest 1 with lots of posts not having any comments. The engagement is averagely low against the number of followers.
		Interaction Quality	The embassy's response to comments, queries and	The Embassy has not responded to any of the comments on all the posts. The Comments from the

			criticism	public are mostly emojis and appreciations. They do not often entail queries. There are a few criticisms about Ghanaians experiences in Lebanon but there is no response from the embassy.
		Collaborative Initiatives	Campaigns encouraging public participation	The posts are informative and educational, telling the public about the diplomatic work the embassy is doing. There are posts about the ambassador's participation in activities such as the UN peacekeeping congress, and the Green Ghana initiative but there has not been an explicit post encouraging Ghanaians or the public to participate in any kind of initiative.

SOURCE	THEME	SUBCATEGORY	FOCUS AREA	DATA
Instagram	Representation of Ghana-Lebanon Relations	Bilateral Initiative	Posts Emphacising Ghana-Lebanon Cooperation	'Ambassador @maher_kheir had the p Foreign Affairs, Hon. Shirley Ayorko regional issues.' @ The Official La Diplomacy Network, Ghana in the pres Parliament Mr. Alban Sumana Kingsford
		Human Interest Stories	Lebanese Contributions in Ghana	Ambassador @maher_kheir received the discussed the program of the Lebanese S Year. #maher_kheir #unimac GRADUATE MINI-SEMINAR FOR THE LEBANI

				<p>BENEFICIARIES on OCTOBER, 2023 , NORTH CAMPUS, @1:30 pm #lebanesecommunity_ghana #embass . 10th Anniversary of the Lebanese Comm</p>
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SOURCE	THEME	SUBCATEGORY	FOCUS AREA	DATA
Instagram	Brand Image Indicators	Trust and Credibility	Evidence of Trust building Efforts	<p>The Lebanese Ambassador Maher Kheir was at the Akwaaba village to support Efua Asantewaa O Aduonum on her Sing-A-Thon as she attempted to break the Guinness World record for the longest singing marathon by an individual.</p> <p>The ambassador attends the Taste of Ghana cultural event at the state Forecourt</p>
		Message Clarity	Consistency and clarity in messaging	Messages are short, precise, and straight to the point with all the necessary information being mentioned and stated.
		Crisis Communication	Handling of sensitive issues or crisis	<p>There are no sensitive issues and crises addressed on the page within the time duration.</p> <p>However, there's a video in memory of the explosion of the harbor of Beirut.</p>

SOURCE	THEME	SUBCATEGORY	FOCUS AREA	DATA
Instagram	Cross Cultural Promotion	Cultural Exchange Activities	Activities showcasing cultural diplomacy	The Lebanese ambassador attends the Taste of Ghana event. Congratulatory video to Miss Grand Ghana 2023. The Ambassador on behalf of the diplomatic corps extends condolence messages to the King, chiefs, and people of the Ga state. The Lebanese embassy celebrates the Independence Day of Lebanon with various cultural activities, eg, Lebanon music and dance.
		Inclusivity in Messaging	Representation of diverse stakeholders	The Lebanese Ambassador at the 10 th anniversary celebration of Grace Chorale International. Accra Community School in collaboration with The Lebanese embassy hosts a cultural fusion festival at Expo Doha 2023. Ghana at Qatar EXPO with the Lebanese Students of Accra

SOURCE	THEME	SUBCATEGORY	FOCUS AREA	DATA
Instagram	Technology use and	Platform Variety	Utilization of various and	The embassy uses various platforms such as Instagram

	Accessibility		multiple platforms	and Facebook to communicate with the Ghanaian public, with various and diverse content on the platforms
		Content Accessibility	Language diversity and mobile-friendliness of the content	The posts on Instagram are mostly in English. There is the use of Arabic language with a translation option under the write-up. The Instagram page is easily accessible allowing anyone with an app to navigate the Embassy's handle.

TABLE 2

FACEBOOK CONTENT ANALYSIS

SOURCE	THEME	SUBCATEGORY	FOCUS AREA	DATA
Facebook	Perception of the Lebanese community	Cultural Representation	Lebanese culture, traditions, and heritage.	<p>Lebanese Independence day celebration, post of Lebanon flag cakes, music and dance. #LebaneseIndependenceDay, #Lebanesecommunity_Ghana.</p> <p>The Embassy shares beautiful moments of the Lebanese Students of</p>

				<p>Accra Community School celebrating the QATAR EXPO. Showcasing dance, music, traditional wear.</p> <p>The embassy celebrates st. Maroun's day. #stmarouchurch</p> <p>The embassy celebrates the anniversary of the martyrdom of the former prime minister of Rafiq Al-Hariri and his companions, the righteous, by going on a holiday.</p>
		Community Engagement	Lebanese community events and collaborations with Ghanaians	<p>The embassy celebrates the 10th anniversary of the Lebanese community scholarship programs. #lebanesecommunityghana, #embassyoflebanonghana</p> <p>The Lebanese community in Ghana award scholarship to 12 UG Law students</p>

				<p>The Lebanese Ambassador Maher Kheir supports Afua Asantewaa O Aduonum on her sing - A - Thon as she attempts to break the Guinness world record for the longest singing marathon by an individual. Go Afua! Go Gh.</p> <p>The Lebanese ambassador and community celebrate dance, music, and culture at the Taste of Ghana occasion.</p> <p>The Ambassador attends the state funeral of Her Excellency Theresa Aba Kuffour, Former First Lady.</p>
		Sentiment Analysis	Comments and feedback from Ghanaians about Lebanon and its community	Abdul Rashid Korsinah sent a thumbs up and clapping emoji in response to the post on the Lebanese community awarding scholarship to 12 UG Law students

				<p>Torgbui Fiazorli II posted on the Ambassador's award receival post and he said 'Please encourage your country men in Ghana with businesses to pay their employees living wages but not 'death wages'</p> <p>Most Lebanese businesses are known to pay their employees very low wages and sometimes mistreat their employees and you know that's not good for employee and employer relationship.</p> <p>Your employees must survive to work for you, when your businesses grow/expand that must reflect in the life of your employees but in Ghana the story is different.</p> <p>The Lebanese Embassy must take this up and do something about it, don't wait for our government to take the initiative because they are useless, let's your</p>
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				<p>conscience guide you.</p> <p>Long Live Lebanon!</p> <p>Long live the Lebanese people!!'</p> <p>Christopher Anu - Congratulations your excellency</p> <p>Maxwell Tufour - Great, I love Lebanon already.</p> <p>Christophe Tsikata - This is beautiful</p> <p>Manuel Agarsor - Happy Independence Day</p>
SOURCE	THEME	SUBCATEGORY	AREA OF FOCUS	DATA
Facebook	Digital Communicat	Content Style and	Nature of Messaging	Educational content informing the public about

	ion Strategies	Tone	(formal, engaging, educational)	<p>the Embassy’s diplomatic works, collaborations and activities. The Embassy uses a formal, reserved and neutral tone in diplomatic posts. Informal, engaging and modern tone are used in informal content. Hashtags are majorly used instead of write-up captions. The contents are visually focused.</p> <p>Some of the captions are written in capital letters.</p>
		Visual Branding	The use of visuals such as photos, videos, images	The contents posted are visuals with photos dominating and videos covering the remaining contents. The face of the Ambassador is majorly presented in the majority of the posts
		Frequency and consistency	Regularity of post and updates	Posts are made regularly with daily posts of new and different content dominating and the longest maximum post interval is three days

		Audience Targeting	Content directed at specific demographics	The content are for the Ghanaian public, Lebanese community, other diplomatic bodies, and the general public
SOURCES	THEME	SUBCATEGORY	FOCUS AREA	DATA
Facebook	Public Engagement and Feedback	Engagement Metrics	Likes, shares, comments and other user interactions	With 12k followers, the engagement on the platform is very low. The highest like is 1.6k with 82 comments and 84 shares on the Afua's Sing-A-Thon post. The remaining posts have an averagely low engagement, second highest comment is 58, 32 comments and 12 shares. Majority of the post have teen number of likes and 0 comments and shares
		Interaction Quality	The embassy's response to comments, queries and criticism	The embassy has not replied to any negative comments on any of the posts. They barely reply to any of the comments under each post. Most of the comments are

				congratulation messages on post with a few emojis.
		Collaborative Initiatives	Campaigns encouraging public participation	The posts are informative and educational, telling the public about the diplomatic work the embassy is doing. There are posts about the ambassador's participation in activities such as the UN peacekeeping congress, and the Green Ghana initiative but there has not been an explicit post encouraging Ghanaians or the public to participate in any kind of initiative.
SOURCE	THEME	SUBCATEGORY	FOCUS AREA	DATA
Facebook	Representation of Ghana-Lebanon Relations	Bilateral Initiative	Posts Emphasizing Ghana-Lebanon Cooperation	The Lebanese ambassador attends the the commissioning ceremony of the Foreign Service institute building
		Human Interest	Lebanese	The Lebanese embassy

		Stories	Contributions in Ghana	<p>support some Ghanaian students with scholarships</p> <p>The ambassador receive outstanding ambassador award</p> <p>The ambassador pay condolence to the Ga royal family for their lost of Ga Mannye, Queen mother of the Ga state</p>
SOURCE	THEME	SUBCATEGORY	FOCUS AREA	DATA
Facebook	Brand Image Indicators	Trust and Credibility	Evidence of Trust building Efforts	<p>The ambassador was the only ambassador to visit Akwaaba Village to support Afua's Sing - A - Thon arathone.</p> <p>The ambassador received a delegation from the Commonwealth Youth Peace Ambassadors Network to discuss the role of young people in</p>

				<p>peace building ahead of the upcoming CYPAN Buddypack in January 2024.</p> <p>The ambassador attends Taste of Ghana event</p>
		Crisis Communication	Handling of sensitive issues or crisis	There are no sensitive issues and crises addressed on the page within the time duration.
SOURCE	THEME	SUBCATEGORY	FOCUS AREA	DATA
Facebook	Cross Cultural Promotion	Cultural Exchange Activities	Activities showcasing cultural diplomacy	<p>The Lebanese ambassador attends the Taste of Ghana event.</p> <p>The embassy sends congratulations to Miss Grand Ghana 2023.</p> <p>The Ambassador on behalf of the diplomatic corps extends condolence messages to the King, chiefs, and people of the</p>

				<p>Ga state.</p> <p>The Lebanese embassy celebrates the Independence Day of Lebanon with various cultural activities, eg, Lebanon music and dance.</p>
		Inclusivity in Messaging	Representation of diverse stakeholders	<p>The Lebanese Ambassador at the 10th anniversary celebration of Grace Chorale International.</p> <p>Accra Community School in collaboration with The Lebanese embassy hosts a cultural fusion festival at Expo Doha 2023. Ghana at Qatar EXPO with the Lebanese Students of Accra</p>
SOURCE	THEME	SUBCATEGORY	FOCUS AREA	DATA
Facebook	Technology use and	Platform Variety	Utilization of	The embassy uses various platforms such as

	Accessibility		various and multiple platforms	<p>Facebook and Instagram to communicate with the Ghanaian public, with various and diverse content on the platforms</p> <p>The posts on Facebook are mostly in English. There is the use of Arabic language with a translation option under the write-up. The Facebook page is easily accessible allowing anyone with an app to navigate the Embassy's handle</p>
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4.2.1 Content Analysis

4.2.1.1 Cultural Representation

The embassy's posts frequently highlight Lebanese cultural events, national celebrations, and traditional heritage. Posts on Instagram and Facebook often feature visually engaging images and videos. This strategy aligns with the embassy's goal of promoting Lebanese heritage in Ghana. However, while these efforts are commendable, they lack an interactive element that

could further engage audiences. The absence of user participation in cultural content limits deeper engagement and shared cultural appreciation (Owusu and Agyei, 2019).

4.2.1.2 Community Engagement

Content related to community engagement focuses on scholarships awarded to Ghanaian students, Lebanese community contributions to Ghana, and collaborative events with local institutions. These initiatives enhance bilateral relations but lack direct engagement with the audience. While the embassy provides information on these initiatives, there is little evidence of real-time interactions or feedback mechanisms that allow beneficiaries to share their experiences. Without active participation from the public, the impact of these initiatives may not be fully realized (Boateng & Amankwah, 2019; Mensah, 2020). The limited response to community engagement content suggests that audiences may not feel personally involved in the embassy's efforts.

4.2.1.3 Sentiment Analysis

Public sentiment, as observed through Facebook and Instagram comments and reactions, is generally positive regarding cultural exchange and scholarships. However, some comments reflect skepticism about the inclusivity of Lebanese-Ghanaian relations. The embassy does not actively respond to public inquiries, reducing potential engagement. As a result, some public concerns remain unaddressed, which may impact the perception of the embassy's approachability. The lack of response to certain sentiments in online discussions creates a gap in communication between the embassy and its audience (Ahiabenu, 2021).

4.2.1.4 Digital Communication Strategies

The communication strategy the embassy adopts is an informative and formal communication style. Posts are structured professionally but lack interactive elements such as Q&A sessions or live discussions. While the content is well-organized, it does not actively encourage audience participation or two-way dialogue. The absence of interactive content may contribute to lower engagement rates despite a strong digital presence (Osei & Tufuor, 2018; Amoako and Frimpong, 2021). Without more dynamic communication strategies, the embassy's social media efforts may not fully maximize its outreach potential.

4.2.1.5 Public Engagement and Feedback

Engagement levels vary across platforms, with Instagram showing high interaction compared to Facebook. However, comment sections often remain unanswered, indicating a lack of two-way communication, limiting the effectiveness of audience relationship-building. This absence of real-time interaction reduces opportunities for fostering meaningful connections with the public. The embassy's passive approach to audience engagement may lead to missed opportunities for strengthening diplomatic relationships (Nyarko, 2020). A more responsive engagement model could contribute to better public perception and trust (Asante and Opoku 2017).

4.2.1.6 Bilateral Relations

A significant portion of the embassy's content showcases diplomatic relations, including meetings with Ghanaian officials and collaborative initiatives. These efforts strengthen the embassy's credibility but do not actively involve public discourse or engagement. Posts mostly focus on formal engagements without offering insights into the impact of these diplomatic efforts. The lack of relatable content may make it difficult for the general public to connect with the embassy's work (Adjaye & Opoku, 2021). Without a more engaging approach, the embassy's diplomatic achievements may not resonate as strongly with its online audience.

4.2.1.7 Brand Image Indicators

The embassy's digital presence portrays a professional and credible image. However, its crisis communication strategy is weak, with limited responses to negative comments or concerns raised by the public. The absence of a structured approach to handling criticism may affect public trust in the institution. In times of controversy or misinformation, the lack of immediate clarification could lead to misinterpretations (Gyasi, 2017; Quaye and Kusi, 2019). Without a clear and consistent strategy for managing its brand image, the embassy's credibility may be challenged in public discourse.

4.2.2 Participant 'A' Interview Response

4.2.2.1 Cultural Representation

Participant A emphasized that cultural diplomacy plays a significant role in fostering Ghana-Lebanon relations. By promoting Lebanese traditions, the embassy aims to build mutual respect and appreciation between the two nations. Through cultural events, exhibitions, and educational programs, the embassy seeks to create a platform for cross-cultural exchange. This approach not only strengthens diplomatic ties but also helps the Ghanaian public develop a deeper understanding of Lebanese heritage. As a result, cultural representation becomes a key element in the embassy's efforts to enhance bilateral relations.

“Our cultural diplomacy efforts aim to strengthen the bond between Lebanon and Ghana. By showcasing Lebanese heritage, we foster mutual respect and understanding.”

4.2.2.2 Community Engagement

The embassy recognizes education as a cornerstone of its diplomatic efforts, highlighting the importance of investing in knowledge-sharing initiatives. Scholarships and institutional collaborations are designed to support Ghanaian students and contribute to the country's educational development. These initiatives create opportunities for academic exchange, fostering long-term relationships between Ghana and Lebanon. Additionally, they position the Lebanese embassy as an active stakeholder in Ghana's educational sector, enhancing its image as a development partner. By prioritizing educational engagement, the embassy demonstrates a commitment to social impact beyond traditional diplomacy.

“Education is at the heart of our partnership with Ghana. Scholarships and collaborations enable a brighter future for Ghanaian students.”

4.2.2.3 Sentiment Analysis

The embassy actively monitors public feedback to enhance its communication strategies and address concerns raised by the Ghanaian audience. By analyzing social media engagement and public discourse, the embassy can assess how its messaging is perceived. This feedback allows for the refinement of diplomatic communication, ensuring that the embassy's initiatives align with public sentiment. Additionally, addressing concerns promptly helps in building trust and improving relationships with key stakeholders. Effective sentiment analysis, therefore, serves as a tool for strengthening the embassy's digital public relations strategy.

“Public perception is crucial. We monitor feedback and seek ways to enhance our engagement strategies.”

4.2.2.4 Digital Communication Strategies

Participant A acknowledged the need for improved digital engagement strategies to enhance the embassy's outreach and public interaction. Despite existing efforts, digital platforms are not fully optimized to facilitate meaningful conversations with the Ghanaian audience. The embassy is working on expanding its online presence by adopting more interactive content formats such as live discussions and Q&A sessions. Enhancing digital communication is essential for building stronger connections with the public and ensuring transparency in diplomatic activities. By implementing more dynamic digital strategies, the embassy aims to improve its overall engagement with Ghanaians.

“We are working on expanding our online presence and making interactions more dynamic.”

4.2.2.5 Public Engagement and Feedback

The embassy values public feedback and is actively exploring ways to create a more interactive and responsive online presence. Current engagement levels indicate that while content receives attention, two-way communication remains limited. Responding to public inquiries and encouraging discussions can enhance the effectiveness of digital diplomacy. Establishing a dedicated team to manage social media interactions and host live discussions could strengthen audience engagement. By fostering open dialogue, the embassy can build stronger relationships with the Ghanaian public and improve its overall digital PR efforts.

“We appreciate the feedback we receive and are considering more interactive approaches.”

4.2.2.6 Bilateral Relations

Strengthening diplomatic ties with Ghana remains a primary focus of the embassy's efforts. This is achieved through cultural, economic, and educational collaborations that reinforce mutual interests. The embassy continuously seeks new opportunities to enhance cooperation and promote sustainable partnerships. By engaging in joint initiatives, both countries can benefit from shared knowledge and economic growth. These diplomatic efforts highlight the embassy's commitment to fostering a long-term relationship with Ghana.

“Diplomatic ties with Ghana remain a top priority, and we continuously seek ways to deepen collaboration.”

4.2.2.7 Brand Image Indicators

The embassy prioritizes transparency and credibility in its communication with the Ghanaian public. Open and honest communication is essential for building trust and maintaining a positive diplomatic presence. By ensuring clarity in its messaging, the embassy aims to strengthen its reputation and foster goodwill. Public confidence in the embassy's activities is a key factor in shaping its brand image. As a result, the embassy remains committed to upholding transparency and reinforcing trust through its digital public relations strategies.

“Our goal is to maintain transparency and strengthen trust with our audience.”

4.3 Discussion of Findings with Research Objectives and Theories

This section integrates the findings from the content analysis and interview with participant A into the research objectives and theoretical frameworks. The discussion is structured according to the research objectives and is analyzed through the lens of the Excellence Theory and Agenda-Setting Theory.

4.3.1 Public Relations Communication Strategies of the Lebanese Embassy

The Lebanese Embassy's PR strategies focus on cultural diplomacy, community engagement, and bilateral relations. Excellence Theory advocates for symmetrical two-way communication, fostering interaction between an organization and its publics. However, the embassy's social media activity primarily consists of one-way communication, where information is disseminated but with limited audience engagement. While the embassy successfully shares updates, the absence of real-time engagement limits its effectiveness in fostering mutual understanding (Anani-Bossman & Mudzanani, 2023). Agenda-Setting Theory highlights how media emphasis on specific topics influences public perception (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). The embassy strategically promotes its cultural and educational initiatives, reinforcing a positive image. However, its minimal responsiveness to public inquiries may undermine its credibility and lessen its ability to control the narrative (Aryeetey, 2024).

4.3.2 Public Perception of Lebanon as Influenced by the Embassy's PR Strategies

Social media interactions indicate that public perception of Lebanon is generally positive but somewhat constrained in scope. Ghanaians recognize the embassy's contributions to education and cultural diplomacy, yet concerns persist about inclusivity and direct engagement. Excellence Theory underscores relationship-building in PR, but the embassy's digital communication approach leans more towards information-sharing rather than fostering

dialogue (Grunig et al., 2002). From an Agenda-Setting perspective, the embassy's emphasis on showcasing cultural and educational initiatives positions Lebanon favorably among Ghanaians. However, inadequate crisis communication and a lack of direct responses to public concerns create a gap that alternative narratives—such as concerns over Lebanese-Ghanaian relations—may fill (Sikanku, 2014).

4.3.3 Assessing the Embassy's Brand Image through Digital PR

The embassy's digital PR efforts construct a professional and credible brand image, particularly in cultural and diplomatic spheres. However, the absence of interactive engagement and crisis communication strategies weakens public trust. Excellence Theory posits that effective branding requires active two-way communication to build lasting relationships (Grunig et al., 2002). The embassy's current strategy lacks this crucial component, making it difficult to foster sustained public trust.

Agenda-Setting Theory also shapes brand perception. By frequently posting about cultural events, scholarships, and bilateral relations, the embassy controls the dominant narratives associated with Lebanon in Ghana. However, enhancing crisis communication could help mitigate potential negative perceptions arising from unaddressed concerns (Quaye & Kusi, 2019).

4.3.4 Cultural Representation in the Embassy's PR Strategy

The embassy's cultural representation is a core aspect of its PR strategy, as seen in its promotion of Lebanese traditions, festivals, and historical events. Excellence Theory supports cultural diplomacy as a tool for fostering mutual understanding (Grunig et al., 2002). However, the impact of these efforts remains limited due to the lack of audience engagement. Implementing interactive approaches—such as live Q&A sessions on cultural topics—could significantly enhance their effectiveness (Owusu & Agyei, 2019).

4.3.5 Community Engagement and Diplomatic Relations

The embassy strengthens diplomatic ties through scholarships and collaborations with Ghanaian institutions. These initiatives align with the Excellence Theory's principle of fostering goodwill and mutual benefit. However, the lack of real-time interaction on social media reduces the potential impact of these efforts. Agenda-Setting Theory suggests that while these initiatives positively position Lebanon, their effectiveness is constrained if the embassy does not actively engage in public discourse (McCombs & Shaw, 1972)

4.3.6 Digital Communication Strategies and Public Perception

The embassy's formal and professional communication style enhances credibility but limits engagement. Excellence Theory advocates for strategic two-way communication, yet the embassy's approach remains largely one-directional (Grunig et al., 2002). Incorporating user-generated content and real-time interactions could improve effectiveness. From an Agenda-Setting perspective, the embassy successfully highlights positive narratives but risks allowing counter-narratives to gain traction due to its limited responsiveness (Seib, 2013).

4.3.7 Enhancing Public Engagement for a Stronger Brand Image

To strengthen its brand image, the embassy should adopt a more interactive approach by responding to public inquiries and fostering dialogue. Excellence Theory emphasizes relationship-building, which the embassy has yet to fully integrate into its digital PR strategy (Grunig et al., 2002). Additionally, proactive crisis communication would enable the embassy to manage its narrative more effectively under the Agenda-Setting framework (Asante & Opoku, 2017).

4.3.8 Conclusion

The findings reveal that while the Lebanese Embassy in Ghana has effectively utilized digital platforms to promote its initiatives, significant gaps remain in audience engagement. Excellence Theory suggests that incorporating two-way communication would enhance relationship-building, while Agenda-Setting Theory underscores the need for proactive narrative management. To optimize its digital PR impact, the embassy should focus on interactive engagement, crisis communication, and direct public involvement

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of key findings from the study, draws conclusions based on these findings, and provides recommendations for improving the Lebanese Embassy in Ghana's digital public relations (PR) strategies. The study examined how the embassy's digital PR efforts shape public perception and influence its brand image, employing the Excellence Theory and Agenda-Setting Theory as theoretical frameworks.

5.2 Summary of Key Findings

The study analyzed the Lebanese Embassy's digital PR strategies using content analysis of Facebook and Instagram posts, supplemented by an interview with a resource person at the embassy. The study found that, the Lebanese Embassy actively employs social media platforms, particularly Facebook and Instagram, to disseminate information about its cultural and diplomatic activities. However, the embassy predominantly utilizes a one-way communication approach, limiting engagement with the Ghanaian public. The analysis revealed that public perception of Lebanon, as influenced by the embassy's digital PR, is generally positive, particularly regarding cultural and educational initiatives. However, concerns about inclusivity and lack of direct engagement with the public persist. The embassy maintains a professional and credible brand image through consistent digital PR efforts. However, its limited engagement with public comments and lack of crisis communication strategies weaken trust and transparency. While the embassy posts regularly and uses visually engaging content, audience interaction remains low. The Excellence Theory suggests that two-way communication is crucial for effective PR, yet the embassy's strategies fall short in fostering dialogue with its audience. The embassy strategically emphasizes cultural events, scholarships, and diplomatic engagements to shape public discourse. However, its lack of responsiveness to public feedback allows alternative narratives to emerge, which may affect its brand perception.

5.3 Conclusion

The study concludes that while the Lebanese Embassy in Ghana has made significant strides in using digital PR to promote Lebanon's image and strengthen bilateral relations, its approach remains largely informational rather than interactive. The findings indicate that the embassy's communication strategies align with Agenda-Setting Theory in influencing public narratives but fall short of Excellence Theory's emphasis on two-way engagement. To enhance its brand image and build stronger relationships with the Ghanaian public, the embassy must adopt a more interactive and responsive digital communication strategy.

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed to improve the effectiveness of the Lebanese Embassy's digital PR strategies: The embassy should enhance two-way communication by foster greater interaction and actively responding to comments, messages, and public inquiries on social media. Hosting live Q&A sessions and interactive discussions can improve audience. The embassy should develop a well structured crisis management strategy. A structured approach to crisis communication should be implemented to address public concerns and manage negative feedback effectively. This would enhance the embassy's credibility and transparency. The embassy should engage its audience by encouraging testimonials, stories, and content contributions from Ghanaian students who have benefited from scholarships and cultural exchange programs. This would personalize its PR efforts and make the Embassy more relatable. The Embassy should increase engagement through interactive features. Incorporating social media polls, quizzes, and contests could stimulate audience participation. Interactive storytelling, such as behind-the-scenes content from diplomatic events, can also create a stronger connection with the audience. The Embassy should also monitor and valuate public sentiment. Regular analysis of public sentiment using digital analytics tools would help the embassy tailor its communication strategies to better align with audience expectations. Tracking engagement trends can inform improvements in content strategy.

5.4 Recommendation for Future Research

While this study provides valuable insights into the Lebanese Embassy's digital PR strategies, further research could explore additional aspects, such as conducting comparative studies with other embassies to assess best practices in digital PR. Also quantitative analysis of audience engagement metrics to supplement qualitative findings. Other studies could

Investigate the impact of specific PR campaigns on Ghanaian perceptions of Lebanon. Digital public relations plays a crucial role in shaping diplomatic relationships and brand perception. By embracing interactive communication strategies and strengthening audience engagement, the Lebanese Embassy in Ghana can enhance its effectiveness in fostering positive Ghana-Lebanon relations. The recommendations outlined in this chapter serve as a strategic guide for improving its digital PR approach and optimizing its influence in the digital space

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INTERVIEW GUIDE

Topic: Exploring the Effect of Digital Public Relations Practice on the Brand Image of the Lebanese Embassy in Ghana.

Interviewee: An expert at the Lebanese Embassy

Interviewer: Millicent Tiborimor

Duration: 1 hour

Semi-Structured Interview Questions.

BACKGROUND AND DIGITAL PUBLIC RELATIONS(PR) STRATEGY.

1. Can you briefly describe the mission and key objectives of the Lebanese Embassy in Ghana?

1. How would you describe the role of public relations in promoting Lebanon's image in Ghana?

2. What digital communication platforms does the Lebanese Embassy actively use for public relations purposes, and why those platforms?

3. How has the embassy's digital PR strategy evolved?

4. What are the key messages the Embassy aims to communicate through its digital platforms?

PUBLIC PERCEPTION AND BRAND IMAGE.

5. How would you describe the Ghanaian public's perception of Lebanon and the Lebanese community in Ghana?

6. What steps has the embassy taken to enhance its brand image through digital PR?

7. How do you assess the effectiveness of the embassy's digital PR efforts in shaping public opinion about Lebanon and the Lebanese community in Ghana?

8. Have you encountered any misconceptions about the Lebanese community that digital PR has helped to correct? If so, how?

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN DIGITAL PR.

9. What are the main challenges the Embassy faces in implementing digital PR strategies?

10. What strategies do you employ to engage Ghanaians effectively on digital platforms?
11. In your opinion, how does digital PR compare to traditional PR in enhancing the embassy's brand image?

RECOMMENDATIONS AND FUTURE OUTLOOK.

12. What plans does the embassy have for improving its digital PR strategies?
13. How do you think digital PR will evolve in the future for diplomatic missions?
14. In what ways can digital PR further strengthen Ghana-Lebanon relations?
15. Is there anything else you would like to share about the impact of digital PR on the Embassy's brand image?

CONTENT ANALYSIS GUIDE

1. Perception of the Lebanese community

- Cultural representation
- Community engagement
- Sentiment analysis

2. Digital Communication Strategy

- Content style and tone
- Visual branding
- Frequency and consistency
- Audience targeting

3. Public Engagement and Feedback

- Engagement metrics
- Interaction quality
- Collaborative initiatives

4. Representation of Ghana-Lebanon Relations

- Bilateral initiatives
- Human interest stories

5. Brand Image

- Trust and credibility

- Crisis communication

6. Cross-Cultural Promotion

- Cultural exchange activities

7. Technology Use and Accessibility

- Platform variety

TABLE 4.2.1 CONTENT ANALYSIS DETAILS

SOURCE	THEMES	KEY FINDINGS
Facebook & Instagram	Cultural Representation	Posts highlight Lebanese Independence Day, cultural events, and national celebrations like St. Maroun’s Day. Hashtags like #LebaneseIndependenceDay and #StMarounChurch are frequently used.
	Community Engagement	The embassy showcases Lebanese community events, including scholarship awards, participation in Ghanaian cultural festivals, and diplomatic engagements.
Facebook	Sentiment Analysis	Mixed reactions. Positive: Praise for scholarships and cultural initiatives. Negative: Criticism of Lebanese businesses regarding labor practices. Neutral: Greetings and emojis.
Instagram	Sentiment Analysis	Mostly positive, but fewer comments. Engagement includes appreciation posts and congratulatory messages. Comments are mostly short or emoji-based .
Facebook	Public Engagement & Feedback	Engagement is low relative to 12 K+ followers . The highest recorded engagement is 1.6K likes, 82 comments, and 84 shares (Afua’s Sing-A-Thon post). Many posts receive 0 comments . The embassy does not respond to comments.
Instagram	Public Engagement & Feedback	Low comment activity despite 2,418 followers. The highest post engagement recorded 1,182 likes but only 4 comments . Most interactions are likes rather than

		discussions. The embassy does not engage with comments.
Facebook & Instagram	Content Strategy	Posts are mainly educational and diplomatic, using a formal tone. Hashtags replace lengthy captions, and content is visually focused. Some captions use all capital letters.
	Visual Branding	Photos dominate embassy posts, with occasional videos. The Ambassador is prominently featured.
	Posting Frequency	Regular posting, with daily updates. The longest interval between posts is three days.
Facebook & Instagram	Ghana-Lebanon Relations	Highlights diplomatic meetings, bilateral discussions, and ambassadorial engagements.
	Human Interest Stories	Features scholarships, awards, and embassy support for cultural and humanitarian initiatives.
Facebook & Instagram	Brand Perception	The Ambassador actively participates in Ghanaian cultural events. Engagement with local communities reinforces credibility.
	Message Clarity	Posts are clear and concise, conveying key information effectively.
	Crisis Communication	No crisis-related content observed. The embassy does not address sensitive issues.
Facebook & Instagram	Cultural Exchange	The Embassy promotes cross-cultural collaborations, such as Ghanaian and Lebanese students participating in events like Expo Doha 2023.
	Inclusivity in Messaging	Posts reflect diverse stakeholders, including students, diplomats, and government officials.
Facebook & Instagram	Technology Use & Accessibility	Facebook and Instagram serve as the embassy's main digital platforms. Content is mostly in English, with Arabic translations available