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## Shaping Public Perception: The Evolution of Government Public Relations in the Digital Age

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### ABSTRACT

This research examines the historical development of public relations and its role in promoting effective governance, democracy, and communication in diverse states. It highlights the Islamic perspective on mass communication and its influence on contemporary public relations practices. The study also explores the evolution of public relations in the digital age, with a focus on social media and its impact on democracy. Additionally, it examines the historical foundations of public relations in Pakistan, which have been shaped by the country's ethnic and religious diversity. Beyond these key areas, the research further explores the ethical considerations of public relations practices in the digital age, particularly regarding data privacy, fake news, and misinformation. It also analyzes the challenges and opportunities presented by the evolving media landscape for public relations professionals and organizations. By providing a comprehensive overview of the field, the research aims to contribute valuable insights for academics, practitioners, and policymakers seeking to understand and navigate the complexities of public relations in the contemporary world. The study provides a comparative analysis of public relations history in the United States, Russia, China, and India, offering international insights into the commonalities and differences that impact communication strategies. Overall, the research provides important insights for academics and practitioners alike, highlighting the crucial role that public relations plays in promoting efficient governance, democracy, and societal advancement.



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## 1. Introduction

As soon as Amma Hawa and Hazrat Adam (AS) set foot on earth, communication started to flow. According to some ethical theories, relationships should be established early on, and leaders should act honorably toward those they lead. Over time, communication has expanded its reach and changed the way it communicates (Safdar, Shabir, & Khan, 2018). In their article titled "Islamic Concept of Mass Communication," Riaz & Hussain (2009) highlight communication from an Islamic perspective, noting that in the modern age, communication is done freely among societies, and attractive communication can play a significant role and influence public opinion. A democracy must have a system for the free expression of political opinion so that citizens can advise public officials of their actions while in office and share information about their experiences, needs, and preferences (Schlozman, Verba, & Brady, 2012). And gradually it forms the basis of good democracy in a state. One may argue that a strong democracy has an institutional framework that is durable and that fulfills citizens' rights to freedom and equality through the lawful and effective operation of its institutions and mechanisms (Morlino, 2004). All that results in a better governance system, public freedom, and the formation of a thriving society full of life and ambitions. The World Bank explained: "Good governance is epitomized by predictable and enlightened policy-making; a bureaucracy imbued with a professional ethos; an executive arm of government accountable for its actions; a strong civil society participating in public affairs; and all behaving under the rule of law" (Yadiv, 2001). First and foremost, a successful democracy is one that properly satisfies its populace. Institutions can uphold the values of the democratic system when they have the full support of civil society.

A strong democracy and effective government are largely dependent on the media. The media, as a vital information source, has been crucial to democratic societies and good government (Norris, 2006). And with time the role of media has been expanding in the democratic states in various forms and shapes. The role of the media is to act as a civic forum for political debate, facilitating informed voting decisions and actions. In recent times, the media underwent a lot of changes with the advancement of the information and technology sector. According to Ashraff (2013), "Media has been playing a crucial role in the protection of rights by making people aware of their rights. Media also makes people to vigilant about political developments in the world and helps to stimulate debate drawing attention to all social evils including institutional failures, corruption, inefficiency, and illegal activities. Social media is the latest phenomenon in a rapidly progressing world."

According to O'Reilly ((2007), "Social media is an internet-based application designed to promote social interaction and promote the use, development, and dissemination of information in society." Social media, which essentially creates and shares user-generated content, builds on many of the same Web 2.0 principles and technology. Social media is becoming more and more prevalent because it gives users the chance to make new social connections in addition to preserving their existing relationships with friends, family, and coworkers (Raacke&Bonds2008). In addition, social media enables citizens not only to influence public debate, public opinion, and public order but also allows scrutinizing government measures and serves as a transparency tool. According to Strand (2010), "Transparency means that citizens are being provided more direct and more easily available access to information on the activities of the government. Citizens can better exercise their civil and political rights if they have access to information about government performance." This means that citizens can assess their impact on governmental decision-making, claim their influence, track spending, and hold government officials responsible. Transparency and access to information are essential components of democratic governments and are effective tools in the fight against corruption (Strand, 2010). In a well-functioning democracy, knowing what civil servants are doing is a fundamental right of citizens. The policies they follow, the laws and regulations they prepare, the programs they implement, how they raise and use them,

and the international agreements they negotiate (Bakhsh et al., 2023). To connect the masses with their representatives and, to keep them aware of the operations of governance, the institution of Public Relations emerged. The formal practice of what is now commonly referred to as "public relations" dates back to the early 20th century. Since then, public relations have been defined in a myriad of ways. The definition often evolves in parallel with changing roles in public relations and technological advances. According to PRSA, "Public relations is a strategic communication process that builds mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics." Communicating with all parties involved and maintaining the circle of trust that underpins all of an organization's public relations efforts (Wilcox, Cameron, and Reber, 2015). As varied as the region's prehistoric past is Pakistan's public relations history. In 1947, Pakistan became a sovereign nation after more than 200 years of British rule. Before then, the entire South Asian region was seen as having a stronger sense of unity. Today, it is still a region with significant ethnic, linguistic, racial, and religious variety. Some scholars trace the roots of Pakistan's public relations back to ancient times when the emperor proclaimed subjects using stone tablets (Kaul, 1988). Government public relations activities are different from public relations activities held in other sectors. This is because the main purpose of the government is to work for general and public goods (Mahmood & Yasin, 2019). In Pakistan, various federal and state-level government agencies use social media. Social media is proving very effective for good governance, general well-being, and the public good (Mahmood & Yasin, 2019).

As stated by Florini, "the provision of necessary information by the government enables the citizens to learn about government accomplishments" (Hussain, 2014). The Chief Information Officer (GIO) is a key player in central government information dissemination in the majority of nations. These people are sometimes referred to as press attachés, press secretaries, or spokespersons. GIO improves public understanding of government policy and raises awareness of its components, including social welfare services (Edes, 2000). Abramson and Means, (2001) defined eGovernment as, "the electronic interaction (transaction and information exchange) between the government, the public (citizens and businesses) and employees." According to the World Bank, (2001), "E-Governance is the government-owned or operating system of information and communication technologies that transform relations with citizens, the private sector, and/or other government agencies to promote citizens' empowerment, improve service delivery, strengthen accountability, increase transparency, or improve government efficiency." At the state level, this role is managed by the press information department. The Press Information Department, which is overseen by a Principal Information Officer, is the main division of the Ministry of Information, Broadcasting, National History, and Literary Heritage (PIO). Since 1947, PID has worked to establish itself as a trustworthy resource for timely information dissemination to the public via all media. Through a suitable method of media display, monitoring, and feedback, PID operates continuously. It strives to inform the government about the effects of its policies and to make the government's policies more widely known. E-government is devoted to enhancing the delivery of several governmental services, including online transactions, and spreading knowledge about how the executive branch operates. More direct participation in government decision-making is made possible by improved email contact between citizens and governments (Thomas and Streib, 2003). Similarly, another aspect of E-Governance is the use of social media. The Public Relations institutions of any government sector can perform one of the essential functions of image building by smartly utilizing social media applications. Using social media in the public sector offers many benefits, including B. Financial and administrative facilities, facilities for disseminating information, and bilateral communication facilities with local government and government services. According to Khan et al., (2015), people can participate in policy formulation and decisions using comments and feedback expressed through social media channels. People and police departments, for example, use social media to report suspected crimes and behaviors. Social media channels also facilitate openness when people are given access to government data and open information through social media channels. Furthermore, Porter, Trammel, Chung, and Kim (2009) state that public

relations officers are also building the narrative of government by using social media such as blogs to target the public more effectively. The use of social media can help public relations officers to become more aware of their effectiveness to target groups and to build relationships with the public. The US Institute of Public Relations (IPRA) claims that social media has given the public the chance to get back to real public relations by giving businesses a way to interact with the public in real-time and directly with shareholders. Second, as society demands accountability and openness from organizations and state governments, performance is crucial. Communication must be sincere and reliable. Third, all public relations strategies and campaigns today incorporate social media as a key component. While rigorously carrying out its responsibilities in a post-truth era, the public relation institutions is however up against a variety of challenges, including inexperienced media, confidentiality, political clout, a scarcity of training and experience, an internet boom, and politics of hatred by competing parties.

Under different headings, the author of the paper conducted a comparative analysis of the history of public relations in different states and the roles played by these institutions. Comparative research between states provides an international viewpoint by pointing out similarities and differences that influence the effectiveness of communication tactics in various political and cultural contexts. This historical context also informs policy discussions, helping identify areas where regulations or guidelines may be needed. Overall, studying the public relations history of various states is invaluable for educational purposes, providing students and practitioners with a holistic understanding of the discipline and enabling them to adapt strategies to unique regional contexts.

## **2. Research Methodology**

This study employs a qualitative research design and utilizes the case study technique. Content analysis techniques will be employed to process both primary and secondary data collected by the researcher. The author has gathered data from newspaper articles, journal articles, and other policy documents of various state governments.

## **3. Public Relations**

The formal use of what is today known as "public relations" started in the early 20th century. Other definitions of public relations have also emerged, and they frequently alter as a result of the changing roles of the profession and technological improvements. Early definitions of public relations placed a strong emphasis on press relations and publicity, whereas more recent definitions include include "engagement" and "relationship-building" notions.

According to PRSA, "Public relations is a strategic communication process that builds mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics."

Gray et al. (2004) also assert that Harlow's (Harlow, 1976) definition of Public Relations contains the overall goals and tasks of Public Relations. In his definition, Public Relations is a "distinctive management function that helps establish and maintain mutual lines of communication, understanding, acceptance, and cooperation between an organization and its public; involves the management of problems or issues; helps management to keep informed on and responsive to public opinions, defines and emphasizes the responsibility of management, keep abreast of and effectively utilize change; serving as an early warning system to help anticipate trends and uses research and ethical communication techniques as its principal tools." Grunig & Hunt (1984), also indicate that it is nearly impossible to come up with a single definition of Public Relations but assert that, "in one way or the other Public Relations activities are part of the management of communication between an organization and its public." Communication in this context is when people move messages to or from other people, thereby using that means to plan, manage and execute projects and programs for organizations as a whole. In

furtherance, Grunig and Hunt (1984), emphasized the need for mutual understanding between an organization and its public for communicated messages to be effective. Based on that, Broom and Sha (2012), opined that “there is the need to understand the world around us and be able to argue for a particular worldview concept and relationships therein, thereby defining Public Relations in contemporary times as ‘the management function that establishes and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and the publics on whom its success or failure depends.’” Sha and Broom (2012) claim that, “public relations are a management function that performs boundary-spanning roles through effective communication and uses feedback to plan and develop sustainable programs with public relations tools.” The goal of public relations is to establish and maintain relationships between an organization and its public through a two-way symmetrical communication model while also producing measurable changes in awareness, attitude, and behavior.

#### 4. Public Relations in Governance

Public relations operations are always being carried out by government agencies. The cornerstones of all public relations efforts carried out by any governmental department are information sharing and maintaining the various stakeholders' confidence and trust (Wilcox, Cameron & Reber, 2015). According to Mahmood & Yasin (2019), the primary function of government is to promote the welfare of the public and the common good, which sets it apart from other sectors' PR efforts. Additionally, it has been noted that the government apparatus deviates from its basic duties—including those related to public relations initiatives—and engages in political image-building, propaganda, counter-propaganda, and phony crisis management. However, public sector PR departments assert that their campaigns are focused on informing stakeholders, enhancing the debarments' reputations, and, most importantly, preserving the mutually beneficial relationship between the public and the government. When compared to private or corporate sector efforts, where the majority of the actions are planned with financial objectives in mind, PR campaigns differ significantly. Public sector companies and agencies must operate with greater efficiency in democratic regimes than they do in authoritarian ones (Mahmood & Yasin, 2019).

#### 5. Key Roles and Functions of Public Relations

According to Harold Burson (as cited in Broom & Sha, 2013), “Public relations has matured into the role of helping organizations decide not only how to say something and what to say, but also what to do.” He mentioned how management-directed communications were produced and disseminated in the early years of public relations in the 1960s. But social evolutions and progression changed the components of public relations. Burson says that the public's scrutiny of what businesses want to say and do—particularly in times of crisis—plays a growing and inevitable role. The majority of public relations professionals, according to Edward, Tench and Yeomans (2009), are seen as communicators who play both manager and technician roles, even though it is acknowledged that one position may predominate in the beginning stages of practice. The scholars expatiated four (4) dimensions as key roles of Public relations as follows:

**Managerial**– These are important roles that contribute to the government's conceptions of who it is, what it ought to do, and what the general public desires and anticipates from it in terms of formulating communications objectives, establishing emergency management protocols and policies, identifying key publics, and developing and upholding positive relations with public at large.

**Operational** – these are more likened to technician roles but familiar with managerial roles by organizing and integrating communication activities through effective and reliable mediums.

**Reflective** – aims to influence the powerful coalition by evaluating the "changing societal ideals to alter governance, standards, and values of social responsibility."

**Educational** –are roles that aim to increase the communication competence of employees.

As part of the Public Relations managerial tasks of the communication manager, according to Grunig and Hunt (1984), the Public Information Officer methodically prepares and manages the organization's programs and policies. They divide the roles into three categories namely;

**Expert prescriber:** where the government officer functions as an expert - who researches and defines programs - and solely takes responsibility for implementing them.

**Communication facilitator:** a position that calls for public information officers to act as a discreet "go-between" to maintain constant two-way symmetrical contact between the government and its citizens.

**Media relations role:** This outlines the obligations of professionals who uphold media contracts and educate other government officials about what the media is doing, and

**The communication liaison role:** As part of their duties, public information officers represent the government at meetings and events and help higher-level public relations managers by giving them opportunities to speak with both internal and external audiences.

## **6. Historical Background of Public Relations**

As stated by Miller (2000), “Public Relations is an interdisciplinary field with ties to business, political science, psychology, and media studies, among other areas.” The history of public relations can thus be studied from a variety of perspectives, including cultural, intellectual, social, and political histories, to mention a few. There is a lot of evidence that contradicts the assumption made in the majority of public relations textbooks that the field originated in the USA, according to L'Etang (2008). Modernity, which has its roots in Europe as well, is the source of contemporary public relations. In light of this insight, it is vital to accept that there can only be a range of public relations histories, not a single, cohesive history (Raaz, & Wehmeier 2011).

The author thoroughly examines the brief history and contemporary state of public relations of several states under the following headings. The author chose the USA, Germany, India, and China for two reasons: first, these nations, unlike Bangladesh, have extensive national PR histories, not just shorter ones that have been documented in publications; and second, these nations are at the forefront of modernization, which is one of the key elements of contemporary PR.

## **7. Public Relations of America**

Encompassing an area larger than 3.6 million square kilometers, the United States of America is a nation in North America (9.4 million square kilometers). There are 50 states there, 48 of which are nearby. The Pacific Ocean, the Atlantic Ocean, Canada, Mexico, and the Gulf of Mexico all encircle them on their western, eastern, and southern borders, respectively. Hawaii is located to the northwest of Canada, and Alaska is located in the Pacific Ocean to the southwest of California. In addition to these states, there are a lot of territories and holdings in the Pacific Ocean and the Caribbean Sea.

Washington, DC, is the nation's capital. People from other nations are likely to be familiar with, Los Angeles, New York, Houston, Philadelphia, Detroit, San Diego, Dallas, Phoenix, Chicago, and San Antonio as some of the more notable cities. The population is estimated by the United States Bureau of the Census to be 281,421,906 people. According to the US Department of Labor's 1998 statistics, about 197,000 of this category are public relations specialists. Public relations professionals and the American businesses that employ them face a substantial challenge as a result of the population's increasing

diversity. Although English is the dominant language, some cities, like Los Angeles, have more students enrolling in schools who speak Spanish as their first language than English.

Harold Burson, a co-founder of Burson-Marsteller, which is today one of the most significant and well-known public relation firms in the world, described how the sector evolved as follows: Clients simply asked their public relations experts, "How do I convey it?" during the post-World War II boom because they already understood what they wanted to do. Executives lost faith in their skills due to the intense activity of the 1960s and began to wonder, "What do I say?" By the 1980s, more and more public relations professionals were taking part in decision-making, leaving their superiors baffled. (Frank, 2000). There is no denying that American public relations have evolved through time to become more sophisticated. The early practitioners in America were, at best, publicists or press agents. As a result, the field is founded on unethical and ineffective practices. Since Burson (cited in Frank, 2000) attributes public relations with gaining a place at the management decision-making table in the middle of the 1980s, we instead date the following description of public relations theory and practice to that period (Motion, Leitch, & Cliffe, 2003). The number of practitioners in the United States increased from 126,000 to 197,000 from the 1980s to 2000 (projected) (U.S. Department of Labor, 1998). U.S. News & World Report's "Best Jobs" edition predicts a 55% increase by 2006, indicating that this high growth is expected to continue (1997). According to Cutlip, Center, and Broom's (2000) analysis, the corporate sector accounts for 40% of the work done by these professionals, followed by agencies (27%), associations, foundations, and educational institutions (14%), the health care industry (8%) and the government (6%), as well as nonprofit organizations (5%). In the US, a college education is a requirement for more than 90% of all practitioners. They have master's degrees complete, over 25% have graduate degrees, and 2% have doctorates (Cutlip et al., 2000). In the last 30 years, public relations practice in the United States has had boom times and busts, according to Motion, Leitch, and Cliffe (2003). For instance, the early 1990s were characterized by downsizing. Then, when start-up dot coms proliferated, practitioners discovered lucrative work luring in investment cash. Many professionals were once again without jobs after the recession. Communication professionals don't anticipate having much job security in their line of work, according to a recent IABC research (cited in "Job Insecurity," 2002). However, industry experts anticipate that professional public relations consultants will once again be in great demand as a result of the numerous claims of managerial misbehavior against some of the top companies in the country (Edelman, 2002). Already, 82% of the IABC members surveyed said they regularly or unrestrictedly have access to senior management. Despite these ups and downs, public relations departments have made significant contributions to American politics. Below, I've listed a few of the areas where they excelled.

## **8. Election Campaigns**

Politics-related public relations can involve a variety of tasks, such as political campaigning, highlighting the deeds of elected and appointed officials, lobbying, fund-raising, and attempting to win public support for a certain course of action. Public relations professionals "have grown to constitute an influential and integral component of the nation's public information system—the system upon which our citizens must rely to make their political judgments and their daily decisions," according to Cutlip (1976). The purpose of formal public relations in political campaigns has only been examined by two authors, and both of them are critical of it. However, PR is viewed by Kelley (1956) as being superior to bossism. He contends that political parties transferred their campaign into the hands of experts who direct the behavior of politicians toward the people and vice versa by turning to propaganda. He notes, "The problem now becomes one offending what it means for our system of government to have a political discussion increasingly monopolized by members of a restricted skill group". He argues that public relations efforts can stifle ideas in the same way that significant advertising spending can be used to prevent competitors from entering the market. Bloom (1973) charts the evolution of political campaigns beginning with

Samuel Adams and the rise of public relations as a factor in decision-making starting with President Eisenhower. Although, public relations is only one element in a campaign, he argues that it is becoming a more crucial step as media and "image" becomes more essential. He points out that the classical democratic paradigm, which regards the press as a form of public intelligence, does not include PR. Reporters, however, are no longer able to keep up with the complexity of society and government and must rely on public relations professionals for assistance. Written in the aftermath of Watergate, Bloom's unhappy conclusion is that "public opinion is not a weapon that the people can confidently hold in reserve as part of their revolutionary arsenal. Instead, it has become a factor subject to professional management". It is almost astounding how little known about the historical function of formal PR in political campaigns is given the significance of elections to a democratic society.

Another author has not looked into the DNC's public relations strategies used in the 1930s and 1940s, although the autobiography of Charles Michelson from 1944 provides some insight and notes that the publicity director "was not of the policy-making group" at the time. Frank O'Hair of Illinois was the first member of Congress to hire a press secretary in 1912, and Hiram Johnson of California was the first senator to do so in 1918. Despite the probability that these press secretaries affected the election, no research has been done on them. The employment of formal public relations in election campaigns may have been impacted by the 17th Amendment, which introduced the direct election of senators and was enacted in 1913, however, this relationship has not yet been thoroughly investigated. The corporate history paradigm that is common in public relations historiography has reportedly inhibited researchers from studying other fields that are just as crucial to understanding, if not more so (Miller, 2000).

### **9. Information strategies**

Fortunately, D.S. presidents' and other leaders' informational campaigns have not been as improperly handled. Most frequently studied topics include presidents and the media as well as executive branch PR, which includes war propaganda. Only one overall history of political PR has been published to date, and it was authored by a British historian. Pimlott (1951) outlines several factors that contributed to the rise of government PR, including the expanding size of both the government and the public and the decline in support for closed-door tactics (such as paying off Congressmen). He claims that even though executive branch agencies were prohibited from hiring publicity agents without congressional approval in 1913, the federal government has justified the use of PR in two different ways: one administrative and one reportorial, with the latter suggesting that policies won't be successful without the support and understanding of the general public. He concludes that citizens should be protected by the professionalization of government information professionals. Despite being nearly 50 years old, Pimlott's book still serves as a useful introduction to the field of formal public relations in politics. Most histories associate the start of government public relations with propaganda during the American Revolution, even though numerous of the colonies employed public relations strategies to encourage settlement (Cutlip, 1995). According to Miller (1936), American propaganda was successful because British officials were worried by its results and thought Sam Adams had transformed New Yorkers and Philadelphians into fire-eating patriots. In summary, nothing is known about the origins of American government propaganda. This reflects the state of the political public relations literature.

### **10. Public Relations of China**

The People's Republic of China is the most populous nation in the world with over 1.3 billion people (Yan, 2000). With a history of about 5,000 years, it is also among the oldest countries in the world. A state cannot continue without ongoing support from its constituents or, at the very least, without any significant opposition. Therefore, such longevity could be viewed as a public relations triumph. Long stretches of political stability have been alternated throughout the nation's history with abrupt, dramatic,



and frequently violent changes. A well-known philosopher named Confucius believed that social stratification was advantageous because it taught people to revere their fathers, local and provincial leaders, and then the emperor, who was frequently referred to as the son of God.

China has long been mostly a peasant society. Peasants spend a significant portion of their time and resources on growing food and just getting by. They have long been considered incapable of making important contributions to social and political processes or choosing their fate by Chinese academics and leaders (Park, 1998). Peasants experienced a lot of misery, which may have made them feel like something needed to change. Chairman Mao Tse-tung recognized the hidden strength and might of the enormous peasantry about 60 years ago. Crisis, culture, and authoritarian government have all contributed to China's closed society. As stressed by Western scholars, communication has frequently been one-way, with little careful listening or consideration of dissenting ideas (Grunig & Hunt, 1984). Modernization and new openings, however, have facilitated slow progress (Chen & Culbertson, 1992).

It is difficult to define the status and scope of public relations in China. There are more than 150 public relations associations across the nation, its provinces, and its towns. But none offers comprehensive coverage of the subject or gathers information on all job descriptions, practitioner credentials, etc. The field's limits are also not well defined. In the PRC, elements like guest relations, translation, and tour-guiding—which are frequently seen as distinct from public relations in the West—take center stage. Additionally, political strategy, a key area of attention in Western public relations, appears to be seen in China by many as a distinct discipline.

Ni Chen, the senior author, who has conducted numerous studies in China before (Chen & Culbertson, 1996), interviewed 10 experts in the field in 2002 to determine the most recent developments and trends. Four instructors, four government employees, one executive from an agency, and one business communication manager participated in the current study. Between 1990 and 1991, Ni Chen gathered the information for her dissertation on public relations at a time when the discipline was just beginning to take off. There were numerous educational institutes offering courses in this area. There were numerous agencies. Moreover, career prospects appeared promising (Chen, 1992). However, according to our sources, throughout the subsequent several years, the field suddenly started to deteriorate. Nearly one-third of the public relations departments in large corporations were cut. In 1989, there were 33 public relations-focused publications and magazines; a few years later, there were only 2. Since the Ministry of Education refused to certify public relations as a major for study at universities, only Zhongshan University in Guangzhou was allowed to provide a public relations program on a trial basis.

Why the drop? Informants offer several plausible explanations. Budgets were cut as a result of China's exposure to the mid-1990s Asian economic slowdown. Marketing was prioritized over public relations in the minds and actions of many businesses. Public relations may have been questioned as a result of tensions with foreign governments and businesses following the government crackdown on students at Tiananmen Square in June 1989. Many believed that public relations professionals were a part of the pervasive commercial and government corruption. Some expressed concern that the profession had expanded too quickly and lacked a solid foundation built on Chinese needs and concepts.

However, public relations quickly began to grow once more. According to a survey carried out in 2000 by the Chinese International Public Relations Association (CIPRA), revenues from public relations services rose from 200 million RMB (\$24 million) to over 2 billion RMB (\$242 million) in just under three years. In the latter decade of the 20th century, PR firms under PRC ownership grew by 30% annually whereas foreign-owned firms only saw a 15% increase. Over 100,000 practitioners were active in the country at the turn of the century, according to the CIPRA study. Similarly, the vice president of

Zenith Integrated Communication noted that other professional industries and high technology have seen tremendous growth (Motion, Leitch & Cliffe 2003).

Why is there growth at the start of the new century? Informants mentioned several causes: (i) There is an increased need for openness as a result of growing worries about corporate and political malfeasance. Executives understood that, in light of anti-corruption initiatives, they would have to make accounting and other operations public to avoid being prosecuted and even put to death. Such publicity needs knowledge of public relations. (ii) There are more and more different types of media outlets. (iii) There is an increasing amount of discussion about how crucial public relations is to the marketing process, just like advertising. In corporate, agency, and academic circles, integrated marketing communication has drawn a lot of interest. (iv) An increase in adult education to support China's emphasis on political, social, and economic development. Adult education curricula began to include more public relations courses. (v) Along with the expansion of a variety of businesses and joint-venture companies, society as a whole is moving away from centralized government and commercial institutions (Wu, 2000). Every organization has different PR issues to deal with.

According to local respondents, communication seems to have a variety of features depending on the industry area. Practitioners primarily function as technicians in small businesses. The way they help businesses create their reputations is through publicity. Public relations frequently manage communications in medium-sized enterprises. The focus is on improving communication between supervisors and staff members as well as between client organizations and the general public. Practitioners participate in strategic planning in major businesses. Creating a positive corporate culture is a priority. Public relations departments now have responsibility for corporate branding and logo creation. However, corporate culture research and development are still in their infancy in China.

When it comes to propaganda, the state government in Beijing frequently employs the press-agentry paradigm (Hunt & Grunig, 1984). Certainly, after the infamous crackdown on students at Tiananmen Square on June 4, 1989, authorities took this action. Leaders of the PRC specifically performed the following: (i) During the Persian Gulf War in 1991, dissident trials were held. The US government and Western media didn't pay much attention because they were focused on Kuwait and Iraq. September 1990: hosted the 11th Asian Games. This was an opportunity for President Jiang Zemin and Premier Li Peng to demonstrate to the world that China was deserving of respect. (ii) Improved their stage presence when speaking with media. President Jiang, for instance, responded to Barbara Walters' queries with grins and sprinklings of English words while wearing a Western work suit. Old-timers like Zhou Enlai and Mao Tse-tung would never have utilized such strategies to appeal to a Western audience (Chen & Culbertson, 1992).

On the other hand, local government representatives shifted toward dialogue. Li Ruihuan, who was the mayor of Tianjin at the time and later occupied a significant position in the Beijing central leadership compound known as the Zhongnanhai, was a pioneer of this method. Li convened open forums as mayor to get feedback from the populace. He urged people to share their opinions with the media. He started a series of yearly polls to gauge public opinion of the local government. Additionally, he used media sources to gather information from folks who were reluctant to communicate with the authorities (Chen & Culbertson, 1992). According to our information, such two-way attempts have recently grown prevalent in southern China's business hubs, particularly in Shanghai, Guangzhou, and Shenzhen. These cities have long served as important gateways for new Western concepts (Chen, 1992).

The field of public relations, which is still relatively new in China, is unquestionably changing swiftly as it defines itself. Western practices do not fit well with Chinese culture. In reality, the field's development appears to have been in opposition to that of the West throughout time as far as communication channels are concerned. American mass media played a significant role in the development of early public relations strategies. However, interpersonal strategies have recently become more significant, in part because of the following: (a) Increasing focus on internal publics like employees, stockholders, and others (b) Audience segmentation and specialist marketing are widely used in strategic theory and in practice (c) The expansion of the Internet and other technologies that make it easier for tiny, niche organizations to communicate

In contrast, the field only recently started in mainland China, with a focus on interpersonal communication. Simultaneous translation and guest relations were well-liked PR strategies. The complexities of Guangxi, culture-based collectivism, and the low credibility of state-owned media all contributed to this, in some measure. The mainstream media, however, seems to have grown in significance recently. Contributing factors include the following: (a) Media acceptance of public relations contributions and pitches has increased along with the number, credibility, diversity, and popularity of media outlets. (b) Products are marketed to huge, diverse audiences as markets have grown in response to rising purchasing power. (c) There is a lot of worry about luring overseas customers and investors through the use of international media now that China has opened its doors to the outside world.

### **11. Public Relations of Russia**

One's collection of social and cultural images of Russia comes to mind when the Russian Federation or simply Russia is mentioned. Some imagine a post-communist nation with a failing economy, while others envision extremely advanced and affluent cities like Moscow. Others speak of the successful transition of the communist regime into a democracy, in which a free market economy develops giving rise to a sizable middle class. Some envision perpetual winters and depressing country roads in remote Russia, along with the poverty and ongoing struggle of Russian citizens. How do we characterize modern Russia and Russian society? There is no one right answer. In addition to having different perspectives and methods for evaluating Russia's transformation, opposing viewpoints on a variety of issues have also been developed as a result of research in the social sciences and social studies looking at how specific phenomena behave differently in various regions of the Russian Federation. For instance, several Russian public relations specialists debated theory and practice by basing all of their arguments only on data from a single region, or even a single city.

Public relations is a relatively new idea among Russians. Before recently, few people were familiar with public relations and even fewer understood it. Less than 20 years ago, the public relations industry began to flourish in Russia, and it has continued to grow since then. Scholars from a variety of disciplines have taken an interest in this novel, uncharted region of potential and have researched the issue in some detail while offering their definitions of what public relations are. A new generation of public relations researchers later faced a dilemma as a result of this very diverse scholarship's development of a diversified understanding of public relations. It was founded on several psychological, social psychological, sociological, political, philosophical, commercial, and journalistic perspectives (Tsetsura, 2000). The disparate public relations practices and lack of theoretical development in Russia are reflected in the lack of a cohesive understanding of public relations.

The history of public relations' growth in Russia is very different from that of this profession's growth in the US. This discrepancy is brought about not just by the relative young of the Russian PR industry, but also by the paucity of research publications in Russian on the subject. The absence of a communication tradition in Russia may be the main distinction between the roots of public relations education in the

United States and Russia. Understanding the field of public relations in the United States depends on your ability to communicate. The tradition of communication does not exist in Russia, though. Instead, journalism has a significant influence on public relations theory, which has implications for Russian public relations.

In Russian public relations practice, government and political PR is a leading expert. There is a lot of research on public relations in this field. Today, political public relations are nearly entirely covered in the majority of public relations textbooks and case studies written by Russian academics. For instance, Pocheptsov (1998) devoted a lot of time delving into the nature of political PR and current trends in the industry. Books on public relations that provide helpful guidance on how to plan political campaigns and employ public relations strategies in election campaigns are among the most widely read (Pheophanov, 2001). Additionally, political public relations and political advertising are frequently studied together, showing that Russian academics do not clearly distinguish between the two (Egorova-Gantman, & Pleshakov, 1999).

Russians frequently criticize political public relations tactics, which is sad given how poorly understood and communicated public relations are in Russian society. Additionally, several unethical techniques, such as black PR, have sparked divisive discussions and caused public relations to be associated with manipulation. Instead of being a genuine phenomenon, the idea of ethical public relations is sometimes dismissed as an oxymoron.

Russian public relations have advanced significantly. This very young profession is expanding tremendously. However, there are a variety of political, social, educational, and cultural quirks that can influence not just how public relations is seen as a discipline but also how it is practiced in distinct mega regions. For the sake of advancing public relations practice and scholarship, modern Russian public relations scholars have started to research and analyze these distinctions. Despite the numerous challenges modern public relations faces in Russia, it remains one of the most fascinating and rapidly expanding professions. Public relations in Russia have a bright future because of ongoing theoretical and practical advancements in the industry.

## **12. Public Relation of India**

It is a relatively new phenomenon to document public relations study and practice, notably in South Asian countries and Asia as a whole. The studies associated with this documentation of the professions cover a variety of facets of public relations, including its history, skilled landscape, theoretical approaches, professionalism, the hardships of the practitioners, models and roles they embrace, and priorities they prioritize. They also compare the frequency of scholarship that has been published (Bardhan, 2003; Patwardhan, 2004; and Sriramesh, 2006). As diverse as the region's prehistoric past is the history of public relations in India. India was ruled by the British for more than 200 years before gaining independence in 1947. Until recently, it was believed that South Asia as a whole was more cohesive. Ethnic, cultural, racial, and religious diversity are still quite strong in this region today.

According to some researchers, public relations in India have their origins in the past, when monarchs issued proclamations to their citizens on rock tablets (Kaul, 1988). While some prefer to concentrate on the time after independence, others have concentrated more on the public relations initiatives that began to take shape during colonial administration. Public relations were utilized by the British government in India to control its ruling methods. Before 1947, multinational corporations like Unilever, Philips, and Dunlop as well as domestic companies like the House of Tata had effective public relations campaigns (Bardhan & Patwardhan, 2004). The successful PR campaign for political activity was the movement for independence from British rule (Desai, 1999).

Following the end of British rule in 1947, India developed a semi-socialist economy, the majority of strategically important industries (such as coal, gas, and steel) were heavily regulated by the government, and a particular form of public relations known as public sector public relations emerged. This strategy put internal/employee interactions and external image management at the forefront. National development was a top priority for the public sector and its public relations work in a newly independent nation (Bardhan, 2003).

Print media flourished and was generally free up until the 1990s, while radio and television were under government control. The government became a significant player in public relations as a result of the media and economic environment (Bardhan & Sriramesh, 2006), whereas the private sector accounted for a considerably smaller portion of the industry. Additionally, in a postcolonial setting at the time, anti-multinational corporation views were fairly strong (Bardhan & Patwardhan, 2004), and the public relations sector had very few ties to the international business community. The industry's infrastructure and reputation were both lacking, and the profession was frequently confused with marketing and advertising (Bardhan, 2003).

The 1990s witnessed a substantial societal transformation marked by an increased demand for public relations, coinciding with the expansion of the private sector and a growing awareness of gender discrimination in society (Jamshed, 2021). Global organizations and multinational corporations partner with Indian businesses and organizations. The print media almost blossomed, especially in regional languages, and radio and television saw extensive privatization. The business soon established itself as a key client for PR (Bardhan & Sriramesh, 2006). The industry's appearance has evolved significantly over the past ten years as a result of digital/internet communication, a high volume of information flow, and a globalized environment. The Indian public relations sector is currently entangled in a global-local dynamic where it is attempting to both navigate the international arena and expand at the domestic level.

Over the past 20 years, the industry has seen several advantages. The overlap between marketing and advertising and public relations in terms of strategic communication is becoming less prevalent. The nation's young, tech-savvy populace, along with the vibrant media and economic environments, indicate a promising future for the sector. There are still certain drawbacks, though. The relationship between the public and commercial sector public relations schools is tense. While organizations like the Public Relations Consultant Association of India (PRCAI) cater more to the business sector's public relations culture, the Public Relations Society of India (PRSI), founded in 1958, includes members who are mostly from the public sector. Most crucially, there is a lack of public relations education infrastructure at the college level, which results in a small pool of qualified entry-level practitioners despite a strong demand (Bardhan, 2003). Patwardhan & Bardhan (2014) claim that the public relations sector in India is generally up against a difficult issue. In its own country, it has been working to establish a solid educational and professional infrastructure in less than two decades, a task that took the United States and other nations more than a generation to do. It is simultaneously putting a lot of effort into becoming a powerful global player.

### **13. Conclusion**

To sum up, this study explores the complex history and significant function of public relations in the areas of democracy, communication, and governance in various states. From prehistoric times to the modern digital era, communication has played a crucial role in forming social structures. The research highlights the Islamic viewpoint on mass media and its current impact on public opinion. Democracy is examined closely as a system that depends on free speech, open communication, and efficient government, with special attention paid to how media is changing in the digital era. Social media is changing democratic processes around the world in terms of transparency, citizen participation, and

government accountability. The early 20th century saw the formal practice of public relations emerge, demonstrating its adaptability to shifting roles and technological developments. Comparative examination of the histories of public relations in the USA, Russia, China, and India offers a global viewpoint, highlighting similarities and contrasts that influence communication tactics. Essentially, this study indicates the critical role that public relations plays in advancing democratic values, facilitating efficient government, and advancing society. The study's conclusions provide insightful guidance for academics and professionals negotiating the ever-changing field of communication in various international contexts.

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