

Effect of Publicity and Public Relations on Organizational Reputation in UAE: A Case Study on Social Media

Baghdad Ahmed Nahar Alshanag¹, Norhayati Rafida binti Abdul Rahim², Osama Kanaker³, Ahmed Abdul Malek⁴

^{1,2,3,4} Faculty of Leadership and Management, Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia, Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia

<p>Article history Submitted: 04 November 2023 Revised: 07 November 2023 Accepted: 11 November 2023</p> <p>Keywords: <i>Public relations, organizational reputation, audience engagement, publicity, UAE</i></p>	<p>Abstract This study aims to investigate the relationship between communication strategies and their impact on audience engagement and organisational reputation in the specific context of the United Arab Emirates (UAE). This study proposed that publicity and public relations affect positively the audience engagement and organizational reputation. The study also proposed audience engagement as a mediating variable. The population of the study included respondents from three states in UAE. Using a questionnaire, a total of 390 responses were collected. The data was analysed using Smart PLS 4. The findings showed that publicity and public relations affected positively the audience engagement and organizational reputation. Audience engagement affected positively the organizational reputation and mediated the effect of publicity and public relations on organizational reputation. This study offers significant contributions to media organizations in the UAE, enhancing communication theory and providing practical guidance. The findings of this study provide a solid basis for future research efforts, taking into account the specific context of the UAE.</p>
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1. Introduction

The rapid advancement of social media (SM) in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has significantly influenced the media environment, necessitating immediate study on the effects of SM on media organizations, audience engagement, and organizational reputation in this dynamic setting. SM has become a dominant force in the UAE, replacing conventional media sources as the main venue for news, information, and communication. SM has become an essential component of several facets of UAE society, including religion, culture, governance, education, and news dissemination [1]. The UAE has emerged as a prominent SM centre in the Middle East, boasting the greatest SM use and accessibility. A substantial portion of the population and Internet users in the country regularly engage on platforms such as Facebook [2]. In the digital era, media institutions, such as television networks, periodicals, newspapers, and news channels, have distinct difficulties and prospects. To maintain their competitiveness and protect their places in the national, regional, and worldwide media landscape, it is crucial for these organizations to efficiently handle their communications and campaigns using SM platforms [3]. Gaining a comprehensive understanding of the intricacies of SM use in this particular environment is crucial for media businesses to prosper.

SM refers to a range of internet platforms that allow users to establish public or semi-public profiles, interact with others, and distribute material [4]. Mass communication has been revolutionized by this influential medium, altering the methods by which people, groups, and organizations distribute and share information [5]. The phrase "social media" incorporates several platforms, including social networking sites and interactive elements like message boards [6]. Audience engagement encompasses more than mere viewership numbers; it serves as the bedrock for media enterprises to develop openness to information. Presently, within the realm of media, viewers are actively pursuing opportunities for engagement and active involvement in discourses. Insufficient involvement may impede a media organization's ability to compete [7]. It is essential to recognize the significance of digital platforms in influencing media reputation.

The idea of organizational reputation is crucial, especially for media firms. It demonstrates the perception of an organization, which is formed by considering its previous activities and anticipated future conduct. An organization's performance may be bolstered by a favourable reputation, which fosters trust among stakeholders [8]. Media companies must acknowledge the significance of reputation in their operations and the ways in which it may be impacted by activity on social media platforms. Although social media has become more important in the media landscape of the UAE, there is a notable lack of study on how media organizations in the UAE use social media for mass communication [9]. The

absence of thorough study impedes the comprehension of the long-term impact of social media on the reputation of media companies [10]. Moreover, a significant portion of the current study primarily examines individual enterprises or industries, rather than media entities. Therefore, it is important to conduct a more targeted inquiry within this particular context.

Media firms distinguish themselves from other businesses by adopting a distinct strategy to social media, since they function as providers of news and information rather than simply followers. This necessitates the creation of an original conceptual framework to comprehend how media companies may efficiently use social media to actively include their audience and improve their reputation. This study seeks to fill the current research void by examining the use of social media by media organizations in the UAE for the purpose of mass communication. It specifically concentrates on the influence of social media on audience engagement and the reputation of the organizations. It will provide essential knowledge on the most effective methods and management approaches for media firms in the digital age. Concisely, the rapid integration of social media in the UAE has revolutionized the media environment, necessitating media entities to comprehend the significance of social media in engaging with audiences and managing their reputation. This study aims to examine the effect of SM communication strategies on audience engagement and organizational reputation. The study also aims to examine the mediating role of audience engagement. The next section discusses the literature review, methodology, findings, discussion, implications and conclusion.

2. Literature Review

This section reviews the literature related to the variables of this study. The theoretical framework is discussed followed by a discussion of the variables of the study as well as the conceptual framework and hypotheses development.

2.1 Social Media in the UAE

UAE has become a leading example of using social media for government communication, specifically emphasizing the use of technology to improve public services [11]. The UAE government has implemented guidelines for using social media into official communication, resulting in many benefits, particularly for enterprises in the UAE [12]. The impact of technology and social media on the social change and political landscape of the UAE has received little scholarly attention, despite the focus on significant events such as the Arab Spring [13]. Social media has emerged as a more effective and engaging advertising medium, overtaking conventional channels such as television, billboards, newspapers, and magazines in terms of efficacy and audience engagement [14]. The survey respondents expressed the increasing significance of having a strong presence on social media for stakeholders in the hospitality and tourism industry, including airlines, hotels, travellers, and travel agents. The influence of privacy settings on social media platforms on UAE citizens' inclination to post trip images was highlighted as a significant issue [15].

With the increasing number of online social networking users in the UAE, social media marketing has significant advantages for the majority of organizations [16]. The level of use of social media marketing plays a vital role for firms in the UAE when considering its integration into their marketing operations, such as online advertising campaigns and gathering client feedback. The substantial engagement of Emirati citizens in social media activities, with a documented involvement rate of 98.98%, highlights the importance of this platform [17]. According to data, there has been a significant surge in the number of internet users in the UAE since 2020, indicating a noticeable expansion of online activity in the nation. YouTube is the leading social media site, with Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, and Tumblr following behind [18]. WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger are widely used chat applications in the UAE, with Skype and Snapchat also being popular despite some delays and differences in user demographics [19].

In the United Arab Emirates, social media has evolved from a method of connecting individuals to a crucial platform for companies to interact with their consumers [20]. Online platforms such as Facebook may bring together people who have same interests and motivate personal development [21]. Due to the changing global geopolitical landscape, Facebook networks have become more significant in molding and exerting influence on many elements of society [22].

2.2 Social Media Communication Strategies in the UAE

The relationship between communication tactics and business reputation is a subject of considerable fascination in the realm of organization and management study. The Internet and social media are acknowledged as significant instruments for constructing and overseeing corporation reputation [23]. Social media platforms provide several means of communication, including advertising, promotions, publicity, and public relations. Facebook's extensive adoption in the UAE has established it as a prominent communication tool, widely used in diverse industries, including government institutions. The UAE government has used social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and Instagram for many goals including exposure, marketing, expanding their audience, ensuring transparency, encouraging participation, and fostering interaction. The government's public relations activities are evaluated by analyzing several social media data, including the number of posts, comments, shares, likes, and tweets [24], [25].

Publicity is a kind of communication where an organization shares information with the general public, usually via various media outlets. It functions to enhance the prominence of a business and advertise its goods, services, creative works, and performances [26]. The stringent restrictions governing social media advertising in the UAE require marketers to exercise caution while developing content, hence creating opportunity for inventive and original strategies [27]. Public relations practitioners prioritize the development and upkeep of connections with the media, trade journals, and influential figures in order to enhance their professional relationships [28]. They use communication campaigns, issue news releases, participate in media contacts, conduct interviews, and assume spokesperson responsibilities to oversee and safeguard an organization's image and reputation [29].

The convergence of public relations and social media is increasingly important, given the fundamental role that social media platforms play in communication and reputation management [30]. Social media enables the establishment of connections with different individuals or groups and facilitates the dissemination of information in a deliberate and organized way [31]. Public relations is the practice of disseminating information to different groups of people in order to develop favourable opinions about a firm, its goods, and its activities [32]. PR practitioners operate in many environments, including public relations and marketing agencies, corporations, government entities, and non-governmental organizations [26]. The connection between communication strategies, corporate reputation, and the use of social media is an intricate and developing area in the realm of organization and management study. In the present digital era, the Internet and social media have brought forth new ways for companies to connect and handle their reputations. It is crucial for corporations and government institutions to comprehend these dynamics.

2.3 Audience Engagement

The involvement of the audience in the UAE is influenced by forward-thinking socioeconomic policies, cultural customs, education, and global affiliations, with social media playing a pivotal role. The UAE's media education programs provide opportunities to get degrees in several subjects relating to media, fostering active participation in the knowledge industry [33]. Audience engagement pertains to the active participation of event goers in order to achieve certain goals [34]. Media narratives are shaped by the level of audience involvement, and creators often customize material to suit certain target audiences [35]. Social media has fundamentally changed the way we define and evaluate involvement [36]. Various social media platforms possess distinct attributes that impact audience engagement [32]. Social media engagement include actions such as like, sharing, commenting, and the creation of user-generated content [37]. Engagement metrics like as likes, shares, and views are used to gauge the level of interaction and may serve as indicators for predicting consumer behaviour and brand reaction [38]. Comprehending social media engagement is essential for many domains such as marketing, media, and communications, given the ongoing evolution of the connection between social media, audience engagement, and business objectives.

2.4 Organizational reputation

Reputation is a complex and diverse notion that has gained significant interest in the field of management research. The organizational reputation, which is shaped by the actions and perceived behaviour of an organization, is of great importance to both internal and external stakeholders. The concept refers to the evaluation of an organization's reputation, which is influenced by its previous conduct, and these evaluations have an impact on the organization's interactions with its stakeholders [39]. The reputation of firms is very important as it has a significant influence on customer loyalty, staff recruitment, and overall performance. Efficiently handling one's reputation is of utmost importance, since it may be readily harmed by adverse exposure, particularly in the era of social media [40]. Reputation management may be difficult because there are many interpretations and implementations of reputation, which makes it tricky to handle effectively [41].

The government's use of social media to interact with residents in the UAE has great potential, since it is anticipated to enhance public services significantly. Nevertheless, it is essential for the government to improve public participation and fulfil their anticipations [42]. Customers generally use government social media platforms to get information on public services, and less often, to provide comments [42]. Establishing confidence in the administration and its use of feedback may need a significant amount of time [42]. The emergence of social media has intensified reputation risks by facilitating the dissemination of information and magnifying the influence of unfavourable feedback [43]. Reputation hazards might be from consumers, staff, or the firm itself [44]. In order to maintain their reputations, organizations must proficiently handle these risks [45].

Social media has a significant impact on an organization's reputation by allowing people to actively express their thoughts and share their experiences [46]. Companies relinquish authority over communication on social media, becoming vulnerable to reputation concerns [47]. In order to safeguard and oversee their reputation, firms must formulate efficient plans, handle problems in a distinctive manner, and establish seamless communication channels both from the top management to the lower levels and vice versa [48]. It is essential to establish contingency measures to tackle the rapid dissemination of internet viewpoints [49]. Frontline personnel, due to their proximity to consumers, provide valuable insights that are essential for managing reputation [50].

2.5 Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses Development

Based on the theories of Social Marketing Theory (SMT) and Development Communication Theory (DCT) as well as the review of the literature. This study proposes that publicity and public relations will have a positive effect on audience engagement and organizational reputation. In addition, the study proposed that audience engagement will have a positive effect on organizational reputation and mediate the effect of publicity and public relations on organizational reputation. Figure 1 shows the conceptual model of this study.

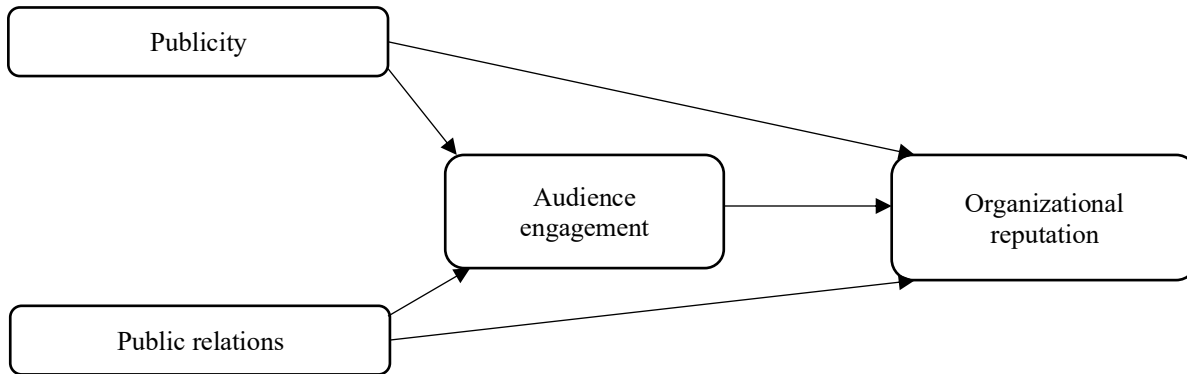


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

2.5.1 Publicity and Audience Engagement

Publicity refers to the systematic effort of informing the general public about an organization's goods, services, or objectives, often via various media channels [51]. A study conducted by [52] has shown that publicity has a beneficial impact on audience engagement. This is because it helps in effectively spreading knowledge from its original source. Research suggests that publicity has a substantial influence on the level of audience engagement in media organizations in the UAE. This finding is consistent with previous research conducted at both regional and worldwide levels [53]. Therefore, the following is hypothesized:

H1: Publicity has a positive impact on audience engagement.

2.5.2 Public Relations and Audience Engagement

Public relations include the strategic management of information exchange between a person or organization and the general public, with the aim of shaping public opinion [54]. Studies have shown that public relations have a beneficial effect on audience engagement by effectively sharing information between different parties, leading to a more involved audience. Public relations is anticipated to have a substantial impact on audience engagement in media organizations in the UAE, as supported by regional and worldwide research [26]. Therefore, the following is hypothesized:

H2: Public relations has a positive effect on audience engagement.

2.5.3 Publicity and Organizational Reputation

Publicity is a crucial aspect of marketing and promotion that involves raising awareness of a product, service, or organization among the general public [55]. Studies suggest that publicity has a positive impact on the reputation of organizations [56] [48] by enhancing awareness of the organization's products or services [57]. Thus, it is postulated that publicity has a substantial influence on the organizational reputation of media firms in the UAE. This association is confirmed by previous studies [49].

H3: Publicity has a positive effect on organizational reputation.

2.5.4 Public Relations and Organizational Reputation

Public relations is a deliberate and planned communication strategy that cultivates mutually advantageous connections between companies and their target audiences [58]. Studies indicate that public relations has a beneficial effect on the reputation of organizations [59] via improving customer connections [60]. Previous studies found positive association between public relations and organizational reputation [60], [61]. Thus, the following is hypothesized:

H4: Public relations have a positive impact on organizational reputation.

2.5.5 Audience Engagement and Organizational Reputation

Audience engagement, which involves intentionally transforming event attendees into active participants to achieve the objectives of both organizers and attendees, has a substantial impact on an organization's reputation [22]. Studies indicate

that audience engagement has a beneficial effect on the reputation of media companies [62] by improving employee happiness and brand perception [63]. Hence, it is anticipated that the engagement of the audience would have a substantial impact on the reputation of media firms in the UAE. Thus, the following is proposed:

H5: Audience engagement has a positive impact on organizational reputation.

2.5.6 Audience Engagement as a Mediator

Audience engagement refers to the cognitive, emotional, or affective experiences that people have with media material. It also plays a role in forecasting differences in the organizational reputation of media firms, as stated by [64] [65]. Other studies found that audience engagement can act as a mediating variable [57]. Therefore, this study anticipates that audience engagement will act as a mediator between the independent variables of this study and the organizational reputation of media firms in the UAE. Therefore, the following is proposed:

H6: Audience engagement serves as a mediator between publicity and the organizational reputation of media firms in the UAE.

H7: Audience engagement serves as a mediator between public relations and the organizational reputation of media firms in the UAE.

3. Research methodology

The research technique for this study employs a quantitative approach, based on a positivist paradigm and using a deductive approach. The purpose of this study is to thoroughly examine how social media communication techniques affect the reputation of media companies in the UAE. The study specifically looks at how audience engagement plays a role in mediating this influence. The study focuses on three primary Emirates: Abu Dhabi, Dubai, and Sharjah. Samples are chosen based on the population ratio to improve sampling variety. The data of this study is collected using a questionnaire. The questionnaire was adopted from previous studies. Measurement of organizational reputation consists of six items and it was adopted from [66]. Measurement of audience engagement consists of nine items and was adopted from [67], [68], the measurement of publicity consists of four items and was adopted from [69] while public relations consists of eight items and was adopted from [70] [71]. A pilot study was conducted to assess the reliability by checking the Cronbach's Alpha. All the values are above 0.70 indicating that the variables have acceptable reliability [72]. The validity was also conducted, and feedback of experts and comments were addressed to enhance the measurement. For field data collection, the sample size is 384 based on [73] however, to avoid low response rate, a total of 512 questionnaire were distributed. The study collected 433 responses. The data is analysed using Smart PLS.

4. Findings

This section presents the findings of this study and it includes the data examination, descriptive statistics and analysis of Smart PLS. The research study used two software that include statistical analysis methods utilizing SPSS version 25 and SmartPLS version 4. Data screening is an essential stage that guarantees the quality and reliability of the data. Of the initial 512 participants, 433 successfully finished the survey, yielding a completion percentage of 84.57%. After further screening, the number of valid responses decreased to 406, as 27 responses were considered ineligible owing to discrepancies. Through univariate analysis, 10 responses with outliers were detected and then deleted. Additionally, multivariate analysis with Mahalanobis D^2 further excluded six additional responses. The final acceptable dataset consisted of 390 responses.

4.1 Descriptive Information of Respondents

A total of 390 respondents participated in this study out of which 38.2% identified as male, while 61.8% identified as female. The majority of respondents were within the 18-30 years, making up 44.1% of the sample. Conversely, the age group of 31-40 years had the lowest number of participants, with just 15.9% of the total. The overwhelming majority of respondents (79.2%) identified themselves as Emirati, which indicates the significant presence of the local people. The sample consisted of 18.2% respondents from other Arabic nations, while 2.6% belonged to other nationalities. More than two-thirds of the participants had achieved a university degree, with 41.8% having a bachelor's degree and 32.3% having a postgraduate qualification. The sample had an equal distribution between government workers and students, with each group comprising 39% of the participants. The respondents consisted of 14.9% private sector workers and 5.1% self-employed persons. The unemployment rate was at a low level of 1.5%.

The overwhelming majority (97.7%) of participants resided in the UAE, either as Emirati nationals or expats. A minority (2.3%) were located outside the UAE, perhaps offering an outsider perspective on the digital media environment in the UAE. The respondents mostly used Instagram, Snapchat, and YouTube as their primary social media sites. Facebook and LinkedIn exhibited a wider range of use patterns, but TikTok demonstrated significant levels of user engagement, particularly among younger demographics. The respondents mostly favoured Emirati news media organizations, with 'OloomalDar-Abudhabi TV,' 'Akhbar_Aleamarat-Dubai TV,' and 'Akhbar -Aldar-Sharjah TV' being the most widely followed. In term of frequency of visits to favourite news media, the predominant pattern seen was individuals accessing their favourite news media platforms three times, with 36.7% of respondents participating in this fashion. The majority

of respondents, accounting for 37.4%, reported spending around 10 minutes each visit on their favourite news media. This implies that a significant segment of the audience places importance on being well-informed and devotes time to digesting news information.

4.2 Descriptive Analysis of Variables

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics for respondents' perceptions of various variables, including publicity, public relations, audience engagement, and organisational reputation. Each of these variables was evaluated on a five-point scale. The mean values range from 3.25 (for audience engagement) to 3.53 (for public relations), suggesting that respondents generally hold somewhat positive perceptions of these variables. More specifically, the mean value of 3.53 for public relations indicates a relatively high level of agreement towards the effectiveness of public relations activities carried out by news media organisations. However, the lowest mean value of 3.25 for audience engagement suggests that there is some room for improvement in terms of engaging audiences.

Table 1: Respondents' Perception of the Different Variables

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	%	Std. Deviation
Publicity	1.00	5.00	3.50	69.95%	0.95
Public Relations	1.00	5.00	3.53	70.62%	0.86
Audience Engagement	1.00	5.00	3.25	65.05%	0.89
Organisational Reputation	1.00	5.00	3.44	68.85%	0.78

4.3 Smart PLS

Using Smart PLS 4, researchers are suggested to evaluate two level that include the measurement model and the structural model. In the following sections, the measurement model along with the structural model are assessed.

4.3.1 Measurement model

The first step in assessing the measurement model is to assess the indicator reliability. The examination of indicator reliability showed that, in the original model, all observed variables, with the exception of AE10, AE14, and OR7, had loadings lower than the approved threshold of 0.70. thus, these items were removed. Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability studies were performed on each variable. The findings demonstrated that all variables, namely Publicity, Public Relations, Audience Engagement, and Organizational Reputation, above the suggested threshold of 0.7 for both Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability. Convergent validity was evaluated by calculating the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for each variable. The findings demonstrated that all components in the framework, including Publicity, Public Relations, and Organizational Reputation, satisfied the requirement of having an Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value of 0.5 or above. Table 2 shows the results of assessing the Cronbach's Alpha, Composite reliability, and AVE.

Table 2: Assessment of Measurement Model

	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Publicity	0.923	0.951	0.866
Public Relations	0.927	0.948	0.820
Audience Engagement	0.951	0.957	0.630
Organisational Reputation	0.913	0.929	0.621

Discriminant validity was assessed by using both the Fornell-Larcker criteria and cross-loadings. As per the Fornell-Larcker criteria, all constructs exhibited discriminant validity, as the square root of their Average Variance Extracted (AVE) exceeded their correlations with other constructs. Table 3 shows that the discriminant validity was achieved.

Table 3: Fornell-larcker Criterion Results for Discriminant Validity

	Pub	PN	AE	OR
Publicity	0.931			
Public Relations	0.379	0.905		
Audience Engagement	0.576	0.501	0.794	
Organisational Reputation	0.470	0.760	0.722	0.788

Multicollinearity was evaluated by examining the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values for the independent variables (Publicity, Public Relations, and Audience Engagement) in relation to their influence on Audience Engagement and Organisational Reputation. All variables had VIF values below 3, which is much lower than the standard threshold of

concern (5 or 10). This suggests that there are no problems of multicollinearity among these factors when predicting both Audience Engagement and Organizational Reputation as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Variance Inflation Factor Results for Multicollinearity

	Audience Engagement	Organisational Reputation
Publicity	1.368	1.594
Public Relations	1.823	1.844
Audience Engagement		2.022

4.3.2 Structural Model

The structural model is assessed based on r-square, f-square and path coefficient. Figure 2 shows the structural model of this study. The R-square shows that the value of audience engagement is 0.438 and for the organizational reputation is 0.597 indicating that the publicity and public relations can explain 43.8% of audience engagement while 59.7% of organizational reputation can be explained by publicity, public relations, and audience engagement.

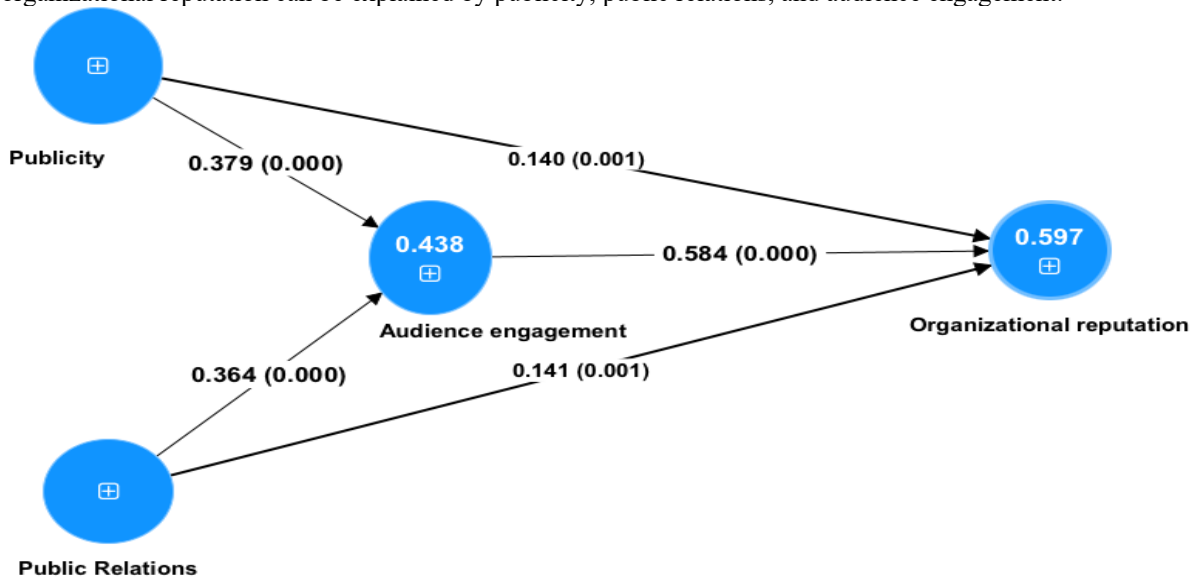


Figure 2: Structural Model

All the f-square were above 0.02 indicating that the effect of variables on dependent variables i.e., audience engagement and organizational reputation is ranged between medium to strong.

4.4 Hypotheses Testing

Table 5 shows the results of testing the hypotheses. It shows the path coefficient (B), standard deviation (std), t-value, P-value, and conclusion.

Table 5: Result of Hypotheses Testing

H	Path	B	Std	T-value	P-value	Conclusion
H1	Publicity -> Audience engagement	0.379	0.047	8.09	0.000	Supported
H2	Public Relations -> Audience engagement	0.364	0.045	8.149	0.000	Supported
H3	Publicity -> Organizational reputation	0.140	0.042	3.325	0.001	Supported
H4	Public Relations -> Organizational reputation	0.141	0.043	3.327	0.001	Supported
H5	Audience engagement -> Organizational reputation	0.584	0.036	16.078	0.000	Supported
H6	Publicity -> Audience engagement -> Organizational reputation	0.221	0.030	7.489	0.000	Supported
H7	Public Relations -> Audience engagement -> Organizational reputation	0.212	0.028	7.562	0.000	Supported

The first hypothesis proposed that the effect of publicity on audience engagement is positive. The hypothesis is confirmed and publicity affected positively the audience engagement. Thus, H1 is supported. Similarly, H2 is supported because the effect of public relations on audience engagement is positive. The third hypothesis and the fourth hypotheses proposed that publicity and public relations affect positively the organizational reputation. The findings as shown in Table 5 showed that the effect is positive supporting H3 and H4 respectively. For H5, it is supported because the effect of audience

engagement on organizational reputation is positive and significant as shown in Table 5. For the mediation effect, audience engagement mediated the effect of publicity (H6) and public relations (H7) on organizational reputation. The mediation is partial because the direct and indirect effect are significant. This indicates that part of the relationship between publicity and public relations with organizational reputation can be explained by the audience engagement.

5. Discussion

This study's findings offer valuable insights into the relationship between publicity, public relations, audience engagement, and organizational reputation. The research findings largely support the hypotheses, enhancing the comprehension of these vital factors within the realm of organizational communication and reputation management. The results highlight the significant influence of publicity and public relations on audience engagement. The significance of these communication strategies in successfully engaging the target audience is a fundamental objective for any organization. In addition, the significance of publicity and public relations in shaping an organization's reputation is highlighted by the positive effects indicated as shown in the results.. This underscores the crucial role these strategies play in influencing the perception of an organization. Establishing a positive reputation is crucial for fostering trust and credibility. The results of this study highlight the important role that publicity and public relations play in achieving this goal. These findings are in line with the findings of previous studies that have examined the relationship between these variables [49].

In addition, the results supported the effect of audience engagement on organizational reputation suggesting that audience engagement has a significant and positive effect on organizational reputation. It can be inferred that organizations that actively interact with their audiences tend to have a stronger reputation. This is because engaged audiences are more inclined to develop positive perceptions and support the organization. These findings are in line with the findings of previous studies [63], [74]. The study's findings provide insight into the mechanisms at play, indicating that audience engagement plays a mediating role in the effects of publicity and public relations on organizational reputation. The findings suggest that there is a connection between publicity, public relations, reputation, and audience engagement. Specifically, it appears that publicity and public relations have a direct impact on reputation, but part of this relationship can be attributed to the level of audience engagement. This emphasizes the complex dynamics of organizational reputation and the importance of audience engagement as a key mediating factor. These findings are consistent with the findings of previous studies [48], [75].

6. Implications and Future Work

The research enhances communication theory by providing a complete comprehension of the interplay between various communication techniques and their impact on Audience Engagement and Organisational Reputation. The enhanced theoretical framework may contribute to future study in this domain. Media companies in the UAE might optimize their communication tactics by customizing them according to the impact sizes and direct/indirect linkages shown in the research. They might emphasize methods such as publicity, advertising, and public relations, which have shown substantial effects on audience engagement and organizational reputation. Moreover, acknowledging the intermediary function of Audience Engagement highlights the need of actively involving the audience in order to enhance their reputation. For future study, there are various areas that might be considered for exploration. Examining the impact of cultural, political, and economic aspects in the UAE on communication strategies and their influence on audience engagement and organizational reputation might provide significant insights.

Comparative studies, conducted across several nations or areas, may provide valuable insights into the applicability of these results and the cultural and contextual differences that may exist. Longitudinal studies aim to analyze the impact of communication techniques on audience engagement and organizational reputation by observing these interactions over a period of time, with the goal of identifying patterns and changes. The study of developing digital media platforms and technology and their effects on audience engagement and organizational reputation is a compelling field of investigation. The research specifically examined media organizations located in the UAE. The generalizability of the results is limited and should be interpreted in the unique context of the UAE.

7. Conclusion

This research has yielded useful insights into the correlations among communication strategies, Audience Engagement, and Organisational Reputation in media firms operating in the UAE. This study enhances both theoretical and practical understanding by elucidating the importance of Audience Engagement and the diverse impacts of various communication tactics. The results provide practical recommendations for media companies in the UAE to improve their standing and effectively connect with their viewers. In addition, they provide opportunities for further investigation into the impact of cultural and contextual elements, as well as the effect of emergent media technologies in this particular setting. Nevertheless, it is crucial to recognize the constraints of the research, including its exclusive emphasis on the UAE. Overall, this study advances the knowledge of communication dynamics in media companies and their influence on organizational reputation.

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