

MEDIA RELATIONS IN MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS FOR PROMOTING GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS (SDG 17)

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Abstract

This paper will discuss how media relations not only can act as an instrument of strategic corporate communications since the 2015/2020 schedule under Sustainable Development Goal 17 (SDG 17) specifically recommends media relations as a promotional tool of multinational partnerships, but also how global partnerships equates to international marketing. This paper considers the importance of media relations in leadership of global corporate in the context of multinational corporations (MNCs) as a promotional tool in Sustainable Development Goal 17 (SDG 17). The study brings out the role that traditional and online media can play in helping corporations to improve their visibility, create credibility, and build on the level of trust they have with various stakeholders who include governments, NGOs, and local communities. Based on the results of the literature, it is evident that the role of media relations goes beyond the concept of publicity to include accountability mechanisms, transparency and multi-stakeholder contracting. The media is first located as the intermediate, however, they manipulate the perception of the population and impact the collaboration on the international level. The analysis highlights that even though online platforms have provided chances to interact with any person around the world in real time, they have also subjected companies to various threats including misinformation and image issues. In general, both the literature review and the presented study find that media relations are essential to empower the legitimacy of multinational corporations in the role of the global partners to improve the speed of achieving SDG 17.

Keywords: Media Relations; Multinational Corporations (MNCs); Global Partnerships; Corporate Communication; Reputation Management; Stakeholder Engagement; Sustainable Development; SDG 17

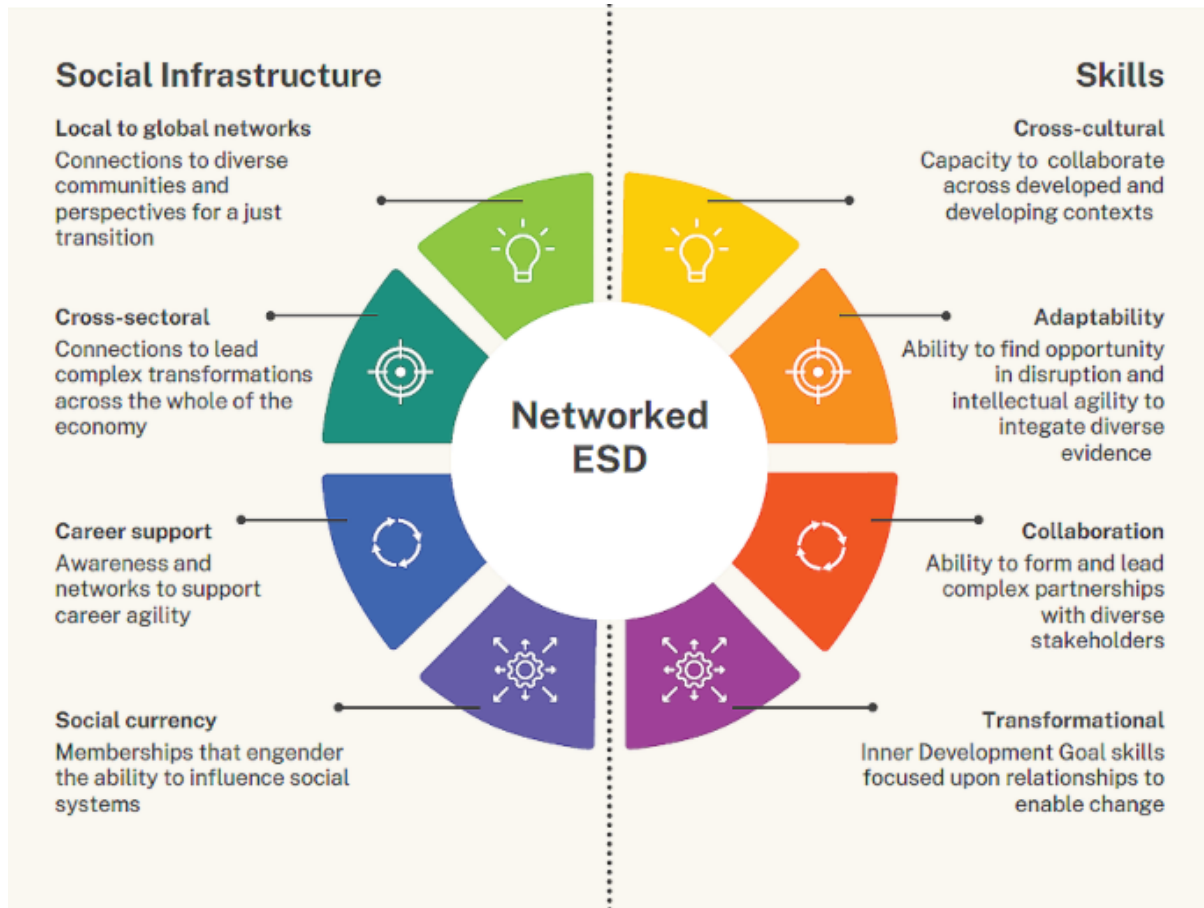
Introduction

With this nature of the world becoming more globalized, multinational corporations (MNCs) have been in the centre stage in determining global economic, social and political responses. Not only are they active in the business system of international development but they were also involved in the development agenda of the world and particularly within the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Among them, the Sustainable Development Goal 17 (SDG 17) that aims at improving global interactions in a manner that leads to sustainable development indicates the reason why the collaboration among the areas, industries, and nations should be taking place. The strategic aspect of corporate communication, also referred to as media relations is an essential medium onto which MNCs can build trust and create transparency and involve stakeholders in the international relationships (Pantoja, 2025). The media functions as an informer and carrier of information but at the same time it is also an independent stakeholder which influences the perception of corporate responsibility, legitimacy as well as alignment to the purpose of global sustainability. Concerning media relations and MNCs, reputation management could be critical, but mobilizing the collective

action, expertise exchange, best practices presentation, can serve to promote SDG 17. In this regard, the field of media relations goes beyond traditional PR and transforms into a communication, lobby and co-blocking system with governments, civil society, international organizations and other actors, any corporate (Cruz, 2019). In addition to that, during a era of digital revolution where news cycles are quicker than ever with a greater presence of the world then ever, media relations is becoming even more important in enhancing the international cooperation than ever before. By addressing media material proactively, MNCs can intensify their sustainability narrative, exhibit partnership agenda, and gain pool of ideas regarding development issues in the world. Corporations can establish themselves as viable partners of SDG 17 through the merging of their most perpetuated stability plans and media approaches, and to which end, inclusive development and sustainable international improvements.



Globalization has changed the dynamics of the corporate functioning and placed multinational corporations (MNCs) in the centre of the international development and collaboration. Such companies do not only promote the economic process, but also control the cultural exchange, policy discussion, and cross-border sustainability efforts. In line with the existing policies of sustainable development within the United Nations, MNCs have emerged as key stakeholders in regards to development of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Among them is SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals that dwells on the importance of forming strong international partnerships: governments, private sector, civil society, and international companies to jointly address the larger problems to the world as inequalities, climate change and sustainable growth. Media relations is disclosed in this landscape as a strategy of operation tool of communication, exchange of information and augmenting partnership systems. Media is also no longer a simple eyewasher but also the assistant which may make the people informed and makes an opinion, besides making them more responsible. The presentation of willingness to act sustainably, the definition of the activities of taking part in global relations, and the results in the legitimacy of stakeholders are instances of good practice in the interference of media in the case of the MNCs.



Media relations enable corporations to market themselves as reliable partners in development initiative in the world by creating a sense of transparency and credibility. Increase in the digital communication platforms and social media growth has only extended the sphere of media relations where a corporation can now interact with various audiences across geographical regions in real time. This change has allowed MNCs to transcend the austerity of the press relationship and shift to the multi-stakeholder engagement approaches that increase corporate voices in the sustainability talks. As an example of how strategic storytelling projects by the global media could help to realize SDG 17, there may be partnerships between businesses, governments, and NGOs. Moreover, media relations allow corporations to communicate their innovation, transfer knowledge, or recreate effective patterns of partnerships with international partners across countries and speed up the achievement of the SDGs. Therefore, the idea, conceptually examined as media relations in situations of multinational corporations and the manner the companies contribute to building global alliances, is a beneficial way of understanding how the communication articulates can contribute to international cooperation, raising the standards of accountability and improving the speed of the SDGs implementation. This paper aims at analyzing the overlapping of media relations, corporate power, and building global partnership, where MNCs may use communication to service and sustain sustainable development at a global magnitude (Cruz, 2023).

Rationale of the Study

The justification of this study process is that increasing number of people have been appreciating the fact that MNCs are not just an economic player but also strategic partners towards the realization of global development objectives. Specifically, the SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals highlights the importance of cooperation between governments, civil societies and the private sector to achieve sustainable development. Although such partnerships

are enabled through the financial resource, technological innovation, policy frameworks, and the connective crust that draws different stakeholders in is communication. Media relations being one of the most fundamental aspects of communication within the corporate setting, offer the relevance, perception, and accessibility of alliances, which in turn encourage fruitful and healthy partnerships (Bull and McNeill, 2019). Although the role of media relations in ensuring global collaborations is crucial, there has been a lack of study done in the literature and practice in corporates regarding the value of these techniques. MNCs are likely to take up sustainability reporting, corporate social responsibility (CSR) campaigns, and partnership activities, but, unless well addressed through the media, their campaigning might not meet and influence targeted audiences. Through media relations, these initiatives will be formulated in a manner that they are well-as understood and framed within the global development contexts as well as be broadcast to the stakeholders, both at local and international levels. In this respect, media is not only the source of information, but a stakeholder, passing checking of the corporate status in long-lasting collaboration. To a greater degree, the digital and social media which are rapidly evolving have transformed the way partnerships are determined and viewed in the world. The stakeholders have grown to need the existence of real time transparency and interactivity and this cannot be an offering of the traditional press relations. This study is therefore timely because it is a reaction to the reality that MNCs ought to be capable of adapting their media practices to adapt to the hyper-connected information-based world.



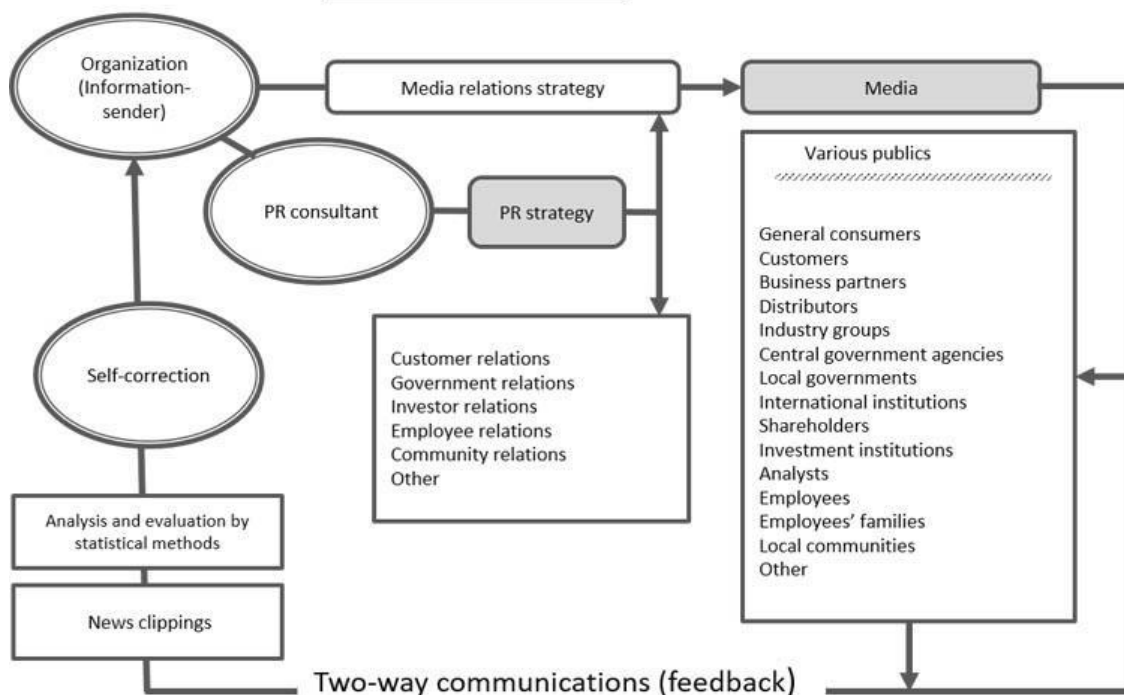
By defining the application of media relations by MNCs to establish trust and cooperation and earn SDG 17, the study is not only rich in connotation on the scholarly level but also on the policy and practice. It points out that where alliances are concerned, all that can bring about success is that they must center not just on deals, but also around resources and round-trip communication enabling a two-way understanding and developed trust and accountability. They can be followed on the assumption that the relations of the media are not marginal, but central to furthering the global partnership. This aspect may contribute to the academic pool of literature and more pragmatic models that enable the corporations with tactics and strategies to apply the media as a method of sustainable international cooperation.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this paper is that it sheds light upon the essential urgency of media relations to ensure that turn multinational corporations (MNCs) into the active participants of SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals. In the academic circles, it expands the horizon of the available

literature explaining the convergence between media communication, corporate operations as well as sustainable development which has not been delved in detail. The research, in turn, finds practical application to the corporate configuration because it provides frameworks through which media campaigns may be investigated with an extrapolation-oriented move through surmounting reputation management to the strengthening credibility, presentation of partnership programs and fosterment of trust among government and global bodies alongside the civil society. One of its beneficiaries could be development agencies and policy makers since the study shows that it can be utilized by them as a tool of accountability, transparency, and guaranteed assistance with other sectors when it comes to cooperation (Bull and Miklian, 2019). At the social level, it emphasizes on effective media interaction as a way of reducing information asymmetry supporting inclusiveness, and promoting general collective behavior in the resolution of international problems. Lastly, the media relations in the given study are discussed not merely as the part of corporation but as the generator of sustainable cooperation which again extends the importance of communication in the grounds of meaningful international cooperation.

Media Relations



Source: 2015 Takashi Inoue, *Public Relations: Relationship Management*, 2nd edition

Academically, the paper fits deeper into the pool of knowledge where the issue of corporate social responsibility, sustainability reporting, and stakeholder engagement has been taken seriously in the literature without prioritizing much concern on the specific role of media relations in facilitating partnerships. The study can tell much to multinational corporate practitioners as it provides them with practical information on the pursuit of traditional and virtual media space, not only to protect the companies and enhance their image, but also to survive as reputable partners in global affairs of sustainability. It highlights the importance of strategic media interaction to increase the partnership programs, improve visibility, and construct the narratives that connect corporate achievements with the general developmental aims (Montiel et al. 2021). Policy and development wisely, the research paper reinforces the

importance of the media as one of the instruments of accountability and transparency, to enable governments, NGOs and international organizations to make their association in partnership with the private visible, credible, and influential. Additionally, on a societal level, the research reveals the effectiveness of media relations in helping minimize information asymmetries, influence the public opinion toward cooperation across the globe, and take action together to solve transnational problems like climate change, poverty, and inequalities. That way, the study points at the fact that media relations is not just a supportive corporate role, but a key facilitator of sustainable international collaboration, to provide sustainable benefits to academia, business, and policy makers, and the society in general.

Literature Review

Concept of Media Relations in Corporate Communication

Media relations constitute a core aspect of corporate communication since it acts as the interface of the relations between organizations and the citizenry via different media. Conventionally, media relationships have been conceptualized as the process of development and sustenance of win-win relationships between corporations and the journalist, editors, and other representatives of the media. The main purpose has been to achieve precise, equitable, and positive news and coverage that will facilitate the corporate image and reputation (Vogler and Badham, 2023). Nevertheless, today the PR practice of media relations have taken new dimensions way beyond the press releases and news coverage, as they incorporate a tactical interaction with a wide spectrum of the traditional and online media displays. Media relations in corporate communication are not really transactional but relational in nature with more credibility, transparency and trust creation towards the external audiences. According to scholars, the media can be seen as an intermediary and a stakeholder, having a greater impact on their perception of corporates by the people, the regulators and their partners. Through the proper management of the PR in the area of media relations, organizations will be able to make themselves more visible, deliver important messages, as well as establish themselves as legitimate participants in the realm of the public discourse. This is even more central when the operations of a multinational outfit (MNC) extend across boundaries of multiple cultures and even across the borders of multiple politics, as the media relations becomes even more predominant, because a single company can generate a narrative that can influence the entire world and yet remain mindful of the realistic situation on the ground. Besides this, the relations with the media are also irrevocably linked to the general goals of corporate communication including the image, contact with stakeholders and corporate social responsibility (CSR). Proving their responsibility, showing results, and being proactive before crisis contributes to the companies interest when faced with and by various audiences as a result of good media management. Other modern trends in the sphere of media relations process include the rise of social media that solidified the process of media relations as two-directional because corporations nowadays can not only broadcast but also contact stakeholders in real-time. This has expanded the field of corporate communication and media relation now is an important strategic concern of building and sustaining organizational legitimacy, trust, and partnerships (Guffey and Loewy, 2019).

Multinational Corporations and Global Communication Practices

MNCs work under very complex settings whereby communication is a core element of enforcing legitimacy, creating stakeholder trust, and balancing cross-national relationships. MNCs communicate with a wide range of audiences due to being a global actor, namely governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), media, employees, and local communities. Communication quality, thus, become not only a business need but also possible strategic instrument to commence corporate goals with international progress priorities. Cultural diversity, language differences, and the diverse conditions related to politics and

regulatory issues disadvantage MNCs affected in communication (Perkins, 2020). The scholars note that standardization and localization have to obtain some balance when it comes to establishing practices of global communication in MNCs. Although the corporations tend to use a global approach to the communication process, being consistent in the brand positioning, they also adjust messages to local standards, values, and expectations. This is essential to maintain the positive attitude of the population and end up in a situation of credibility, particular in the territory that could have suspicious attitudes towards foreign companies.

Another emerging requirement of MNCs is corporate social responsibility, which relates well enough to open and transparent communication, particularly regarding the sustainability and corporate development agenda. MNCs are demonstrating their responsibility and filling the gaps by being responsible in terms of sustainability reporting, stakeholder communication and contactually engaging in media interaction, with regard to their partners in the global arena. Media relations play the role of publicity system in this regard, as much as the location of these perceived mutual activity, knowledge exchange, and international collaboration. This has also transformed how the MNCs communicate with one another across the world as the communication is now digitalized. At any one time, transnational audiences may be met with on online platforms, social media, and the online news journalists now, it becomes possible to reach people and bring global initiatives before their eyes in reality time after time (George and Schillebeeckx, 2022). Nevertheless, this online environment deals also in increased scrutiny of MNCs whose information goes into circulation fast and whose reputability may be easily jeopardized. Therefore, the practice of global communication needs to be handled in specific environments with the media relations taking the centre stage in shaping the story, ensuring legitimacy, and earning alliances with global settings in accordance with the Sustainable Development Goals objectives like SDG 17.

Media Relations as a Tool for Building Corporate Reputation

It has been widely known that corporate reputation is one of the most intangible assets to any organization most especially to a multinational corporation (MNC) which depends on various cultural, political and economic conditions to survive. Media relations are important because they determine, stabilize and safeguard this reputation by how corporations are being framed in the readings (Lee, 2022). Favored press publicity promotes credibility, trust and makes a corporate entity acceptable and responsible in the global arena and unfavored publicity destroys confidence in stakeholders and harms future collaborations. Media relation is a management instrument that is used in shaping a corporate image in line with the company values and expectations by the stakeholders. Corporations can also be able to convey their ethical conduct, environmental sustainability, and social responsibility when talking to journalists, editors and digital influencers. According to scholars, corporate identity is formed as companies and stakeholders engage and that media plays a leading role in this approach. Therefore, positive media involvement means that the collective organizational discourse is not just heard, but it is also given the meaning that boosts the legitimacy of organizations.

The role of media relations is even larger in the case of MNCs whose operations are carried out across national and cultural borders. Such companies have to juggle both international and local reputations as they need to draw a steady brand message, but also suit the local culture. As an example, whereas the global press is concentrating on the overall contribution of a corporation in sustainability, the local one can have the concentration on the community-based impacts and partnerships. The capacity to penetrate new markets with reputable media interactions can enhance the capacity of MNCs to earn professional and efficient precedence with the government and non-government organisations and establish alliances across the continents in pursuant to SDG 17. Besides, reputation management by media relations refers not only to a positive promotion but also to a proactive crisis communication. In a digital time

of instant gratification, it is the corporations that are at the increased risk of misinformation, criticism and reputational crises. Apparently, media relations strategies, including appropriate selection of information at the right time, honest disclosure, and sympathetic communication have the ability to calm risks and regain confidence among the stakeholders. In this way, MNCs will not only safeguard their image but also show their credibility as agents of sustainable growth as they position themselves as open and responsible partners.

Media and Stakeholder Engagement in Sustainable Development

Sustainable development focuses on stakeholder involvement as a way of choosing and representing the interest of various people such as governments, the civil society, businesses, local communities, and international agencies among others in the process of swaying the decisions. In the context of multinational corporations (MNCs), media relations serve as an important process that will enable such an engagement, which entails a built-in dialogue channel, releasing information, and maximizing acquaintance. Not only will the media disseminate corporate agendas but will also serve as a watchdog that will make sure corporations are accountable toward their claims of sustainability and their commitments with partners (Mehmood et al. 2023). Studies show that the media has a dual role in engaging the stakeholders, one being that media has the role in boosting the corporate voices but on the other hand, moderates the opinions of people regarding corporate responsibility. Through planning and efforts in using both traditional and digital media, corporations could make it easier to communicate their efforts as an achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals, in multiple ways that would appeal to various audiences. As an example, MNCs can highlight the problem of their collaboration with governments, non-governmental organizations and other corporations, with the help of media campaigns, press releases and cooperative narratives and establish themselves as the active players of the international cooperation.

The customer base activity has traveled far through the e-media platform. Two-way correspondence ensured by sharing social media sites, corporate blogs and online forums enable the corporations to face their stakeholders face-to-face hence resulting in inclusiveness and trust. This has seen the stakeholders not be passive recipients of information as they are now a part of the conversation. Such interaction not only increases legitimacy of the companies, but also provides the corporations with valuable information on how to be more sustainable and more efficient in organizing their partnership strategies. In addition to this, the media relations assist in creating the perception of the inclusive narratives, which reflect the interdependence among the global problems. Sustainable media involvement makes the aspect of normal behaviour usual through focusing on the worth of collective action and manifesting the idea of negotiation and bringing forth the diverse voices of the stakeholders. This can be a strategic strength in the case of MNCs as it makes it more legitimate and it also makes them viable institutions in the global quest towards sustainable development. This will put media relations beyond reputation management and transform it into a significant stakeholder inclusion instrument, dialogue, and mutual responsibility tool in SDG 17 advancement (Mehmood et al. 2023).

Methodology

The qualitative research design is preferred in the current paper, relying mainly on the secondary data represented by the academic literature, reports, and case studies and corporate communication models. The systematic review of available scholarly articles, sustainability reports and international organization publications were used to study how multinationals helping with global joint ventures, use media relation to offer support. The thematic organization of the literature was defined by the main spheres: the idea of media relations, communication activities in the MNCs, corporate reputation, stakeholders involvement, and

the digital media use, and the overlap with SDG 17. Synthesizing findings, reaching conclusions related to comparing views, and determining similar patterns, the themes approach was used to achieve the desired outcomes. This will enable the study of communication as an instrument to sustainable development to be investigated in detail without shouldering it on a single corporation or industry. The methodology is credible because it is based on the evidence documented and theoretical ideas and offers an opportunity to understand how the media relations could be long-term aligned with the goals of SDG 17.

Results and Discussion

The conclusion of this paper is to point out that media relations is not only crucial in corporate communication, but also in providing strategic facilitation towards global collaborations as regards SDG 17. To sum up the literature review, one can state that MNCs highly depend on media interaction, which assists the establishment of positive perceptions, appearance of a sense of legitimacy, and to define them as players accountable to the process of world development. The findings suggest that proper management of media relations transcend the capacities of publicity to enhance a medium of transparency, dialogue, and building trust with cross-border stakeholders as a means of media relations. This fact supports the perception that media serves as a mediator and a mediator in that it modulates the images of multinational corporations in the sustainability arena of the globe. Among the major findings is that media relations have a direct impact on the corporate reputation that leads to an improved capacity of MNCs to engage in relationships (Vogler and Badham, 2023). Taking the initiative to contact media forms a support network, corporations enable their initiatives to gain attention, enhance credibility, and prove their reliability as partners; therefore, they become reliable partners. Based on an example, the delivery of communications on partnership contributions should take the form of press releases, media conferences, and storytelling of a corporation so that it is able to appeal to governments, NGOs, and local populations. The discussion shows that corporations that are considered to be transparent and accountable have a higher chance of attracting long term partners which consequently lead to the process of achievement of SDG 17.

The findings further indicate that media engagement of stakeholders is a key element of communication of sustainable development. The conventional media still be determined in the establishment of trust and credibility; however, the online platforms turn the engagement process into a more interactive and inclusive one. Evidence indicates that through the social media platforms, online news media, and the digital campaigns, MNCs have the ability to communicate with various stakeholders in real-time and establish a two-way communication approach perspective, allowing the involvement in more global initiatives. A transition of this kind to media relations will be in agreement with the shift towards media relations, where one-way marketing has been adapted into a dialogue where multi-stakeholders take corporations into the solution-discussing group addressing the global plight and not only an economic player.

Table: Role of Media Relations in Corporate Communication

Aspect	Findings	Implications for MNCs and SDG 17
Traditional Media Relations	Historically focused on press releases and publicity.	Limited scope in promoting sustainable partnerships.
Contemporary Media Relations	Strategic, relational, and trust based.	Builds credibility and legitimacy in global cooperation.

Media Stakeholder	as	Media influences public perception and corporate accountability.	Enhances transparency in partnerships and ensures accountability.
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The other significant deliverable is that the digital media is developed as an initiator of international alliances. The information technology platforms also facilitate MNCs to inform about innovations, best practices and enlist assistance in development endeavors at the transnational level. On the one hand, via media relations, corporations can be in a position to show its contribution in partnerships, and increasing legitimacy and augmenting its impact in international cooperation. Alternatively, the meticulousness of the media holds MNCs to account in that partnership claims are established to be made in actual performance. Such duality will ensure that the media relations channel is not only used to foster alliances but is also increasingly concerned with the integrity since it is the godsend of improving cooperation to the entire globe. As it was observed in the discussion, appropriate media relations contributes to the establishment of plausibility in multinational corporations with regard to partnerships sustenance. Conventional methods of communication and online communication give the corporation the opportunity to establish reputation, draw stakeholders and the feeling of trust that is part of the execution of SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals.

Table: Media Relations and Corporate Reputation

Reputation Factor	Role of Media Relations	Impact on Global Partnerships (SDG 17)
Visibility	Ensures initiatives and partnerships are highlighted.	Attracts global partners and increases recognition.
Credibility	Communicates authenticity and transparency.	Builds trust with governments, NGOs, and communities.
Crisis Management	Provides timely responses and transparent disclosures.	Maintains trust and prevents disruption of partnerships.

Conclusion

The article essay gravitates on the finding that media relations is an evocative facilitator, which multinational corporations may apply to activate global multi-relationships and build on SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals. Media engagements whether through the pre-existing traditional media or the newer digital media assist the corporations to feature the partnership activities, and communicate the promises of sustainability and gain the trust of the different stakeholders across borders. When properly using media, MNCs can chance to develop corporate image, inclusiveness as well as accountability; these are significant constituents of success in long time cooperation. The paradox roles of media, seemingly on the contrary, are also noted in the conclusions, in the process of establishing visibility and cooperation, its other part can be observed on the watch of a watchdog that has expectations of corporations to return transparently and honestly. Digital transformation has made real time communication a reality but also with equal woes such as the misinformation and reputational aspects and this was because, digital transformation has placed the responsibility on corporations to take initiatives and due care of cultures prior to communication. Last but not last, the paper indicates that media relations can hardly be seen as anything more than a side involved, yet a central component of establishing collaboration, lining up activities and cementing the process of achievement of a sustainable global development.

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