

## **HUMAN COMMUNICATION RESEARCH: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW**

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### **Abstract**

*While communication is a daily thing for humans, human communication involves not only the transmission of information but also the interpretation and understanding of that information. This paper examined research conducted by researchers in human communication. The study utilized the systematic review methodology for gathering data. Findings revealed that researchers have focused more on areas of human communications like human communication and technology, Publishing, Mediated communication, Education and Public speaking. The study also found that researchers were more active during the period of 2010-2019. Also that most works done in Human communication were more of books than empirical research. The study recommended that interdisciplinary approach to presentation and collaborations as well as more concerted research in the area.*

**Keywords:** human communication, systematic review, communication,

### **Introduction**

Communication is at the basis of all behaviours that are uniquely human in nature since it is the essential premise of human life to be able to communicate with one's surrounds and the rest of the world. Communication is the structures factor of human social existence and creates the social reality rather than just serving as a way of explaining it. Hence, communication work as a systemic process in which people interact with symbols and via them to generate and interpret meanings (Elebute&Oyewole 2021).

Human communication plays a crucial role in various contexts and has significant importance in our daily lives. Human communication serves as the foundation for social interaction, understanding, and cooperation in various contexts. It enables the exchange of ideas, thoughts, emotions, and knowledge, contributing to personal, professional, and societal growth and development. Human communication can be found in different contexts like, Personal Relationships, Professional or workplace Settings, Education, Social and Cultural Interaction, Healthcare, Public Speaking and Leadership and Media

and Mass Communication among others (O’Sullivan & Carr 2018). Through the transmission and reception of context-dependent verbal and nonverbal signals, human communication creates meaning. According to Masterson, Beebe, and Watson (1989), human communication is the act of constructing meaning via the use of verbal and nonverbal cues in order to make sense of the environment and share it with others. Communication is defined as having two components by the National Communication Association, an academic institution that aids in regulating the field. Communication is defined as how people use messages to generate meanings within and across various contexts, and is the discipline that studies all forms, modes, media, and consequences of communication through humanistic, social scientific, and aesthetic inquiry (National Communication Association, n.d.).

### **Objectives**

Aim of this study is to examine the research conducted by researcher’s human communication. Other objectives are as follows;

1. To find out the areas covered by researchers in human communication
2. To find out the period researchers focus more on researching about human communication sub themes.
3. To determine the most preferred method of paper presentation.

### **Methodology**

This study used the Systematic review technique. According to Pursell & McCrae (2020) a systematic review is a rigorous and comprehensive method used to synthesize and analyse existing research on a particular topic or question. It involves systematically searching for, selecting, appraising, and synthesizing relevant studies to provide a comprehensive summary of the available evidence. Thus the systematic review was used to find, gather and analyse relevant data for the study. The study population was one hundred (100) purposively selected published articles in the area of Human communications.

### **Source for data/ digital databases used**

1. Google scholar,
2. Research gate,
3. Academia,
4. JSTOR and
5. Elsevier

### **Key words used**

1. Human communication,
2. Human communication OR Communication
3. Communication or Indigenous African communication
4. Human communication AND Cultural Interaction
5. Human communication AND Education
6. Communication OR Speech
7. Speech OR Public speaking
8. Professional OR Organizational Communication
9. Publishing OR Digital publishing

10. Human Communication Research

**Criteria for inclusion:** criteria for including published articles in the systematic review

1. The published articles must be written and authored in English language
2. The articles are authored by Nigerian scholars
3. The articles are discussing various issues of human communication in Nigeria

**Criteria for exclusion**

1. Any article written in mixed language is excluded
2. Any article not relating to human communication in Nigeria
3. Any article without information related to the topic were excluded

The articles selected were then compiled in an annotated bibliography form of one hundred studies. Finding possibly related papers with the study's objectives led to the selection of the one hundred articles. The researcher and an assistant first examined the abstract before reading the body of the articles to see if they meet the requirements for inclusion. The evaluation was completed in the next step by choosing pertinent articles that matched the requirements for inclusion. The data gotten from the study was tabulated for analysis.

**Literature review**

**Technology and human communications:** the technological inroads in the world and its effect on human life is felt in communication also. The convergence of the media has aided faster communication and real-time communication. Thus researchers have studied how internet and other technologies have affected human communication. According to Galantucci, (2010) the emergence of human communication systems is typically investigated via 2 approaches with complementary strengths and weaknesses: naturalistic studies and computer simulations. This study was conducted with a method that combines these approaches. Pairs of participants played video games requiring communication. Members of a pair were physically separated but exchanged graphic signals through a medium that prevented the use of standard symbols (e.g., letters). Communication systems emerged and developed rapidly during the games, integrating the use of explicit signs with information implicitly available to players and silent behaviour-coordinating procedures. According to the researcher The systems that emerged suggest 3 conclusions: (a) signs originate from different mappings; (b) sign systems develop parsimoniously; (c) sign forms are perceptually distinct, easy to produce, and tolerant to variations.

Consequently, Gong & Nass (2007), Computer-generated anthropomorphic characters are a growing type of communicator that is deployed in digital communication environments. An essential theoretical question is how people identify humanlike but clearly artificial, hence humanoid, entities in comparison to natural human ones. This identity categorization inquiry was approached under the framework of consistency and tested through examining inconsistency effects from mismatching categories. Study 1 (N = 80), incorporating a self-disclosure task, tested participants' responses to a talking-face agent, which varied in four combinations of human versus humanoid faces and voices. In line with the literature on inconsistency, the pairing of a human face with a humanoid voice or a humanoid face with a human voice led to longer processing time in making judgment of the agent and less trust than the pairing of a face and a voice from either the human or the humanoid category.

Female users particularly showed negative attitudes toward inconsistently paired talking faces. Study 2 (N = 80), using a task that stressed comprehension demand, replicated the inconsistency effects on judging time and females' negative attitudes but not for comprehension-related outcomes. Voice clarity overshadowed the consistency concern for comprehension-related responses. The overall inconsistency effects suggest that people treat humanoid entities in a different category from natural human ones.

In their study, Onyeator and Okpara(2019) examine people's perspectives of interpersonal communication, especially in the digital age. The contemporary digital era is majorly characterized by human interaction and this has led to a difference in the way people communicate. The authors argue that the revolution in communication patterns which has now shifted to human machine communication from face-to-face interpersonal contact has been enabled by technology affordances. The researchers use a family unit in Nigeria to investigate the changing communication patterns in families due to the constant use of new technologies. They administered structured questionnaire to approximately 370 participants in the 37 Lagos' local development areas. Results showed that due to constant engagement with technologies, family members lost interest in engaging in interpersonal communication. The loss of interest results from non-self-disclosure and reduced cues.

**Professional or organisational communication:** Strong communication skills are vital for public speaking, presentations, and leadership roles. The ability to convey ideas clearly, engage the audience, and inspire others is essential in these contexts. Communication skills are essential for success in the workplace, family, business and the world over. Clear and effective communication enables collaboration, teamwork, and productivity. It helps in conveying ideas, negotiating, and resolving conflicts. Golish, (2006), used systems theory to examine the communication strategies that differentiate "strong" stepfamilies from stepfamilies having more difficulty, inductively deriving a composite of stepfamily "communication strengths." A total of 90 in-depth interviews were conducted with stepparents, parents, and stepchildren from 30 stepfamilies. The stepfamilies, regardless of their strength, faced 7 primary challenges in their development: "feeling caught," regulating boundaries with a noncustodial family, ambiguity of parental roles, "traumatic bonding," vying for resources, discrepancies in conflict management styles, and building solidarity as a family unit. However, the communicative tactics used to manage them differed according to the strength of the stepfamily. In general, strong stepfamilies reported using every day talk, more openness, spending time together as a family, communicating clear rules and boundaries, engaging in family problem solving, promoting a positive image of the noncustodial parent, and more consistency in perceptions about the severity of their problems. Implications for appropriate boundary integration in stepfamilies are discussed.

Oral communication is a very important part of everyday life. It is important to you because, as you make communication decision, you are building your personal and professional future. Whether it is oral, written, or nonverbal, communication is what makes us human. It assists us in building relationships and carrying out daily work. Communication is also important to our society generally because it helps us develop a sense of community even though we are a diverse country with many differences of opinion. Through communication we discover our similarities of interest and purpose and can reach consensus or gain understanding on many issues about which we disagree. It is

a must-read resource material to students, scholars and general public who value the importance of good communication skills for effective communication. The author has vast knowledge and experience in human resource services.

**Nonverbal communication:** Nonverbal Communication in Human Interaction breaks down nonverbal communication, analyzes it, and looks at it from every angle so that readers have an intellectual and not just an intuitive grasp of this endlessly fascinating subject. Knapp, M., Hall, J. & Horgan, T. (2021) in their book “Nonverbal communication in human interaction” offered an interdisciplinary approach to the study of nonverbal communication that shows how it affects a wide variety of academic interests. The book added theory and research from scholars with a wide variety of academic backgrounds, including communication, anthropology, counselling, psychology, psychiatry, and linguistics.

**Publishing as human communication:** Information is the foundation of human communication, and books and other print media are one of the best ways to share information. In Nigeria, the book publishing business has benefited greatly from digitization, which has made it simpler for publishers to reach a larger audience and for writers to self-publish their works. Ifeduba, Agu, and Adejoh (2020) claim that legal book publishing is one of the industries seeing significant growth due to digital advances. Digital technology is now driving the processes of generating and dispersing professional publications. Nevertheless, there are few studies specifically examining the use of innovation by legal publishing companies, particularly in developing nations.

Digital publishing improves book publishing process from the initial stage of text creation to the final stage of distribution and access by readers. Regardless of these benefits, partial or wholesome transition to digital publishing among Nigerian book publishers is hazy (Haco-Obasi & Chukwu, 2021).

Another study Adegbite-Badmus, T. A., & Folayan, B. J. (2020) explored the prospects of electronic publishing in Nigeria and highlighted the potential benefits of e-publishing, including wider reach, lower production costs, and improved reader experience. The study demonstrated that digital publishing is still in its early stages in Nigeria, but there is potential for growth and development in the industry. Publishers and other stakeholders in the industry can benefit from a deeper understanding of digital publishing and its potential benefits, as well as strategies for adopting and deploying digital publishing technologies.

**Education:** Communication is fundamental in education. Students rely on effective communication to understand and learn from teachers and peers. It facilitates the exchange of knowledge, clarifies concepts, and promotes active participation in the learning process.

**Social and Cultural Interaction:** Human communication enables individuals to connect with others from diverse backgrounds, fostering social integration and understanding. It facilitates intercultural communication, promoting tolerance, empathy, and the appreciation of cultural differences. Cross-cultural communication as a field of study is a human communication variant of investigating how people from differing cultural backgrounds communicate, in similar and different ways among themselves, and how they endeavour to communicate across cultures. Intercultural communication is a related field of study

Jack & Schyns, (2015) noted that as highly social species, humans frequently exchange social information to support almost all facets of life. One of the richest and most powerful tools in social communication is the face, from which observers can quickly and easily

make a number of inferences — about identity, gender, sex, age, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, physical health, attractiveness, emotional state, personality traits, pain or physical pleasure, deception, and even social status. With the advent of the digital economy, increasing globalization and cultural integration, understanding precisely which face information supports social communication and which produces misunderstanding is central to the evolving needs of modern society (for example, in the design of socially interactive digital avatars and companion robots). Doing so is challenging, however, because the face can be thought of as comprising a high-dimensional, dynamic information space, and this impacts cognitive science and neuroimaging, and their broader applications in the digital economy. New opportunities to address this challenge are arising from the development of new methods and technologies, coupled with the emergence of a modern scientific culture that embraces cross-disciplinary approaches.

Jack & Schyns, (2015) review an approach that combines state-of-the-art computer graphics, psychophysics and vision science, cultural psychology and social cognition, and to highlight the main knowledge advances it has generated. In the light of current developments, the study provided a vision of the future directions in the field of human facial communication within and across cultures.

Media and Mass Communication: Human communication through media platforms plays a significant role in disseminating information, shaping public opinion, and influencing social, cultural, and political dynamics.

## **Results and Discussion of Findings**

### **Research Question 1**

**Table 1. Human communication areas focused on by researchers**

S/N	HUMAN COMMUNICATION SUB THEMES	Frequency	PERCENTAGE %
1	Publishing	15	13.8
2	Healthcare	10	9.2
3	Social and Cultural Interaction	5	4.6%
4	Public Speaking and Leadership	11	10.1
5	Media and Mass Communication	15	13.8%
6	Education	18	16.5
7	Indigenous communication	11	10.1
8	Professional or organisational communication	8	7.3
9	Communication and technology	16	14.7
	<b>Total</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>100%</b>

Based on the one hundred annotated bibliography gathered by the author, findings show that researchers focus more on research that relates human communication and technology (14.7%) to Publishing (13.8%), Mediated communication (13.8%), Education (16.5%), and Public speaking (10.1%).

### **Research Question 2**

**Period researchers focused more on researching about human communication sub themes**

S/N	Period of publication	Frequency	Percentage %
1	1970-1999	12	11

2	2000-2009	39		35.8
3	2010-2019	44		40.4
4	2020-2023	24		22
	<b>Total</b>	<b>109</b>		<b>100</b>

Based on the findings of this study, it is revealed that 40% percent of the articles reviewed were published between 2010-2019. After this, from 2000-2009 the articles garnered 35.8% coverage. Comparatively, from 2020-2023 there were 22% published and 11% between 1970-1999.

### **Research Question 3**

#### **Method of paper presentation**

S/N	Paper type	Frequency	Percentage %
1	Book	45	41.3
2	Empirical paper	20	18.3
3	Position paper	11	10.1
4	Conceptual paper	19	17.4
5	Literature review	14	12.9
	<b>Total</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>100</b>

Based on the findings of this study, it is revealed that 41% percent of the mode of presentation by the authors was books, 18.3% were empirical papers, 10.1% position paper, 17.4% were conceptual papers and 12.9% were literature review works.

### **Discussion and conclusion**

Based on the data presented it has been revealed that researchers have over the years focused mainly on the subjects of Human communication as it relates to human communication and technology, Publishing, Mediated communication, Education and Public speaking. The study also concluded that researchers were more active during the period of 2010-2019. Also that most works done in Human communication were more of books than empirical research. The implication is that most researchers in that area did not explore other means of presenting their works. The study recommended that interdisciplinary approach to presentation and collaborations as well as more concerted research in the area,

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