



Dialogic Communication and Strategic Citizen Engagement through Ghana's Public Sector Websites

¹Charles Nii Ayiku Ayiku & ²Charmaine du Plessis

^{1&2}Department of Communication Science, College of Human Sciences, University of South Africa (Unisa)

¹<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7524-370X>

²<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9977-8987>

ABSTRACT

Background: Despite significant investment in digital platforms and e-government initiatives, public sector communication in Ghana via the corporate website continues to function as one-way interaction aimed at information dissemination rather than enabling dialogue, feedback, or sustained citizen engagement.

Objectives: This study examines the extent to which Ghana's public sector corporate websites incorporate dialogic communication principles and identifies the institutional, cultural, and technological barriers that constrain their implementation for citizen engagement.

Methods: The study adopted a qualitative multiple-case design to investigate the understanding, practice of, and barriers to adopting dialogic communication principles for Ghana's public sector corporate websites using semi-structured in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and a manifest content analysis.

Results: The study reveals that Ghanaian public sector corporate websites operate predominantly as one-way information repositories. The dialogic loop, enabling feedback and timely responses, emerged as the weakest element, constrained by hierarchical approval processes, limited digital capacity, and inadequate feedback systems. Other dialogic principles, including mutuality and propinquity, were partially present across institutions, while empathy and commitment were largely absent, indicating a systemic orientation toward information provision rather than relational engagement.

Conclusion: The results contribute to scholarship on digital governance in postcolonial African contexts, proposing ways in which corporate websites may be repositioned from static information hubs toward more interactive platforms with the potential to support democratic dialogue, public trust, and citizen-centred governance.

Unique contribution: The study proposes an eight-component framework, distinguishing strategic from tactical components to facilitate dialogic communication via a corporate website in an African public sector context.

Key recommendation: Ghanaian public sector institutions must reposition their corporate websites as a strategic governance resource by adopting a dialogic approach grounded in listening, mutual understanding, and shared responsibility between the government and citizens.

Keywords: Dialogic communication, public sector, Ghana, corporate websites, citizen engagement



INTRODUCTION

Digital communication has become an indispensable component of contemporary public governance, transforming how governments interact with citizens and deliver public services. The rapid diffusion of information and communication technologies (ICTs) has enabled public sector institutions worldwide to adopt digital platforms that facilitate information dissemination, service delivery, and citizen participation. Increasingly, governments are expected not only to provide timely and accurate information but also to foster transparency, accountability, and meaningful engagement through interactive digital communication. Consequently, communication is now recognised as a strategic resource that strengthens public trust, enhances government legitimacy, and promotes participatory governance (Kim & Lee, 2012).

This shift is reflected in public administration reforms across many countries, where digital governance initiatives seek to improve both administrative efficiency and citizen engagement. Rather than serving merely as repositories of government information, official websites and other digital platforms are increasingly expected to support two-way communication that enables citizens to provide feedback, participate in decision-making processes, and develop sustained relationships with public institutions. Such expectations align with the broader principles of democratic governance, which emphasise openness, responsiveness, participation, and accountability (Moyo, 2020).

Across Africa, governments have invested considerably in digital technologies to modernise public administration and improve public service delivery. Although many countries have expanded access to e-government services and established official digital communication platforms, the interactive potential of these technologies remains largely underutilised. Existing digital platforms continue to prioritise information dissemination over dialogue, limiting opportunities for citizens to engage meaningfully with government institutions (Mano, 2020; Mutsvairo & Ragnedda, 2019). As a result, the relationship-building potential of digital communication has received comparatively little scholarly and practical attention within African public sector institutions.

Ghana has pursued digital governance reforms since the early 2000s through initiatives such as the e-Transform Programme and the Ghana.gov platform, with the objective of modernising public service delivery and improving citizens' access to government services (Adu et al., 2018; Quaye, 2022). Most Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) now maintain official websites, while several have also adopted social media platforms to complement their communication activities (Kim & Lee, 2012). Despite this growing digital presence, communication through these platforms remains predominantly one-way. Government websites continue to function primarily as channels for disseminating information rather than facilitating dialogue, feedback, and citizen participation, reflecting an institutional orientation towards control and administrative compliance rather than interactive engagement (Asamoah, 2019). Consequently, digital communication in Ghana has yet to realise its democratic potential as a mechanism for fostering transparency, accountability, trust, and long-term relationships between government and citizens.



The theoretical foundation of this study is the Dialogic Communication Theory developed by Kent and Taylor (1998), which posits that effective organisational communication should promote mutuality, openness, responsiveness, empathy, and the continuity of relationships between organisations and their stakeholders. Although this framework has been widely applied in corporate and nonprofit communication research, its application within African public sector institutions remains limited. Existing studies on digital governance in Africa have largely concentrated on technological infrastructure, internet accessibility, and electronic service delivery, while paying comparatively little attention to how government institutions strategically employ digital communication to facilitate dialogue and build enduring relationships with citizens (Mano, 2020; Mutsvairo & Ragnedda, 2019).

This limited attention creates an important knowledge gap regarding the implementation of dialogic communication within Ghana's public sector. While previous studies have documented the expansion of digital government platforms, there is insufficient empirical evidence on how public sector organisations understand and operationalise dialogic communication through their corporate websites and the contextual factors that influence such practices. Addressing this gap is particularly important because effective dialogic communication has the potential to strengthen citizen participation, improve institutional responsiveness, enhance public trust, and reinforce democratic governance.

Against this background, this study examines how Ghanaian public sector organisations understand and implement dialogic communication through their corporate websites. It further investigates the institutional, cultural, and technological factors that facilitate or constrain dialogic engagement. Specifically, the study addresses the following research questions:

1. How do Ghanaian public sector organisations understand and implement dialogic communication through their corporate websites?
2. What institutional, cultural, and technological factors influence the extent to which dialogic engagement is achieved on Ghanaian public sector corporate websites?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Digital communication in African public sectors

Governments across the African continent are progressively digitising public administration, intending to enhance transparency, improve service delivery and boost citizen engagement. Despite this growing emphasis on e-governance, research consistently highlights uneven progress in effectively leveraging these technologies for meaningful two-way communication (Bwalya & Healy, 2010; Mutuku, 2014). Ghana's e-governance landscape reflects this broader continental trend: Much effort has gone into official government websites and portals, but the most notable features of real dialogic communication, interactivity, and responsiveness remain lacking (Adu et al., 2018).



Numerous studies across major African nations, including Nigeria (Asogwa, 2013), South Africa (Bwalya & Healy, 2010) and Kenya (Mutuku, 2014), consistently reveal the same impediments to digital public engagement: limited budgets, inadequate staff training, and widespread digital illiteracy among citizens. Collectively, these studies provide compelling evidence of success where challenges have been systematically addressed. In the Ghanaian context specifically, progress has been inconsistent, while digital platforms have expanded, research consistently points to a gap between infrastructure availability and meaningful citizen interaction (Asamoah, 2019).

Strategic versus tactical communication

Strategic communication reflects a long-term approach in which communication is integrated with organisational goals and directed toward relationship management rather than message control. It prioritises interaction, trust, and mutual understanding. In contrast, tactical communication comprises short-term, reactive activities such as routine updates and one-off announcements, limiting opportunities for relationship-building and public dialogue (Andersson, 2025; Cornelissen, 2017; Kent & Theunissen, 2016).

Existing scholarship suggests that public sector communication, especially through digital channels, mostly focuses on the tactical side while ignoring the strategic aspect (Cornelissen, 2017). Government websites are primarily used to communicate straightforward information with little focus on ongoing communication or citizen feedback, revealing underlying institutional logics of control, risk aversion, and bureaucratic accountability (Taylor & Kent, 2014). In Ghana, public sector communication units are commonly structured around information management and media liaison rather than strategic relationship-building, reflecting a predominantly tactical orientation (see Andersson, 2025). This study advances the literature by examining how Ghanaian public sector organisations understand and implement digital communication, locating dialogic practices on the strategic-tactical continuum.

Corporate websites as dialogic platforms

In this study, the terms "corporate website" and "public sector website" are used interchangeably to refer to official institutional websites (Kent, 2013; Kent & Taylor, 2003). Corporate websites occupy a strategically significant position in organisational communication because they provide institutions with substantial control over content design, information architecture and modes of interaction (Kent, 2013). Kent and Taylor (2002; 2003) identified five dialogic principles that guide the use of websites for relationship-building: the *dialogic loop* (enabling two-way feedback), *useful information* (providing relevant, valuable content for all publics), *generation of return visits* (offering features that encourage repeated engagement), *ease of interface* (ensuring navigational simplicity), and *conservation of visitors* (prioritising relationships with existing publics over attracting new ones). It is put forward in this study that in the public sector, websites can be promoted as instruments of transparency, service delivery, and citizen engagement, yet research demonstrates a substantial gap between this potential and practice, particularly in African contexts (Moyo, 2020; Wasserman, 2021).



Studies of African e-government initiatives reveal that limited interactivity on public sector websites is often shaped by institutional constraints rather than technical incapacity. Bureaucratic approval procedures, risk-averse communication cultures and limited strategic ownership of digital platforms frequently result in websites being used defensively rather than dialogically (Moyo, 2020; Taylor & Kent, 2014). This disconnect highlights a key gap in the literature: While prior research identifies the underutilisation of dialogic features, there exists limited empirical insight into how organisational practices, institutional priorities and leadership orientations shape website use in African public sector settings.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Dialogic communication theory

This study adopted Dialogic Communication Theory (DCT) as its analytical lens. DCT, developed by Kent and Taylor (1998), conceptualises communication as a process of relationship-building through two-way, ethical, and mutually beneficial interaction between organisations and their publics, rather than as a one-way mechanism of persuasion. The theory highlights three core components as the main building blocks of trust: openness, which refers to transparency and a willingness to share information and engage with stakeholder concerns; responsiveness, which denotes timely acknowledgement of and action on public feedback; and mutuality, which reflects recognition of shared interests and the cultivation of reciprocal relationships between organisations and their publics (Kent & Taylor, 1998). These principles are particularly applicable to public sector communication, in that government legitimacy rests on genuine citizen engagement.

Building on these principles, Kent and Taylor (2002) proposed five strategies to embody dialogue digitally: the dialogue loop (actively listening and inviting public responses), useful information (disseminating relevant, valuable content), generation of return visits, ease of interface and conservation of visitors. These guidelines serve as a standard for measuring the dialogic capacity of organisational websites. Research shows that organisations practising a dialogic approach gain increased engagement, greater transparency, and improved trustworthiness compared to those that solely employ promotional communication (Kent & Taylor, 2021).

The theory is, however, challenging to implement in the public sector, where bureaucratic and politically sensitive situations prioritise message control and hierarchical decision-making (Moyo, 2020). A question has also been raised about the cultural transferability of dialogic theory, developed mainly in Western liberal democratic contexts. Nevertheless, certain academics assert that the principles of dialogue indeed correspond with indigenous African communicative traditions, based on collective deliberation and reciprocity (Moyo, 2020). DCT provides the analytical framework for examining how Ghanaian public sector organisations understand and practise digital communication through their corporate websites. In doing so, it guides the assessment of website features, communication practices, and barriers to citizen engagement, focusing on openness, responsiveness, mutuality, and the dialogic loop, while underpinning the proposed framework.



METHODOLOGY

Research design

The study adopted a qualitative multiple-case design through a social constructionist worldview to investigate the understanding, practice of, and barriers to adopting dialogic communication principles for Ghana's public sector corporate websites. A social constructionist perspective assumes that meanings and organisational realities are socially produced through interaction and interpretation. Consequently, the study sought to understand how communication professionals construct and interpret dialogic communication within their institutional contexts (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Five national-level ministries representing foreign affairs, education, natural resources, agriculture, and health were purposively selected to ensure diversity in institutional mandate, communication capacity, and digital maturity, thereby facilitating meaningful cross-case comparison (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Five cases were considered appropriate for a qualitative multiple-case design, as they allow for pattern replication and comparison while maintaining analytical rigour (Yin, 2018). The ministries also allowed comparative analysis across different communication contexts within Ghana's central government. Each ministry served as the primary unit of analysis, incorporating the official website, the communication department, and public relations practitioners as embedded sub-units. Cross-case synthesis was used to identify broader patterns of dialogic communication across the cases (Yin, 2018).

Data collection

Data were collected after ethics approval was granted by the researchers' institution, using three complementary methods: semi-structured in-depth interviews, focus groups and manifest website content analysis to enhance methodological triangulation and the credibility of the results.

Table 1 below depicts the data collection methods, sampling techniques and sample sizes employed in the study.

Table 1: Data collection methods, sampling, and sample sizes

Method	Sample method	Sample size	Sample unit
Semi-structured interviews via Zoom	Purposive	5 participants from 5 public sector institutions, respectively	Public relations managers
Focus groups via Zoom	Purposive	30 participants (5 focus groups with 6 participants each)	Public relations professionals
Manifest content analysis	Purposive	5 corporate websites	One website from each public sector institution



Interviews and focus groups conducted via Zoom were recorded with participants' consent and transcribed verbatim for analysis. A qualitative manifest content analysis was also conducted on the official corporate websites of the five selected institutions using Kent and Taylor's (2021) dialogic principles as the analytical framework, as depicted in table 2.

Table 2: Summary of dialogic website features across five Ghanaian public sector institutions

Dialogic principle (Kent & Taylor, 1998)	Description	Presence across institutions (n = 5)	Observations
Mutuality	Evidence of reciprocal links and recognition of publics	3 of 5	Links to citizen feedback or partner organisations were inconsistent.
Propinquity	Opportunities for timely feedback and interaction	2 of 5	Contact forms present, but slow or no response.
Empathy	Tone of communication and concern for publics' needs	1 of 5	Language is formal and bureaucratic. Limited inclusivity.
Risk	Willingness to engage in open dialogue or criticism	2 of 5	Minimal tolerance for public critique or debate.
Commitment	Institutional dedication to sustaining dialogue	1 of 5	No evidence of ongoing dialogue initiatives or evaluation.

DATA ANALYSIS

Following verbatim transcription of the interviews and focus groups, thematic analysis was implemented based on Braun and Clarke's (2021) six-step framework. The researchers generated codes inductively to reflect themes that frequently appeared in communication practices, institutional barriers, and citizen expectations. The themes that emerged were contrasted across the five cases to identify convergent and divergent patterns.

The results from the website analysis were combined with interview and focus group results to create a triangulated interpretation of dialogic communication across the five Ghanaian public sector institutions. Credibility was advanced through Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria for qualitative rigour: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. The coding framework was grounded in established dialogic communication principles (Kent & Taylor



2021), while systematic application of the codebook ensured consistency in identifying and categorising website features (Vears & Gillam, 2022).

RESULTS

The triangulated results of the three methods are presented in terms of three overall themes.

Theme 1: Current digital communication practices

The results reveal that most Ghanaian public sector institutions have established digital communication units and adopted online platforms to enhance information flow and visibility. However, the dominant communication orientation remains informational and administrative rather than dialogic. Institutional websites function primarily as digital noticeboards, featuring press releases, announcements, and project updates without sustained opportunities for public feedback (Adu et al 2018).

Interviews with public relations managers indicated that online engagement is largely perceived as a compliance activity, namely a demonstration of transparency rather than a platform for interaction. Respondents frequently referred to communication as a “requirement of good governance”, but few articulated specific strategies for encouraging citizen dialogue. While all five institutions maintained active social media accounts, only two employed dedicated staff for digital interaction. Moreover, response times to public enquiries were inconsistent.

“We post updates regularly, but we do not really have a system for tracking who [sic] responds or [sic] what citizens say back to us. It is more about putting information out there” (Interview participant, Ministry of Education).

Focus group participants confirmed this observation, noting that while the institutions’ websites provide valuable information, they often fail to acknowledge user feedback. Several participants perceived government communication as unidirectional and impersonal:

“You submit a form and hear nothing. It is like talking to a wall. You know the message went in, but nothing comes back” (Focus group participant, Ministry of Health).

Despite the availability of contact forms and e-mail links, participants reported that responses to submitted queries were either delayed or never received.

Theme 2: Barriers to dialogic implementation

Several interrelated barriers were identified as limiting the adoption of dialogic communication within the public sector, namely institutional hierarchy, capacity deficits and technological inconsistencies.

Firstly, bureaucratic communication structures reinforce top-down information flow. Most participants emphasised the need for prior approval from senior officials before publishing digital content, which delays response times and discourages spontaneous interaction



“Before any response goes online, it has to be cleared by at least three people. By the time approval comes, the moment has passed” (Interview participant, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration).

Secondly, limited staff capacity and inadequate training were frequently mentioned. Many communication officers lack the technical and strategic skills to manage two-way engagement online. Institutions often prioritise public relations protocol functions over strategic communication, resulting in a lack of professional autonomy for communication units.

Thirdly, disparities in digital infrastructure and inconsistent website maintenance undermine continuity. Some websites are outdated or inaccessible on mobile devices, creating barriers to interaction. Communication staff also expressed frustration with the absence of clear feedback loops and inconsistent message framing across platforms.

“Our website has not been updated in months. I know this, but I do not have the authority or the budget to fix it on my own” (Interview participant, Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources).

These results underscore that dialogic communication in Ghana’s public sector remains conceptually acknowledged but practically underdeveloped. While institutions express commitment to transparency, they lack measurable frameworks for interaction and relationship-building.

Theme 3: Opportunities for strategic transformation

Despite limitations, the study identified emerging opportunities that could enable a strategic shift toward dialogic communication. Growing digital literacy among practitioners and the increasing demand for responsive governance represent a significant development. Focus group participants expressed recognition of the limitations of current practices and articulated a desire to move toward more interactive engagement, particularly through mobile-friendly and multilingual platforms.

“If we had the training and the tools, I think we could do so much more. People are online, and they want answers. We just need to be empowered to respond” (Focus group participant, Ministry of Food and Agriculture).

Public relations managers also recognised the reputational and governance value of sustained dialogue. Several respondents noted that proactive engagement could pre-empt misinformation and improve public trust (Kent & Taylor, 2021). The integration of feedback analytics and sentiment monitoring tools offers potential for more responsive communication planning. Furthermore, recent government digitalisation initiatives such as the e-Transform and Ghana.gov platforms provide infrastructural support that can facilitate dialogic practices if strategically managed (Quaye, 2022).

These emerging opportunities collectively informed the development of an eight-component framework for dialogic communication, which is proposed in the Discussion section as a structured response to the barriers and gaps identified across the five case institutions.



DISCUSSION

The study investigated the understanding, implementation of, and barriers to adopting dialogic communication principles for Ghana's public sector corporate websites.

Returning to research question 1, the evidence shows that although public sector institutions in Ghana have invested in digital technologies for communication, their operations remain rooted in traditional, hierarchical information management when implemented (Anani-Bossman & Tella, 2022; Mahama, 2020). The gap between technology adoption and the implementation of dialogue highlights the need for a strategic shift in public sector communication – from a tool of information transmission to a process of mutual engagement. This is important in that dialogic theory (Kent & Taylor, 1998; 2021) conceptualises communication as a process of relationship-building grounded in reciprocity and trust rather than persuasion. Consistent with results from studies in Nigeria (Asogwa, 2013), South Africa (Bwalya & Healy, 2010), and Kenya (Mutuku, 2014), Ghanaian public sector institutions continue to privilege information dissemination over citizen interaction. These studies similarly report that government websites are predominantly used to publish information rather than facilitate meaningful dialogue with citizens. However, whereas previous studies largely focused on technological limitations and digital infrastructure deficits, the present study demonstrates that organisational hierarchy and communication culture are equally important barriers (Kent & Theunissen, 2016; Moyo, 2020).

Returning to research question 2, the results indicate that several barriers impede the implementation of dialogic communication on the corporate websites of these public sector institutions, namely top-down information flow, limited staff capacity and skills, and technological inconsistencies (Andersson, 2025; Taylor & Kent, 2014). Such rigid hierarchies are incompatible with the responsiveness that dialogic communication requires (Taylor & Kent, 2014). The importance of hierarchical approval processes supports previous work by Taylor and Kent (2014), who argue that bureaucratic systems often prioritise message control over responsiveness. Similar concerns have been reported in African public sector communication research (Moyo, 2020). However, participants in the present study consistently identified approval procedures as the most significant obstacle to timely online engagement. The results further suggest that institutionalising dialogic communication requires embedding communication within organisational strategy and strengthening professional communication capabilities (Cornelissen, 2017).

It is therefore argued that for dialogic communication to occur on the corporate website, greater emphasis must be placed on strategic communication beyond focusing solely on tactical tools. Strategic communication should be at the core of governance strategy rather than being a facilitating service department. The results indicate that public relations practitioners are typically in a position of limited administrative authority, which hampers their strategic involvement. Repositioning these roles to focus on relational and dialogic skills would meaningfully transform the way in which institutions communicate with citizens (Andersson, 2025).

The proposed eight-component framework directly responds to the identified barriers in that the strategic components, strategic objectives, public engagement, and the dialogic loop, address the hierarchical and cultural constraints that limit responsiveness and institutional commitment. On the other hand, the tactical components, user interface, content management, and communication channels, address the technological and capacity deficits that undermine continuity and reach. Together, they provide a coherent pathway from compliance-driven information control to genuine strategic citizen engagement.

Based on the results, an eight-component framework distinguishing strategic from tactical components to facilitate dialogic communication via a corporate website is now proposed. The framework repositions the corporate website from a static information hub into an interactive platform for democratic participation, public trust and accountable governance.

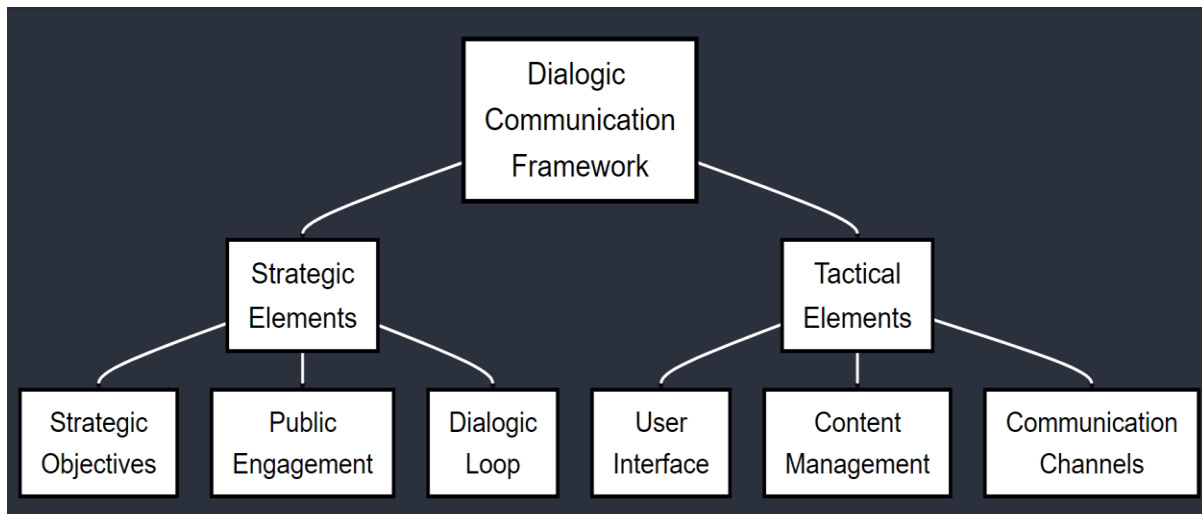


Figure 1: A graphical representation of the framework

The framework comprises strategic and tactical components that jointly support dialogic communication. The strategic components reflect long-term institutional commitments, while the tactical components represent the operational mechanisms through which these commitments are implemented.



The strategic components are outlined in table 3 below:

Table 3: Strategic components of the framework

Strategic component	Explanation	References
Strategic objectives	The organisation's explicit commitment to relationship-building as a governance goal rather than a by-product of information dissemination	Andersson, 2025; Kent & Taylor, 2002
Public engagement	The sustained, intentional effort to create spaces where citizens can contribute meaningfully to governance processes	Taylor & Kent, 2014
Dialogic loop	The institution's responsiveness, its willingness to listen, acknowledge and act on citizen input	Kent & Taylor, 1998

The tactical components are explained in table 4 below:

Table 4: Tactical components of the framework

Tactical component	Explanation	References
User interface	The accessibility, navigability, and mobile friendliness of the corporate website	Kent & Taylor, 2003
Content management	The regularity, relevance, and tone of published content, including the use of plain, inclusive, and culturally appropriate language	Kent & Taylor, 2021
Communication channels	The deliberate selection and integration of platforms, websites, social media and e-mail to ensure broad citizen reach and consistent messaging	Quaye, 2022



Meaningful dialogic communication requires both types of components to function in alignment. For instance, tactical excellence without strategic intent produces compliance-driven communication, while strategic intent without tactical capability results in aspiration without action (Cornelissen, 2017; Kent & Taylor, 2021).

Theoretical and practical implications

On the theoretical level, this research resituates dialogic communication as a versatile and contextually sensitive model that can effectively link public relations, digital governance, and development communication paradigms (Kent & Taylor, 2021; Lane, 2021). It demonstrates that dialogue, if taken seriously in bureaucratic systems, needs to be reinterpreted rather than rejected. Instead of considering dialogue as an unrealistic goal, the results indicate that it can be utilised as a strategic tool for accountability and citizen-centred governance (Kent & Taylor, 2021).

On the practical side, the study equips communication practitioners and policy-makers with actionable strategies based on the proposed framework. The process of institutional dialogue calls for policy and practice cooperation, namely the incorporation of communication goals into national governance frameworks, the creation of accountability indicators, and the promotion of leadership enthusiasm for participatory engagement. Public sector institutions must continuously evaluate their dialogic competence via content analysis and citizen satisfaction surveys to guarantee progress toward genuine engagement.

CONCLUSION

The study proposes an eight-component framework to strengthen dialogic communication in Ghanaian public sector websites. Although public sector institutions in Ghana are equipped with digital infrastructure and there is growing practitioner awareness of the limitations of one-way communication, they remain constrained by structural and cultural challenges. The proposed framework offers actionable guidance for repositioning corporate websites from static information hubs toward more interactive platforms that have the potential to support democratic participation, public trust, and accountable governance, outcomes that will require sustained institutional commitment beyond technical implementation.

The study expands DCT by contextualising it within African public sector realities, illustrating how cultural and resource constraints affect its implementation. The study is, however, not without limitations. The research focused on five Ghanaian government ministries using purposive sampling, which may limit transferability to other public sector contexts. Additionally, the manifest content analysis captured websites at a single point in time, providing a static snapshot rather than a longitudinal view. Further research should be conducted to explore cross-national comparisons of dialogic communication in African contexts, as well as longitudinal studies tracking outcomes of strategic digital engagement initiatives.



Ethical clearance

Ethical clearance was granted by the researchers' institution before data collection.

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Conflict of interest

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

Authors' contributions

Charles Nii Ayiku Ayiku conceived, wrote and implemented the study. Charmaine du Plessis assisted with conceptualisation, guided the research process and critically reviewed and edited the drafts of the manuscript.

Availability of data and materials

The datasets on which conclusions were drawn for this study are available upon reasonable request.

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