The Role of Artificial Intelligence in Transforming Public Relations Practices: Insights from the UAE

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	AI (Artificial Intelligence) has turned out to be a life-changing technology in PR (Public Relations), and in other fields of strategic communications, even though its adoption and applications remain undiscovered. This research therefore addresses the gap by leveraging the (UTAUT) Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology model to investigate the integration and acceptance of AI among the PR professionals in the UAE (United Arab Emirates). Using a mixed method technique, data was collected via interviews and surveys with 103 PR practitioners, offering extensive insights into aspects that drive and hinder AI (Artificial Intelligence) adoption. The research findings reveal that AI technologies notably improve PR functions by modernizing content creation to encourage robust stakeholder relationships, while enabling real time audience engagements. Key aspects that impact adoption is inclusive of ease of use, the ability to effectively customize messaging, and operational efficiency. Nevertheless, barriers like ethical concerns, limited training, and inefficient regulation implementation policies persist. This study pinpoints the potential of AI to revolutionize PR practices while stressing the need for targeted strategies and policies to address the adoption challenges. Through contribution to the body of understanding on AI in PR, the research offers actionable perceptions for practitioners and policy makers who aim to use AI's opportunities effectively and responsibly. **Keywords:** Artificial Intelligence, Public Relations, Communication Technology, Audience Engagement, Sentiment Analysis, Chatbots, UAE

1. INTRODUCTION

Recently, the emergence of AI as a powerful tool of redesigning various communication fields like PR is eminent. New features of managing alliances are offered by the integration of AI in PR, developing communication strategies in addition to improving audience engagements. Through these technologies, PR professionals are enabled to leverage data driven insights, monitor audience opinions, and automate content creation to a remarkable degree. The attention of PR professionals, academic institutions and worldwide organizations has been captured by this technological potential, contributing to heightening

fascination in acknowledging AI's role and its ramifications in the PR fields. The United Arab Emirates has become a conspicuous AI adoption' testing grounds across various fields that include PR, due to its recognition to committing to technological advancements. With the intensifying policies and significant emerging technological investments, a unique setting is provided by the UAE to investigate AI's transformative impacts on PR, particularly in both the government and private sectors. Due to the progressive turn to AI driven tools for supporting organizations' PR activities, understanding level of adaptation and acceptance of AI amidst PR professionals is key. This research addresses this scope through investigating UAE's AI adoption in the context of the UTAUT model. This study's significance is in the investigation of AI usage in achieving communication goals and its ability of improving PR practices. Through the analysis of PR professionals' outlook on AI, and the elements impacting its adoption, this paper aims to elucidate the benefits and the shortcomings of integrating AI into PR.

This article uses a mixed methods approach to combine qualitative interviews insights and quantitative survey data to develop an extensive apprehension of AI's role in PR. The results offer valuable outlooks on AI's influences on content creation, stakeholder relations, campaign management, and audience targeting. Finally, the research seeks to impart a background for practical guidance and further studies for PR professionals and institutions aspiring to employ AI's abilities efficiently. By AI adoption investigations in the UAE's enterprising communication terrain, this study additionally informs strategic recommendations and policies for enterprises pursuing to responsively innovate in PR.

2.BACKGROUND AND THEORETICAL CONTEXT

2.1.AI in Public Relations - A Global Perspective

 AI has emerged as a life-changing force across industries, reshaping how organizations engage with their audiences and managing communication techniques. In PR, AI tools like chat-bots, predictive analytics, natural language processing, and sentiment analysis are revolutionizing professionals' approach to content creation, campaign evaluation, and audience interaction (Brown et al., 2024; Buchanan et al., 2022). Internationally, the incorporation of AI into PR practices is a demonstration of notable potential of enhancing operational efficiency, delivering personalized communication, and fostering real-time audience engagement. For example, AI-driven platforms enable organizations to examine public sentiment on social media, craft data-driven narratives, and predict audience responses to achieve communication goals.(Baniyassen, 2024). Despite its capability, the global adoption of AI in PR has experienced numerous challenges (Zhou et al., 2024). Ethical concerns in regard to privacy, transparency, and bias have drawn substantial attention from practitioners and scholars. Moreover, the rapid pace of technological development has created a learning curve for PR professionals, especially those in regions with varying levels of technological readiness and infrastructure (Dehabre, 2023). This duality of challenge and promise accentuates the significance of research into AI adoption, particularly in obscured contexts like UAE.

2.2.AI Adoption in the UAE - A Unique Context

The UAE has positioned itself as an international leader in AI innovation, fostered by national strategies like the UAE Artificial Intelligence Strategy 2031. This program aims to embed AI across private and government sectors to improve innovation, economic competitiveness, and efficiency (Häglund & Björklund, 2024). Nevertheless, workforce dynamics, cultural nuances, and organizational structures within the region present unique considerations for AI integration.

The UAE's multilingual and multicultural environment adds another layer of intricacy to AI adoption in PR. With a diverse population entailing various languages, nationalities, and cultural norms, PR professionals must navigate these differences to effectively leverage AI tools. For instance, AI applications in the UAE's PR sector must accommodate localized content creation, sentiment analysis in multiple languages, and culturally sensitive communication strategies. These contextual factors necessitate a deeper understanding of how AI technologies can be adapted to meet specified needs of the UAE's PR landscape (Al Zaabi et al., 2023; Kim, 2020).

2.3. Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT)

The theoretical foundation of this study is the UTAUT model, which provides a robust framework for examining technology adoption. Developed by Venkatesh et al. (2003), UTAUT identifies four core constructs influencing technology acceptance: performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions (Aytekin et al., 2022; Dwivedi et al., 2019). Performance expectancy relates to the perceived benefits of using technology, such as increased efficiency or improved outcomes. Effort expectancy refers to the ease of use and accessibility of technology. Social influence examines the role of societal and organizational norms in shaping adoption behavior. In the context of AI adoption in PR, UTAUT offers valuable insights into the factors driving or hindering acceptance. For instance, PR professionals may adopt AI tools if they perceive significant performance benefits, such as enhanced content creation or audience engagement (Ahmed & Al Amiri, 2022). Similarly, organizational support, such as training programs and access to AI resources, plays a critical role in facilitating adoption. (Morehouse, 2024).

2.4. Research Gaps and Significance

While existing literature highlights the transformative potential of AI in PR, several gaps remain. Much of the research focuses on developed markets, leaving a dearth of studies examining AI adoption in emerging economies like the UAE. In addition, there is limited exploration of the cultural, organizational, and ethical dimensions of AI integration in PR practices. This study addresses these gaps by investigating the perceptions and experiences of PR professionals in the UAE, a region uniquely positioned at the intersection of technological advancement and cultural diversity.The findings contribute to the growing body of knowledge on AI in communication by offering empirical insights into the factors influencing AI adoption in PR. By combining qualitative and quantitative data, this research provides a nuanced understanding of the benefits, challenges, and implications of AI integration. Furthermore, the study's focus on the UAE enriches global discussions on AI adoption by showcasing how regional contexts shape the technology's application and impact.

2.5. Objectives

The objectives of this research aim to explore PR professionals' perceptions, benefits, challenges, and attitudes toward artificial intelligence (AI) in public relations practices. It seeks to assess how PR professionals perceive AI's role in enhancing efficiency and effectiveness, whether they view it as a complementary tool, or a disruptive force. Additionally, the research aims to identify the key benefits, such as automation, data-driven insights, and audience targeting, alongside challenges like resistance to change, lack of expertise, and ethical concerns. Furthermore, it evaluates PR professionals' overall attitudes toward AI adoption, determining whether their stance is positive, neutral, or negative.

2.6. Research Questions

To produce high-quality results, we can respond to these inputs at the end of the study by using both quantitative and qualitative criteria.

1. How do PR professionals perceive the role of artificial intelligence in enhancing efficiency and effectiveness in public relations practices?
2. What are the key benefits and challenges PR professionals associate with integrating AI into public relations activities?
3. To what extent do PR professionals exhibit positive or negative attitudes toward AI adoption in PR?

3.METHODOLOGY; THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

3.1Methodology

This study employs mixed methods research design, integrating quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews to comprehensively explore the adoption AI in PR within UAE. By combining these

methodologies, the research leverages their complementary strengths to develop a robust understanding of the subject matter.

3.2. Research Design
The mixed methods approach is particularly suited for studying complex phenomena like AI adoption, which involves both individual attitudes and organizational dynamics. This design aligns with UTAUT, which provides a theoretical framework to investigate factors influencing technology acceptance. The quantitative component identifies patterns and trends, while the qualitative component offers nuanced insights into personal experiences and social dynamics, resulting in a holistic perspective.

3.3. Data Collection
3.3.1. Quantitative Surveys
Structured surveys were administered to a national sample of PR professionals across governmental and private sectors in the UAE. The survey design included multi-item scales adapted from validated instruments in prior technology acceptance research to measure UTAUT constructs such as perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, social influence, and facilitating conditions. Responses were collected using a Likert scale, and statistical analysis was conducted using SPSS to identify correlations and adoption trends. Descriptive statistics provided an overview of respondents' perceptions, while inferential techniques such as t-tests and ANOVA examined group differences based on demographics and professional backgrounds.

3.4.2. Qualitative Interviews
Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key stakeholders, including representatives from Sharjah Police, Dubai Police, Sharjah Municipality, Azizi Real Estate, and Sharjah Islamic Bank. These interviews probed deeper into participants' lived experiences, exploring themes such as AI's compatibility with existing workflows, perceived barriers, and potential benefits. Open-ended questions encouraged participants to share narratives that contextualized the quantitative findings. Thematic analysis was employed to uncover patterns and insights, supported by qualitative analysis software.

3.5. Society and Sample
The research focused on diverse demographic groups within the UAE, including PR professionals, students, employees, and retirees connected to the fields of communication and PR. This comprehensive sampling ensured a wide-ranging evaluation of AI awareness and acceptance. For the qualitative component, participants were purposively selected to represent different sectors and organizational contexts, allowing for a comparative analysis of AI adoption across various professional settings.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Survey Participants

Variable		f.	%
sex	Male	40	38.8
	Female	63	61.2
Age	18-30	55	53.4
	31-40	19	18.4
	41-60	29	28.2
Education	0	3	0.01
	1	12	11.9
	2	9	8.9
	3	56	55.4
	4	13	12.9
	5	10	9.9

High School=1/ Diploma=2/ Bachelor=3/ Master=4/ PhD=5/ Others=0

3.6. Tools and Instruments

The survey utilized a Likert scale to measure participants' attitudes, perceptions, and usage of AI. Statistical analysis through SPSS enabled rigorous testing of the hypotheses and identification of key adoption drivers. In contrast, interviews relied on thematic analysis, providing qualitative depth to complement the numerical data. Audio recordings ensured accurate transcription and analysis, with participant consent obtained to maintain ethical standards.

3.6. Validity, Reliability, and Ethical Considerations

To ensure the validity and reliability of the research instruments, the survey questionnaire underwent a thorough review by subject matter experts and was pilot tested with a small sample of PR professionals. Feedback was incorporated to refine the questions for clarity and relevance. For interviews, audio recordings and signed consent forms ensured transparency and accuracy, fostering reliable data collection (Chandel, 2024). Participants were informed of the study's objectives and procedures and provided with written consent. Data were anonymized to protect privacy, and participants retained the right to withdraw at any point. The study adhered to institutional review board (IRB) standards, ensuring compliance with ethical guidelines.

4.RESULTS

This section presents the findings derived from both quantitative survey data and qualitative interviews, offering a comprehensive understanding of artificial intelligence adoption and its implications in PR within the UAE. The survey results provide statistical evidence of general trends, while the interview findings offer deeper contextual insights into the nuances of AI integration in PR. Together, these results underscore key adoption drivers, barriers, and perceived impacts on PR practices.

Perceptions, Uses and Attitudes towards using AI in PR

The study measured perceptions of AI in public relations using three Likert scales, all showing positive attitudes:

- Perception of AI (Mean: 23.1/30) - Respondents viewed AI in PR positively overall.

- Uses of AI (Mean: 26.12/35) - Strong agreement on AI's usefulness in PR tasks.

- Public Trends Toward AI (Mean: 20.14/30) - A slightly lower but still positive view on AI adoption, indicating the need for more training and awareness.

4.1. Table 2: Perceptions, Uses and Attitudes towards using AI in PR

Perception	Means
The uses of artificial intelligence in public relations can help with finding and filtering audiences.	**4.14**
Artificial intelligence will contribute to reaching broader segments of the target audience in public relations practice.	**4.05**
Artificial Intelligence and humanity merging for a better career & institution in the future.	**4.05**
If public relations employees aren't trained in the applications of artificial intelligence, they risk being left behind.	**4.04**
Human communication in the field of public relations will remain more important than artificial intelligence applications, no matter how developed this regard is.	**4.00**
Artificial intelligence is still not common in public relations in UAE institutions.	**2.83**

Usage	
The necessity of using artificial intelligence varies based on the specific type and nature of the application.	**4.18**
The use of artificial intelligence is useful in public relations practice.	**4.05**
The uses of artificial intelligence contribute to facilitating transactions for customers and employees.	**4.03**
The use of artificial intelligence in public relations is an expression of keeping pace with development.	**4.03**
The use of artificial intelligence is considered a factor of public confidence in the advancement of work.	**3.68**
The use of artificial intelligence is equivalent to or exceeds human capabilities at work.	**3.36**
In the field of public relations, it is not important to use artificial intelligence.	**2.79**
Attitude	
Many stakeholders prefer human interaction in public relations more than artificial intelligence.	**3.99**
The uses of artificial intelligence in public relations can go in broad directions in finding and filtering potential clients (stakeholders).	**3.93**
The public (stakeholders) have become accustomed to the use of artificial intelligence in all tasks.	**3.46**
Artificial intelligence is the most important in the world of public relations in communication.	**3.41**
The essence of the relationship between the public and the organization is negatively affected by artificial intelligence.	**2.70**
Public relations companies and departments have not adapted to using artificial intelligence to reach the public.	**2.65**

The results reveal that AI is largely seen as beneficial in public relations, particularly for enhancing audience engagement and operational efficiency; however, human communication remains paramount, reflecting a reluctance to fully rely on automated interactions. Despite its recognized advantages, AI has yet to become a dominant force in UAE PR, with many firms showing slow adaptation to emerging technologies. To fully leverage AI's potential, strategies should emphasize AI-human collaboration, prioritize comprehensive training for PR professionals, and promote broader awareness of AI's capabilities across the industry.

PR professional perception toward using IA:

The data reflects a generally positive perception of artificial intelligence (AI) in public relations, particularly regarding its role in audience targeting and professional growth. The highest-rated statement (Mean = 4.14) highlights AI's effectiveness in identifying and filtering audiences, indicating strong confidence in AI's ability to enhance precision in PR campaigns. Similarly, respondents believe AI will help reach broader audience segments (Mean = 4.05), reinforcing the idea that AI can optimize outreach efforts. The perception of AI as a tool for future career and institutional advancement (Mean = 4.05) aligns with the belief that PR professionals who fail to adopt AI applications may face obsolescence (Mean = 4.04). These responses suggest an acknowledgment of AI's growing relevance in PR and the need for professional adaptation. Despite AI's perceived advantages, human communication remains a priority in PR, with respondents rating its importance above AI applications (Mean = 4.00). This indicates a degree of skepticism about fully automating PR communication, emphasizing the irreplaceable role of human interaction in building relationships with stakeholders. However, AI's adoption in UAE PR institutions is perceived as relatively low (Mean = 2.83), suggesting slow implementation and possibly limited awareness or infrastructural readiness. This highlights the need

for greater investment in AI integration, training, and awareness in the UAE PR sector to keep pace with global trends.

PR professional viewpoints about using AI in PR practices:

The results indicate a strong consensus on the importance and usefulness of artificial intelligence (AI) in public relations, though its necessity is seen as context-dependent. The highest-rated statement (Mean = 4.18) emphasizes that AI's applicability varies based on specific use cases, suggesting that while AI is beneficial, its effectiveness depends on the nature of the task. This nuanced perspective highlights the need for strategic AI adoption rather than a one-size-fits-all approach. AI is widely perceived as useful in PR practice (Mean = 4.05), reinforcing the belief that it enhances operational efficiency. Respondents also recognize AI's role in streamlining transactions for both customers and employees (Mean = 4.03), as well as its contribution to keeping up with technological advancements (Mean = 4.03). These ratings suggest that AI is increasingly viewed as an essential tool for modernizing PR processes and ensuring competitiveness in the industry. However, the belief that AI fosters public confidence in work advancements (Mean = 3.68) is slightly weaker, implying that while AI enhances efficiency, it may not yet be widely trusted as a core driver of credibility in PR. Moreover, AI is not overwhelmingly seen as equivalent to or surpassing human capabilities in PR work (Mean = 3.36), indicating a continued reliance on human expertise for key tasks such as relationship-building and strategic communication. The lowest-rated statement (Mean = 2.79) suggests that the majority disagree with the notion that AI is unimportant in PR, reinforcing its perceived relevance. However, the overall trend indicates that AI is seen as a supportive tool rather than a full replacement for human-driven PR efforts.

PR professional attitudes toward using AI in PR practices:

The results highlight a preference for human interaction in public relations (PR), with stakeholders favoring direct human communication over AI-driven interactions (Mean = 3.99). This suggests that while AI is becoming more integrated into PR processes, there remains a strong belief that human communication is more effective for relationship-building and trust management. However, AI is still recognized for its capabilities, as reflected in the statement that AI can be used in broad directions to find and filter potential clients (Mean = 3.93). This indicates that stakeholders acknowledge AI's analytical and data-driven advantages in audience segmentation, targeting, and efficiency in PR campaigns. Despite increasing AI adoption, the level of stakeholder customization to AI in all tasks is moderate (Mean = 3.46). This suggests that while AI tools are becoming more common, their integration into PR processes is not yet fully embraced or seamless. Furthermore, the perception that AI is the most important factor in PR communication (Mean = 3.41) is relatively low, indicating that stakeholders still view AI as a supportive tool rather than a core element of PR strategy. Concerns about AI's impact on public relationships are evident in the lower agreement with the idea that AI negatively affects the relationship between the public and organizations (Mean = 2.70). While this suggests that AI is not necessarily perceived as harmful, it also implies that it is not yet fully trusted to handle meaningful stakeholder engagement. Similarly, the belief that PR companies have not yet adapted to AI for public engagement (Mean = 2.65) reflects a perception that AI adoption in PR firms is still in its early stages or has not been fully optimized.

The findings highlight that while AI is valued, its successful integration into PR practices necessitates employee education and a clear emphasis on AI as a complement to, rather than a replacement for, human roles. These insights align with and validate the relevance of the UTAUT framework in understanding AI adoption in public relations.

4.2. Table3: Measurement means

Measurement means

	PERCEPTION	USES	ATTITUDE
Mean	23.10/ 30	26.12/35	20.14/30
N	103	103	103
Std. Deviation	2.827	3.891	2.481

Gender Differences in Perception, Usage, and Attitude Toward AI, by using SPSS T-test analysis, the researcher examined gender differences. Results showed no significant differences in perception, usage, or attitudes toward AI. Females scored slightly higher in perception (23.16 vs. 23.00), while males had a marginally higher usage score (26.88 vs. 25.6). Attitude scores were nearly identical (females: 20.18, males: 20.07), indicating consistent views between genders.

Age-Based Differences in Perception, Usage, and Attitude Toward AI, the authors sued *F*-test analysis to compare between mean across age groups, the results reveals no significant differences in perception, usage, or attitudes. Scores were consistent across all age demographics, showing uniform views on AI adoption in public relations.

Variations in Perception, Usage, and Attitude by Educational Level, the authors sued *F*-test to assess differences across educational levels. No significant variations were found in perception, usage, or attitudes. However, individuals with higher education exhibited slightly higher usage scores, suggesting a marginally greater engagement with AI despite overall consistency in views.

5.INTERVIEWS FINDINGS

Interviews were conducted with representatives from diverse sectors, including Sharjah Islamic Bank, Sharjah Municipality, Dubai Police, and Azizi Real Estate. Participants included PR managers, directors, and strategic communication personnel, offering insights into AI's practical applications and challenges in PR.

Table 4: Interview Participants and Organizational Backgrounds

Participant ID	Organization	Sector	Role	Experience
P1	Sharjah Islamic Bank	Banking/Finance	Public Relations Manager	10+ years
P2	Sharjah Municipality	Government	PR Specialist	8 years
P3	Dubai Police	Law Enforcement	Communication Officer	12 years
P4	Azizi Real Estate	Private Sector	PR Manager	7 years
P5	Sharjah Police	Law Enforcement	PR Representative	9 years

Key Themes and Findings

Perceived Usefulness of AI in PR

Participants consistently highlighted AI's potential to enhance PR practices, particularly in content creation, audience analysis, and campaign management. *Sharjah Islamic Bank* emphasized using AI for chat-bots, sentiment analysis, and predictive customer behavior modeling, *Dubai Police* described leveraging AI for public safety campaigns and audience targeting, aligning with the emirate's broader digital transformation goals.

"AI helps streamline communication efforts, especially through predictive analytics that enable targeted messaging." – PR Director, Sharjah Islamic Bank.

Even though AI was generally perceived as beneficial, numerous barriers were identified in the previous literature such as:

- Lack of Expertise - Many interviewees expressed concerns about insufficient training and technical skills among staff (Chen et al., 2023; Chu et al., 2024).
- Cultural Factors - Azizi Real Estate noted that clients in the Arab world prefer human interaction over AI-driven communication, citing trust and emotional factors.
- Infrastructure Limitations - Smaller organizations cited budget constraints and limited infrastructure as major hurdles.

"AI tools are available, but without proper training, staff struggle to use them effectively." – PR Manager, Sharjah Municipality.

Ethical and Privacy Concerns

Data privacy emerged as a recurring theme. Participants emphasized the need for Transparent AI systems that respect user privacy and Policies to mitigate risks such as data breaches and algorithmic biases.

"While AI is transformative, privacy concerns must be addressed to build trust among stakeholders." – PR Manager, Dubai Police

Cultural and Social Dynamics

AI adoption is significantly influenced by cultural preferences and social norms such as Arab customers prioritize human interaction and personalized communication. Organizations like Dubai Police suggested balancing AI's efficiency with human oversight to maintain public trust.

"AI enhances operational efficiency, but we ensure human involvement for culturally sensitive tasks." – Director of PR, Dubai Police

6. DISCUSSION

While survey participants emphasized the need for ease of use and management support, interviewees highlighted cultural and ethical considerations as critical factors. Both methods underscore the importance of training and infrastructure development to overcome barriers to adoption.

Table 5: Integrated Insights from Surveys and Interviews

Theme	Survey Insights	Interview Insights
Ease of Use	The majority cited ease of use as a key factor for AI adoption.	Managers discussed the necessity of training to address ease.
Management Support	Strong need for top-down implementation strategies.	Emphasis on management provides clear directives.
Cultural Considerations	Limited mention.	Cultural norms and ethics are viewed as pivotal for implementation.
Training Requirements	Identified lack of training as a barrier to adoption.	Suggested tailored programs to upskill employees.
Infrastructure Development	Highlighted as necessary for effective AI integration.	Interviews elaborated on the technical challenges involved.

The survey and interview results reveal a shared recognition of AI's potential in enhancing PR efficiency and audience engagement. Both methods emphasize the significance of perceived usefulness and ease of use in driving AI adoption. However, a key divergence arises: survey participants generally exhibit

greater enthusiasm for AI integration, while interviewees express concerns about cultural sensitivities, ethical considerations, and organizational preparedness.

This contrast underscores the importance of tailored AI implementation strategies that address both the optimism of potential users and the reservations of PR professionals. Combining these perspectives offers a nuanced understanding that is essential for practical application and future policy development in AI-driven PR.

The findings from this study highlight a multifaceted understanding of AI's role in public relations, combining insights from surveys and interviews to paint a detailed picture of adoption dynamics in the UAE. Survey respondents demonstrated a strong willingness to embrace AI, recognizing its potential for operational efficiency, data-driven decision-making, and improved audience engagement. This aligns with global trends where AI is increasingly viewed as a transformative tool in strategic communication practices.

Conversely, interview participants provided a grounded perspective, pointing out cultural, organizational, and ethical challenges that could hinder AI's seamless adoption. Their reservations, including the need for human oversight, concerns about data privacy, and the cultural importance of face-to-face communication, highlight the complexity of integrating AI into PR workflows. This divergence emphasizes the need for PR strategies to balance technological innovation with the human elements that are foundational to effective communication.

7.PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

The study's results suggest actionable strategies for AI integration into PR. Organizations should prioritize training and capacity-building initiatives to address the knowledge gap among PR professionals. By fostering familiarity with AI tools, organizations can mitigate resistance rooted in perceived complexity or lack of usability. Moreover, developing ethical guidelines and transparent policies around AI use can alleviate concerns related to privacy and data security, ensuring public trust and compliance with regulatory standards.

Cultural nuances must also be considered in AI implementation. In the UAE, where interpersonal relationships and cultural traditions hold significant value, PR strategies should integrate AI in a way that complements rather than replaces human interaction. For instance, AI tools can be employed for data analysis and operational tasks while leaving relationship-building and culturally sensitive communication to human PR practitioners.

8.CONTRIBUTIONS TO THEORY

This study enriches the theoretical understanding of AI adoption in PR through the lens of UTAUT. Findings validate the importance of constructs such as perceived usefulness, ease of use, and social influence, while also highlighting the role of facilitating conditions and cultural context in shaping AI adoption behaviors. The integration of quantitative and qualitative methods further demonstrates the robustness of UTAUT in studying emerging technologies within diverse professional fields.

9.LIMITATIONS

While the study provides valuable insights, certain limitations must be acknowledged. The reliance on self-reported data may introduce biases, such as social desirability or overestimation of AI's acceptance. Additionally, the study's focus on UAE-based organizations may limit the generalizability of findings to other regions with different technological, cultural, or organizational contexts. Future research should explore cross-regional comparisons to provide a more holistic understanding of AI's impact on PR practices globally.

10.IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The study opens avenues for further exploration into AI's evolving role in PR. Future research could investigate the long-term effects of AI adoption on organizational effectiveness, stakeholder relationships, and audience engagement. Comparative studies across industries or regions could shed

light on the universal and context-specific factors influencing AI adoption. Moreover, exploring the ethical and psychological implications of AI in communication can provide deeper insights into its integration challenges and opportunities.

12.CONCLUSION

This study highlights the transformative role of artificial intelligence in public relations, focusing on its adoption in the UAE. The findings reveal that AI enhances operational efficiency, improves audience engagement, and facilitates data-driven decision-making. While survey respondents were optimistic about AI's potential, interview participants emphasized the importance of balancing technological innovation with cultural and organizational considerations. These insights underscore the dual challenge of integrating AI into PR: maximizing its benefits while addressing concerns related to human interaction, privacy, and ethical standards.

The integration of AI into PR practices requires deliberate and strategic approaches. Training programs and awareness initiatives can bridge the knowledge gap among professionals, while robust ethical guidelines and transparent policies can ensure responsible AI use. Additionally, fostering a collaborative approach that integrates AI tools with human expertise can enhance communication strategies while respecting cultural nuances. By addressing these areas, organizations can harness AI's potential to revolutionize PR practices, fostering stronger client relationships and improved communication outcomes.

The study concludes that AI offers immense opportunities for advancing PR practices, particularly in the UAE's dynamic and technologically progressive environment. However, successful integration demands a balanced approach, combining technological advancements with human-centered strategies. These findings provide a foundation for further research and practical applications, ensuring that AI continues to evolve as a valuable tool in the field of public relations.

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List of Abbreviations

AI – Artificial Intelligence

PR - Public Relations

UAE – United Arab Emirates

UTAUT - Unified Theory of Acceptance nd Use of Technology