

"The imperativeness of strategic planning and implementation of Public Relations

The chapter examines the role of planning in effective public relations process, and discusses the background of public relations practice, as well as the phases of development in the evolution public relations practice in Nigeria. The study highlighted the similarities and differences between public relations and the other adjuncts of the mass media. The Social Judgment Theory was adopted as the as the most appropriate theoretical framework for the study, which explains how the members of a target public usually respond to messages that are of mutual benefits to the both source and the recipient of mediated messages. This theory assumes that the members of a target audience are likely to receive and evaluate every message based on where they placed such message on the attitude scale. It believes that audience's attitude towards a message involves a series of imperceptible variations, ranging from most favourable, to most unfavourable . Therefore, the author advises that public relations officers must first be able to identify the predispositions of the members of a target public toward an issue to be able to ascertain the degree of persuasion that might be required to effect a positive change in the cognitive balance of the members of the target public. The chapter further examined the implications of strategic and tactical planning in effective public relations process and how public diplomacy and soft power could be used to enhance public relations practice in Nigerian universities.