

# Enhancing Public Involvement through Digital PR Strategies

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## Abstract

*This study falls within the framework of academic efforts aimed at exploring the relationship between digital transformation and the activation of community participation. It does so by examining the extent to which digital public relations mechanisms are used to establish effective communication between institutions and their audiences through modern digital media. The “Sonelgaz” company in Guelma was selected as the study field, as a public service institution, to monitor the reality of digital public relations practices and their impact on enhancing audience interaction and responsiveness. To achieve the study’s objectives, a questionnaire was employed as the primary tool for collecting quantitative data due to its ability to capture respondent opinions accurately. Additionally, observation was used to monitor behavioural and communicative aspects that cannot be quantitatively measured. These tools were directed at a purposive sample of the institution’s officials due to their direct relation to the research topic, in addition to a random sample of citizens dealing with the institution, to capture the perspectives of both sides regarding digital transformation and the level of community participation through public relations channels. Upon completing the field study and analysing the data, the results revealed weak community participation in the institution’s initiatives, indicating the limited effectiveness of current digital channels in attracting and motivating the public. It also highlighted the absence of clear mechanisms to measure the impact of digital public relations campaigns on enhancing community participation.*

**Keywords:** *Digital Transformation/ Digital Public Relations / Community Participation / Interactive Digital Platforms.*

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## Introduction

Our current era is witnessing continuous technological developments that affect societies, individuals, and institutions alike. Accordingly, countries are constantly striving to keep pace with these changes and integrate them into various fields to facilitate functions and tasks by leveraging the tools provided by digital transformation. It contributes to achieving the well-being of societies and individuals through the diverse services it offers, which highlights the importance of digital transformation and its role in facilitating the exchange of information and data without spatial or temporal barriers—especially in terms of communication between institutions and their internal and external audiences, and the development of interaction methods between them. This has led to improved service quality and enhanced societal engagement in the development process.

In this context, adopting public relations strategies has become essential for institutions to ensure effective communication with the public and strengthen their role in society. This is one of the most important functions of public relations, which is a key strategy present in nearly all modern institutions in one form or another. One of these strategies is community participation, which reflects the degree to which the institution is open to its environment and responsive to individuals’ needs to enhance institutional loyalty. This underlines the strategy’s importance and calls for intensified studies and structured planning of public relations functions across all institutions, including governmental ones. These institutions aim to achieve public benefits and improve services through digital means aligned with societal progress.

## Research Problem

The world is undergoing a comprehensive digital transformation that affects all aspects of life, including societies, individuals, and institutions. Digital technologies—which convert information into digital formats—have become essential tools for improving institutional efficiency and enhancing audience

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interaction through various modern electronic devices and tools that open new channels of communication and digital access, such as social media, digital marketing, and mobile applications. Digital transformation is no longer a choice but a necessity driven by the rapid development in the use of information technology tools in all aspects of life, especially in institutions.

It is a comprehensive program that affects how institutions operate and how information is delivered to audiences. Therefore, all countries are striving to integrate digital transformation into various sectors to streamline related functions and responsibilities. This transformation has revolutionised public relations, radically altering the methods and strategies used by professionals in the field. It has become a central part of modern communication strategies within institutions by introducing new communication channels and increasing the importance of digital content in attracting and influencing audiences.

Public relations strategies have evolved from traditional methods focused on publicity and media that relied on newspapers, magazines, and advertisements to disseminate information and events, to modern digital strategies based on digital tools that enhance effective communication and build institutional reputation. Among these is the strategy of community participation, which facilitates access to information by providing digital platforms and direct channels for citizens to obtain services easily, increasing transparency and credibility and enhancing public trust in the institution.

This is at the heart of what public relations does as a dynamic function present in most institutions, including governmental ones. These institutions are a key part of the state structure with multiple roles, primarily meeting citizen needs, providing public services, and achieving sustainable development.

With the growing interest of public institutions in digital transformation, it has become a pivotal factor in enhancing community participation and effective communication with citizens. Among these institutions is the Algerian Electricity and Gas Company (Sonelgaz), which seeks to adopt advanced digital technologies to improve its services and strengthen its relationship with the public. With increasing reliance on digital channels, Sonelgaz's public relations strategies now heavily depend on digital tools such as social media and interactive digital platforms.

Hence, our research problem can be summarised in the following main question:

**How does digital transformation contribute to enhancing community participation through public relations in government institutions?**

#### **Sub-Questions**

- What are the challenges and opportunities faced by the institution in implementing digital transformation?
- How does Sonelgaz implement the community participation strategy?
- What digital transformation tools has Sonelgaz adopted to enhance community participation?
- How can government institutions effectively apply public relations strategies to build trust with the public?
- What is the role of public relations in enhancing community participation through digital transformation at Sonelgaz?

#### **Significance of the Study**

The importance of this study lies in the significance of its subject matter. Digital transformation has become a fundamental element in the development of public relations strategies within government institutions. This study is particularly important as it offers insights into how digital tools can be used to improve the

effectiveness of institutional communication and strengthen public engagement. It also sheds light on the challenges government institutions face in adopting digital transformation within their communication strategies, which helps in proposing practical solutions for more efficient and transparent communication.

Thus, we can say that digital transformation has become a pivotal tool that government institutions rely on to strengthen their relationship with their clients and achieve their set public relations goals.

### Objectives of the Study

Every research study has specific goals it seeks to achieve. Through our choice of this topic, we aim to reach the following objectives:

- To uncover the role digital transformation plays in developing public relations strategies within government institutions, particularly Sonelgaz-Guelma.
- To assess the extent to which digital transformation contributes to improving the efficiency and effectiveness of institutional communication between Sonelgaz and its audience.
- To identify and evaluate the digital tools used in public relations strategies within government institutions and their impact on audience engagement.
- To analyse the challenges and obstacles facing government institutions, including Sonelgaz, in integrating digital transformation within their communication practices.
- To enrich academic literature with a field study that addresses one of the critical aspects of public relations and digital transformation in government institutions.

### Research Methodology

This study falls under the category of descriptive and analytical research. Accordingly, we adopted the descriptive-analytical method, which combines two fundamental scientific approaches: descriptive and analytical. We relied on both approaches in this study to explore various scholarly works and define the relationship between digital transformation and public relations, and their role in enhancing community participation, as well as understanding the opportunities and challenges associated with digital transformation in public institutions.

### Population and Sample of the Study

The study population includes employees at the Sonelgaz unit in Guelma, particularly the institution's executives and managers due to their direct involvement in the implementation and activation of digital transformation. They are also the primary organisers and operators of activities and initiatives aimed at public interaction and institutional representation.

Additionally, the population includes all individuals and citizens interacting with Sonelgaz-Guelma—whether from inside or outside the institution—to determine the extent to which digital transformation influences and improves their participation and engagement with institutional activities and services.

We adopted a purposive sample comprising Sonelgaz-Guelma employees and a random sample of citizens dealing with the institution.

Thus, the study sample includes:

- Internal audience: managers and executives (29 respondents)

- External audience: clients of the Algerian Electricity and Gas Distribution Company (Sonelgaz) (214 respondents)

We targeted the internal audience to obtain accurate and reliable answers, and the external audience to assess the contribution of digital transformation in enhancing community participation through public relations in the institution.

### Research Tools

Among the scientific tools used in this study are:

- Observation, which helped monitor behavioural and communicative aspects that cannot be quantitatively measured.
- Questionnaire, a vital tool for gathering data and information in large research populations.

Our questionnaire consisted of carefully prepared and objective questions designed to address the study's hypotheses and indicators. We mainly used closed-ended questions.

### Scope of the Study

- Spatial Scope: The field study was conducted at the Algerian Electricity and Gas Distribution Company – Guelma unit.
- Temporal Scope: The study was conducted from February 2025 to June 2025. During this period, important data and information were collected regarding the role of digital transformation in enhancing-community participation at Sonelgaz-Guelma, and the main interactive digital platforms used by the institution to engage with its audience.

### Conceptual Definitions

#### Digital Transformation

Linguistically: The term consists of two parts: “transformation” and “digital.”

- Transformation refers to the act of changing from one state or position to another.
- Digital comes from the word “digit,” indicating a numerical symbol or marker.

Technically: Digital transformation is the process of shifting institutions and organisations from using traditional technologies to adopting digital technologies to improve performance, expand capabilities, and achieve development and innovation. It involves the integration of digital technology into business processes, services, and organisational culture. The aim is to increase operational efficiency, enhance customer experience, foster innovation, and achieve sustainable growth and profitability.

It also includes converting documents and traditional processes into electronic or digital formats, using technology to facilitate access to information and improve efficiency.

Practically: It can be defined as the integration of modern digital technologies into all aspects of life and work to simplify processes and enhance performance. Instead of performing tasks manually or traditionally, institutions rely heavily on digital tools to provide better, faster, and more innovative services.

## Public Relations

Linguistically

- Relations refers to the links or connections between an institution and its audience.
- Public refers to the general population as opposed to specific or private groups.

Technically: Public relations is defined as “a planned activity aimed at achieving mutual understanding and satisfaction between an organisation and its audiences—both internal and external—through policies and programs grounded in social responsibility.

The International Public Relations Association defines it as:

“A continuous and planned management function used by both public and private institutions to gain understanding, sympathy, and support from audiences that matter to. It does this by measuring public opinion and ensuring that organisational policies align as much as possible with public expectations”

The British Institute of Public Relations defines it as:

“Planned and continuous efforts aimed at establishing good relationships and maintaining mutual understanding between an organisation and its audience.”

According to the Longman Dictionary of Media and Communication:

“A management function that evaluates public opinion trends and aligns organisational policies and activities with public interest.”

Practically: Public relations is a set of regular, structured communication activities conducted by institutions to build a positive image and maintain effective communication with internal and external stakeholders.

## Digital Public Relations

Digital PR refers to activities that use internet-based media, search engines, and social networking sites as communication channels between an organisation and its audience. Its main objectives include:

- Strengthening the identity of the company, product, or service.
- Promoting business growth and increasing online sales.
- Building positive relationships with target groups through interactive engagement.

## Community Participation

Technically: Community participation involves the activities undertaken by members of society to serve their community across political, social, cultural, and educational fields. These members can be individuals, groups, or institutions, and their behaviours are often based on voluntarism, commitment, awareness, and transparency.

Another definition sees it as:

“A process where individuals take part in political and social life, have the opportunity to contribute to setting community goals, and participate in achieving them.”

It has also been defined as the act of sharing responsibility in performing tasks or services collectively.

According to Sawsan Othman, it is:

“A deliberate and integrated process based on widespread participation. It is multidimensional and requires joint efforts from experts across various fields, working as a team and coordinating with government agencies to increase the chances of achieving desired goals.”

Practically: It refers to engaging in community activities or initiatives—either directly through physical presence or virtually via social media—by supporting campaigns, volunteering, interacting with content, and freely expressing opinions.

### **A Scientific Overview of Digital Transformation Dimensions**

Digital transformation encompasses four fundamental dimensions:

#### **Change Management**

Change management focuses on people—both internal and external stakeholders—their attitudes, behaviours, and the ecosystems in which they operate. Adopting a comprehensive approach to change helps increase institutional efficiency. Incorporating open principles such as transparency and inclusiveness into change models enables institutions to develop adaptable individuals who can quickly respond to business needs.

Transparency and inclusiveness offer opportunities for open communication and feedback from often-unheard voices. Collaboration and co-creation empower institutions to adopt new perspectives and more innovative solutions, helping identify gaps and barriers faster and thus improving policies, processes, and solutions.

#### **Ecosystem Needs**

An ecosystem consists of the living, interconnected network of people and organisational structures that make up the environment in which an institution operates. All actors within the ecosystem rely on each other for growth and success. Just as in natural ecosystems, a weakness in one component can affect the others over time.

Organisational leaders must understand the needs of all stakeholders involved, especially when introducing new technologies. Often, the introduction of new digital solutions creates an even greater need for institutions to evaluate and align ecosystem requirements before implementation.

#### **Processes**

Each time an institution uses the term “transformation,” it must understand what it truly means—transformation implies a radical change. This requires reviewing and adapting institutional processes to fit the new model. Often, simple yet interconnected processes are overlooked when introducing new technologies, which can unintentionally create workflow overload and production delays.

Leadership must consider connected processes and policies when changing business models or implementing streamlined technological solutions.

#### **Silos**

Institutions that adopt open principles tend to break down barriers that hinder collaboration and co-creation. They create inclusive processes that enable cross-training for employees, encourage transparent knowledge-sharing, and make information easily accessible.

Breaking down silos within institutions has become essential for business and societal success—especially during intense periods of digital transformation. Leaders can embrace new thinking by listening to unheard voices and diverse perspectives, and by creating learning opportunities to build a more capable and adaptive workforce.

### **Phases of Digital Transformation Implementation**

Digital transformation does not follow a fixed path—each institution or organisation adopts a unique process. However, most implementations include six key phases:

#### **Phase 1: Creating an Institutional Vision**

Institutions must define their vision and objectives—not just by focusing on problems to be solved with innovation, but by identifying long-term goals and the desired experience for both employees and clients. A strategic vision must align objectives with available resources to ensure a comprehensive, global outlook for the future.

#### **Phase 2: Assessing Organisational Readiness**

This phase involves evaluating the institution's current infrastructure and digital capabilities. The organisation must analyse how well its systems, software, and tools meet present and future needs. This evaluation supports identifying which services need improvement, which operations should be automated, and how best to invest resources for successful transformation.

#### **Phase 3: Designing the End-User Experience**

Once the vision and current state are established, leadership must empower individuals capable of executing and advocating for change. These individuals play a vital role in convincing others of the benefits of transformation, ensuring buy-in and minimising resistance.

#### **Phase 4: Evaluating the Current Situation**

Institutions must identify their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges to understand where to focus efforts and what requires adjustment.

#### **Phase 5: Creating an Implementation Roadmap**

In this step, institutions gather the necessary resources to ensure effective implementation. This includes planning, budgeting, and assigning roles to avoid errors and optimise execution.

#### **Phase 6: Adjusting Organisational Culture and Infrastructure**

The final phase involves preparing the infrastructure by assembling a team of qualified digital professionals—such as a digital officer and other skilled personnel. If internal resources are lacking, institutions should seek external partners. It's essential to integrate digital transformation into institutional goals and promote a digital culture aligned with the organisation's new digital processes.

### **The Role of Public Relations in the Era of Digital Communication**

#### **Objectives of Digital Public Relations:**

With the expansion of the digital ecosystem and the central role played by the internet and social media in the field of communication—and with the growing number of social media users—the management and protection of an organisation's online reputation has become a core objective for public relations professionals.

The reputation of most organisations is now at stake due to increasing competition and the massive presence on the web. There are countless websites, news platforms, and digital content hubs. This has pushed companies to recognise the importance of managing their online image by carefully planning their communication strategies.

Some of the key objectives of digital public relations include:

- **Promoting a Positive Image:** Spreading a favorable image of the company to attract investors and individuals who want to be part of its success, mainly through influential digital media.
- **Crisis Communication & Awareness:** Protecting the company's image during crises and raising public awareness about its services through influencing target audiences via platforms like blogs, online magazines, news websites, and social media.
- **Enhancing Credibility:** Strengthening the organisation's credibility by delivering consistent, transparent, and accessible information across all digital channels.
- **Bringing the Company Closer to Its Public:** Making the company present and visible in the business world by sharing updates and creating easy access to information.
- **Managing Online Reputation:** Monitoring and protecting the organisation's image across social media platforms and focusing on the identity the company wishes to project.
- **Direct Interaction:** Facilitating real-time engagement with audiences to improve brand image and identity.

### **Digital Public Relations Strategies:**

Public relations includes a variety of strategies that institutions adopt under digital transformation and rapid technological advancements. The most prominent among them are:

#### **1. Information Strategy:**

This strategy involves conveying the institution's vision through communication by presenting facts and data to attract public interest and governmental attention. It typically follows a one-way communication model from the organisation to the public, often using journalistic forms like press releases, reports, or TV programs.

#### **2. Educational Strategy:**

This approach presents facts and explanations in an objective manner to raise awareness and encourage positive behaviours. It relies on rational interpretation to achieve organisational goals and maintain a strong reputation.

#### **3. Persuasion Strategy:**

This strategy targets audiences directly to influence their opinions, beliefs, and attitudes. It frequently uses emotional appeals and, at times, logical arguments, evidence, and statistics to craft persuasive messages, especially for elite audiences.

#### **4. Dialogue Strategy:**

This strategy encourages two-way communication that reflects the viewpoints of both the organisation and the audience. It emphasises audience involvement in meetings, seminars, and decision-making processes, respecting public opinion as a core value.

### **5. Consensus-Building Strategy:**

Used when there are conflicting interests among parties, this strategy seeks to develop mutual understanding and improve institutional policy. It indirectly promotes the institution's value to maintain a leading position and enhance its reputation.

### **6. Cooperation Strategy:**

This strategy is applied when the organisation and the public share common goals and mutual needs. It creates a sense of shared responsibility based on truthful information to overcome obstacles and improve services collaboratively.

### **7. Image-Building Strategy:**

This strategy focuses on forming a positive institutional image by highlighting achievements that benefit society. It promotes organisational goals that reflect community well-being and reinforces the desired perception of the institution.

### **8. Incentive Strategy:**

This strategy includes motivational messages and promises of better services to encourage public engagement and interaction with the organisation.

### **9. Social Responsibility Strategy:**

Public relations departments use this strategy to build strong ties with various community groups by participating in their interests, solving problems, promoting security awareness, and supporting societal development.

### **10. Community Participation Strategy:**

This strategy is rooted in enhancing the involvement of individuals and empowering marginalised groups. It motivates them to take active roles in ongoing events and decision-making, helping the institution build synergy with its surrounding environment. Community participation also helps reduce negative emotions—especially among poorer populations—by addressing their needs and engaging them in changing their socio-economic conditions with the support of responsible institutions

## **A Scientific Reading of Community Participation Dimensions**

### **The Importance of Community Participation:**

Community participation holds great importance as it:

- **Enhances National Belonging:** It fosters a sense of patriotism and eliminates passivity and dependency within the community. Participation is a social value in itself and a collective approach that offers numerous benefits.
- **Strengthens Social Solidarity:** Participation brings together people from diverse backgrounds to work towards common goals, fostering a cohesive and cooperative society.
- **Develops Skills and Capacities:** Through volunteering and involvement in community projects, individuals gain new skills and develop capabilities that help them both personally and professionally.

- Improves the Local Environment: Participation leads to better living conditions through collective involvement in local projects and services.
- Solves Social Problems: It enables individuals to engage in dialogue and action to find practical solutions to social issues.
- Promotes Democracy and Political Involvement: Participation helps individuals understand and exercise their democratic rights through voting, public discussions, and engagement with decision-makers.
- Empowers Marginalised Groups: It gives underrepresented communities a chance to express themselves and take part in impactful events and decisions.
- Ensures Services Suit Local Needs: By involving citizens directly, services can be better aligned with real community demands.
- Supports Non-Governmental Efforts: NGOs can play a vital role where governmental institutions may fall short, particularly in outreach and responsiveness.
- Builds Awareness: Participation leads to deeper understanding of social realities and empowers communities to shape their own futures through continuous learning and engagement.

### **The Role of Digital Transformation in Enhancing Community Participation:**

Interactive digital platforms are among the most prominent tools of digital transformation within government institutions. They aim to:

- Improve service quality.
- Enhance transparency.
- Simplify communication between administration and citizens.
- Enable remote service delivery and real-time interaction.
- Streamline administrative procedures.

#### **1. Types of Interactive Digital Platforms:**

##### **a. Development Platforms (Creative Platforms):**

These digital tools allow individuals or groups to express ideas, develop projects, and share innovations electronically. Their aim is to stimulate creative thinking and encourage engagement. Examples include:

- GDG Algeria: A platform specialised in tech workshops.
- GitHub: A platform for managing programming projects and developer collaboration.
- Stack Overflow: The largest online developer community, offering solutions to coding problems.

##### **b. Transactional Platforms:**

These platforms facilitate digital commercial interactions between individuals or businesses. Examples include:

- Payment platforms
- E-commerce platforms
- Service marketplaces
- Product marketplaces

c. Communication Platforms:

These provide tools for fast, diverse, and effective communication among users. Examples include:

- LinkedIn (professional networking)
- WhatsApp
- Instagram
- Twitter (X)

d. Social Networking Platforms:

These platforms create digital spaces where communities connect through mutual interactions. Examples include:

- Instagram
- Twitter
- Facebook
- Flickr

## Applied Section: Data Analysis and Interpretation

### Description of the Institution under Study:

Sonelgaz – Guelma is a regional unit affiliated with the national Sonelgaz Group. It is responsible for managing and organising electricity and gas distribution activities across the Guelma province. It operates under the guidance and strategies of the parent company and serves as a fundamental link in executing Sonelgaz's local-level tasks, ensuring high-quality public services in electricity and gas sectors.

Its core missions include:

- Distributing electricity and natural gas throughout the province.
- Maintaining electricity and gas networks and responding to technical failures.
- Ensuring the quality and continuity of public energy services.
- Receiving and handling customer complaints and concerns.
- Supervising new expansion and connection projects.

- Managing local human and financial resources.
- Complying with safety, security, and environmental standards.

### Key Results of the Citizen Survey:

#### Sources of Information about Sonelgaz Services

– Source	– Frequency	– Percentage
– Social media platforms	– 130	– 60,7%
– Official website	– 81	– 37,9%
– Mobile app	– 12	– 5,6%
– Other	– 12	– 5,6%

#### Interpretation:

Most respondents (60.7%) rely on social media as their main source of information about Sonelgaz services. This reflects a growing trend toward fast, simple digital media. The official website came second (37.9%), though it is expected to be more reliable. The limited reliance on it may stem from weak promotion and lack of interactive, regularly updated content. Meanwhile, only 5.6% use the mobile application, possibly due to lack of awareness or insufficient guidance on its use. Another 5.6% mentioned alternative sources like local radio or printed advertisements, likely due to digital illiteracy or personal preferences.

#### Do Digital Transactions Save Effort Compared to Traditional Ones?

– Response	– Frequency	– Percentage
– Yes	– 79	– 36.9%
– To some extent	– 82	– 38.3%
– No	– 53	– 24.8%

#### Interpretation:

Most participants answered “to some extent” (38.3%), suggesting that digital services offer convenience but are not yet fully optimised. 36.9% agreed completely, indicating satisfaction with the digital transition.

However, 24.8% saw no difference, likely due to lack of awareness, difficulty understanding procedures, or insufficient support.

#### Citizen Participation in Institutional Initiatives:

– Response	– Frequency	– Percentage
– Yes	– 41	– 19.2%
– No	– 173	– 80.8%

Interpretation:

A large portion of citizens (80.8%) do not participate in Sonelgaz’s initiatives. This indicates weak community involvement, possibly due to limited promotion of these initiatives through digital channels or a lack of engaging, easy-to-use formats.

#### 4. Quality of Digital Interaction with Citizens:

Result (Graph Summary):

- 55.6% rated interaction as acceptable
- 24.8% said it is good
- 17.8% said it is poor
- 1.9% rated it as very poor

Interpretation:

Most participants see the digital interaction as acceptable but not outstanding. Some appreciate the efforts of the digital PR team, while others experience delays or unresolved issues that lead to dissatisfaction.

#### Challenges of Digital Community Participation:

– Challenge	– Frequency	– Percentage
– Lack of instant response service	– 116	– 54.2%
– Poor internet network	– 115	– 53.7%
– Outdated information	– 50	– 23.4%
– Absence of notifications	– 41	– 19.2%

## Interpretation

The most common difficulties are delayed responses and poor internet, which hinder effective engagement. Outdated information and missing alerts also impact user experience and transparency, reducing participation rates.

### Key Results of the Employee Survey:

#### 1. Availability of Digital Platforms for Public Relations

– Response	– Frequency	– Percentage
– Yes	– 24	– 82.8%
– No	– 5	– 17.2%

#### Interpretation:

The majority (82.8%) confirmed that Sonelgaz has digital platforms dedicated to public relations. This indicates the institution's efforts to implement digital transformation. However, the 17.2% who said “no” may reflect a lack of internal communication or insufficient training about these platforms.

#### 2. Effectiveness of Digital Platforms in Communication with the Public

– Response	– Frequency	– Percentage
– Yes	– 18	– 62.1%
– To some extent	– 7	– 24.1%
– No	– 4	– 13.8%

#### Interpretation:

A considerable portion (62.1%) sees the platforms as effective, though 24.1% believe their impact is only partial—possibly due to a lack of strategy or content management. Meanwhile, 13.8% do not find them effective at all, suggesting a gap between platform availability and proper audience engagement.

#### 3. Is Community Participation a Priority in Digital Public Relations Strategy?

– Response	– Frequency	– Percentage
– Yes	– 11	– 37.9%
– No	– 18	– 62.1%

#### Interpretation:

62.1% of staff believe that community participation is not prioritised in the institution's digital PR strategy. This suggests either an absence of clear planning or a gap in aligning communication goals with societal needs.

#### Challenges in Implementing Community Participation via Digital Platforms

– Challenge	– Frequency	– Percentage
– Lack of qualified staff	– 14	– 48.3%
– Lack of technical resources	– 11	– 37.9%
– Lack of cooperation from management	– 4	– 13.8%

Interpretation:

The main barrier is the lack of trained and specialised personnel (48.3%), followed by insufficient technical tools (37.9%), and weak management support (13.8%). These obstacles hinder the institution's ability to successfully implement and benefit from digital community participation strategies.

### Overall Study Findings

Based on the field study and analysis of collected data, we summarise the key findings as follows:

- The institution has made efforts to adopt digital transformation in communication, especially through social media, but these efforts are still limited and lack comprehensive strategy.
- Community participation in Sonelgaz-Guelma initiatives is weak, pointing to a need for more engaging, accessible, and transparent communication tools.
- Digital platforms are available but not fully leveraged to activate meaningful community involvement.
- There is a shortage of trained human resources and a lack of coordination between departments, hindering the integration of digital tools in public relations activities.
- The institution lacks clear mechanisms to measure the impact of digital campaigns on community participation.

### Conclusion

This study confirms that digital transformation has the potential to enhance community participation through effective use of public relations strategies. However, in the case of Sonelgaz-Guelma, there is a noticeable gap between potential and actual performance. This gap is due to technical, organisational, and human challenges that prevent the full realisation of digital engagement objectives.

The institution must adopt a clear, integrated strategy that includes training, resource allocation, and audience-focused content creation to achieve better digital communication and stronger community engagement.

### Recommendations

1. Develop a comprehensive digital public relations strategy that emphasises community participation.
2. Increase training for PR staff in digital communication tools and audience engagement techniques.
3. Improve infrastructure and provide necessary digital resources to support communication efforts.
4. Strengthen coordination between departments to ensure unified and consistent digital messaging.
5. Design interactive and user-friendly digital platforms that encourage citizen engagement.
6. Establish performance indicators to assess the impact of digital PR campaigns on community participation.

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