

Employees' Perceptions of Promotional Strategies, Digital Communication and Fundraising Effectiveness in Nigerian Nonprofit Organisations

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Abstract

Purpose: Nonprofit organisations operate in increasingly competitive environments where effective fundraising, stakeholder engagement, and organisational visibility are essential for long-term sustainability. Despite growing interest in nonprofit marketing, empirical evidence on promotional strategies within developing economies remains limited. This study examines employees' perceptions of the role of promotional strategies and digital communication in supporting fundraising effectiveness, stakeholder engagement, and organisational visibility among nonprofit organisations in Nigeria. **Design/Methodology/Approach:** A quantitative cross-sectional survey design was employed. Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire administered to employees of three Nigerian nonprofit organisations: the New Era Foundation, the Murtala Mohammed Foundation, and the Nigerian Heart Foundation. A total of 296 valid responses were analysed using descriptive statistics. **Findings:** Employees generally perceived promotional strategies as contributing positively to fundraising effectiveness, organisational performance, and membership development. Respondents also recognised the importance of digital communication, particularly organisational websites and social media, in strengthening stakeholder engagement and enhancing organisational visibility. The findings suggest that employees perceived the combination of traditional promotional activities and digital communication as supporting stronger stakeholder relationships and organisational sustainability. **Originality/Value:** This study contributes empirical evidence from a developing economy, where empirical research on nonprofit marketing remains comparatively limited. It extends understanding of employees' perceptions of how promotional strategies and digital communication support fundraising effectiveness and stakeholder engage-

ment, while providing practical insights for nonprofit managers seeking to strengthen organisational sustainability.

Keywords

Nonprofit Organisations, Promotional Strategies, Fundraising Effectiveness, Stakeholder Engagement, Digital Communication, Nigeria

1. Introduction

Nonprofit organisations play a vital role in addressing social, educational, health, and humanitarian challenges that governments and the private sector cannot adequately address alone (Salamon & Sokolowski, 2016). They deliver essential public services, promote community development, advocate for vulnerable populations, and contribute to sustainable development (Anheier, 2014). However, nonprofit organisations increasingly operate in competitive environments characterised by constrained financial resources, rising donor expectations, greater accountability, and intensified competition for philanthropic support (Laurett & Ferreira, 2018). Consequently, securing sustainable funding has become a major strategic challenge for many nonprofit organisations (Werke & Bogale, 2024).

To address these challenges, nonprofit organisations have increasingly adopted strategic marketing practices to strengthen stakeholder relationships, enhance organisational visibility, and support fundraising activities (Dolnicar & Lazarevski, 2009). Contemporary nonprofit marketing extends beyond promoting organisational activities to creating long-term value for donors, volunteers, beneficiaries, corporate partners, governments, and local communities (Mato-Santiso, Rey-García, & Sanzo-Pérez, 2021). Within this broader perspective, promotional activities represent an important communication strategy for encouraging charitable giving, membership recruitment, volunteer participation, community engagement, and stakeholder advocacy (Sargeant & Shang, 2010). Recent literature further emphasises that nonprofit marketing is increasingly viewed as a strategic organisational function that integrates relationship building, stakeholder engagement, digital communication, and organisational sustainability, while highlighting the need for greater empirical evidence from developing-country contexts (Werke & Bogale, 2024).

Alongside traditional promotional activities, digital communication has become an increasingly important component of nonprofit marketing (Saxton & Wang, 2014). Organisational websites, social media, email marketing, and online donation platforms enable organisations to communicate more effectively with stakeholders, improve organisational transparency, strengthen donor trust, and enhance the communication of social impact (Mato-Santiso, Rey-García, & Sanzo-Pérez, 2021). Consequently, effective nonprofit marketing increasingly depends on integrating traditional promotional approaches with digital communication strategies

to maintain stakeholder relationships and organisational visibility.

Despite growing research on nonprofit marketing, important knowledge gaps remain. Existing studies have predominantly examined nonprofit organisations operating in developed economies, limiting understanding of nonprofit marketing within resource-constrained environments (Laurett & Ferreira, 2018). Furthermore, fundraising, stakeholder engagement, digital communication, and promotional activities have frequently been examined as separate areas of inquiry, providing limited understanding of employees' perceptions of how these promotional strategies collectively support organisational performance and stakeholder relationships within nonprofit organisations (Mato-Santiso, Rey-García, & Sanzo-Pérez, 2021). Although recent reviews have advanced understanding of nonprofit marketing, empirical evidence from African and other developing-country contexts remains comparatively limited (Werke & Bogale, 2024).

Nigeria provides an important context for addressing these gaps. The country's nonprofit sector plays a significant role in healthcare, education, humanitarian assistance, youth empowerment, and community development, yet many organisations operate under financial constraints while competing for limited donor funding, volunteer support, and public attention. These conditions increase the importance of effective promotional strategies and digital communication for strengthening stakeholder relationships and supporting fundraising activities. However, empirical evidence examining employees' perceptions of these promotional practices within Nigerian nonprofit organisations remains limited.

Against this background, this study examines employees' perceptions of the role of promotional strategies among selected nonprofit organisations in Nigeria. Specifically, it investigates how employees perceive promotional activities in relation to fundraising effectiveness, membership development, organisational visibility, and stakeholder engagement, while considering the complementary role of digital communication in supporting these organisational activities.

This study makes three contributions to the nonprofit marketing literature. First, it provides empirical evidence on promotional strategies within nonprofit organisations operating in a developing economy, addressing the limited empirical evidence on nonprofit marketing within African and other developing-country contexts. Second, it provides empirical evidence of employees' perceptions of the role of promotional activities and digital communication in supporting fundraising effectiveness, stakeholder engagement, and organisational visibility. Third, it offers practical insights for nonprofit managers seeking to develop integrated communication strategies that strengthen stakeholder relationships and enhance organisational sustainability in resource-constrained environments.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Nonprofit Marketing and Organisational Sustainability

Nonprofit organisations operate in increasingly competitive environments characterised by constrained financial resources, rising donor expectations, volunteer

recruitment challenges, and growing demands for accountability (Laurett & Ferreira, 2018). Unlike commercial organisations, they pursue social rather than commercial objectives, making effective stakeholder relationships central to organisational sustainability (Mato-Santiso, Rey-García, & Sanzo-Pérez, 2021). Consequently, marketing has evolved from a promotional function to a strategic capability that supports fundraising, stakeholder engagement, organisational legitimacy, and long-term sustainability (Werke & Bogale, 2024).

Contemporary nonprofit marketing emphasises creating value for multiple stakeholder groups, including donors, beneficiaries, volunteers, corporate partners, governments, and local communities (Mato-Santiso, Rey-García, & Sanzo-Pérez, 2021). This stakeholder-oriented approach reflects a shift from transactional fundraising towards relationship marketing, where organisations seek to build trust, commitment, and long-term stakeholder loyalty (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Relationship-oriented approaches have been associated with stronger donor retention, repeat giving, and greater organisational resilience in uncertain funding environments (Sargeant & Shang, 2010). More recent marketing literature similarly highlights that value creation increasingly depends on collaborative engagement among multiple stakeholders rather than one-way organisational communication (Aksoy et al., 2022).

Relationship Marketing Theory provides an appropriate theoretical foundation by proposing that long-term organisational success depends on developing enduring stakeholder relationships rather than focusing solely on discrete transactions (Berry, 1983; Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Complementing this perspective, Stakeholder Theory argues that organisational performance depends on effectively balancing the interests of multiple stakeholder groups (Freeman, 1984; Freeman, Phillips, & Sisodia, 2010). Together, these theories position communication, trust, and stakeholder engagement as central mechanisms through which nonprofit organisations seek to strengthen fundraising activities and organisational sustainability. Aksoy et al. (2022) further argue that effective stakeholder engagement requires organisations to coordinate interactions across multiple stakeholder groups, reinforcing the strategic importance of relationship-oriented marketing within nonprofit settings.

Recent evidence supports this strategic orientation. A systematic review by Werke and Bogale (2024) identifies stakeholder relationship management, fundraising, branding, social media communication, and performance measurement as dominant themes in contemporary nonprofit marketing research. Similarly, Mato-Santiso, Rey-García and Sanzo-Pérez (2021) demonstrate that nonprofit organisations increasingly manage stakeholder relationships through multiple communication channels, integrating traditional promotional activities with digital communication to strengthen engagement and organisational visibility. Collectively, these studies indicate that integrated marketing approaches have become increasingly important for nonprofit organisations while also highlighting the limited empirical evidence available from African and other developing-country

contexts. This reinforces the need for context-specific studies examining employees' perceptions of promotional strategies within Nigerian nonprofit organisations.

2.2. Sales Promotion and Fundraising Effectiveness

Fundraising is a primary mechanism through which nonprofit organisations secure the financial resources required to achieve their social missions. Increasing competition for donor support, coupled with rising expectations of accountability and transparency, has encouraged nonprofit organisations to adopt more strategic marketing approaches that strengthen stakeholder engagement and support fundraising activities (Laurett & Ferreira, 2018; Werke & Bogale, 2024).

Within nonprofit organisations, sales promotion extends beyond stimulating short-term transactions to encouraging charitable giving, volunteer participation, membership recruitment, fundraising event participation, and public awareness of organisational missions (Sargeant & Shang, 2010). Rather than generating one-off donations, effective promotional activities seek to build long-term stakeholder relationships that support organisational sustainability, consistent with the principles of Relationship Marketing Theory (Morgan & Hunt, 1994).

Research indicates that well-designed promotional strategies enhance donor awareness, strengthen organisational credibility, and foster stakeholder commitment by clearly communicating organisational impact and demonstrating accountability (Sargeant & Shang, 2010; Mato-Santiso, Rey-García, & Sanzo-Pérez, 2021). More recent research also suggests that successful fundraising increasingly depends on relationship-centred marketing approaches that build stakeholder trust and encourage sustained engagement rather than focusing solely on individual fundraising campaigns (Van Steenburg et al., 2022). Collectively, these studies highlight the strategic importance of integrating fundraising with broader stakeholder relationship management.

Contemporary nonprofit organisations increasingly combine traditional promotional activities with digital communication channels, including organisational websites and social media, to strengthen organisational visibility, stakeholder engagement, and fundraising activities (Lovejoy & Saxton, 2012). Coordinating communication across these channels helps deliver consistent organisational messages while strengthening relationships with multiple stakeholder groups (Mato-Santiso, Rey-García, & Sanzo-Pérez, 2021). Recent nonprofit marketing research similarly emphasises that integrated communication strategies strengthen organisational resilience by supporting long-term stakeholder relationships rather than isolated fundraising initiatives (Werke & Bogale, 2024).

Despite these advances, empirical evidence remains concentrated in developed economies, limiting understanding of how promotional strategies operate within resource-constrained nonprofit contexts (Werke & Bogale, 2024). Although studies increasingly recognise the importance of integrated marketing and stakeholder engagement, comparatively little empirical research has examined employees'

perceptions of promotional strategies within nonprofit organisations in Sub-Saharan Africa. Consequently, there remains limited evidence on how employees perceive the role of promotional activities in supporting fundraising, stakeholder engagement, and organisational visibility in contexts such as Nigeria, reinforcing the need for the present study (Di Lauro, Tursunbayeva, & Antonelli, 2019).

2.3. Digital Marketing and Stakeholder Engagement

Digital technologies have transformed how nonprofit organisations communicate with stakeholders, mobilise resources, and demonstrate organisational impact (Lovejoy & Saxton, 2012). Digital marketing now extends beyond organisational websites and social media to encompass integrated communication strategies that facilitate continuous engagement with donors, volunteers, beneficiaries, and the wider public (Mato-Santiso, Rey-García, & Sanzo-Pérez, 2021). Consequently, nonprofit organisations increasingly use digital channels to strengthen stakeholder relationships, improve organisational transparency, and support fundraising activities (Werke & Bogale, 2024).

Digital communication differs from traditional one-way communication by enabling interactive engagement between organisations and stakeholders (Kent & Taylor, 2002). Through websites, social media, email marketing, and online fundraising platforms, stakeholders can participate in organisational activities, share experiences, provide feedback, and advocate for social causes, thereby strengthening organisational visibility and stakeholder commitment (Lovejoy & Saxton, 2012). This interactive approach reflects the growing emphasis on multi-stakeholder engagement, whereby organisations create value through continuous dialogue and collaboration with diverse stakeholder groups rather than one-way information dissemination (Aksoy et al., 2022).

Organisational websites remain central to nonprofit digital communication. Beyond providing organisational information, they communicate mission, programme outcomes, financial accountability, and opportunities for donations or volunteering (Saxton & Guo, 2011). Transparent and regularly updated websites have been associated with greater organisational credibility and donor trust, both of which are important determinants of charitable giving and donor retention (Saxton & Wang, 2014). Similarly, social media platforms enable organisations to promote fundraising campaigns, share stories of organisational impact, acknowledge donor contributions, recruit volunteers, and encourage electronic word-of-mouth, extending organisational reach at relatively low cost (Di Lauro, Tursunbayeva, & Antonelli, 2019).

Digital communication also enables nonprofit organisations to communicate organisational achievements and social impact more effectively (Mato-Santiso, Rey-García, & Sanzo-Pérez, 2021). By sharing organisational news and programme outcomes through digital platforms, organisations can strengthen stakeholder engagement, increase public awareness, and encourage continued support (Merchant, Ford, & Sargeant, 2010). Recent literature similarly emphasises that effec-

tive digital communication should be integrated within broader stakeholder relationship strategies to strengthen long-term organisational sustainability rather than focusing solely on online visibility (Werke & Bogale, 2024).

Despite these advantages, digital communication alone is insufficient to sustain stakeholder engagement. Its effectiveness depends on communication quality, organisational transparency, and credibility, while complementing rather than replacing traditional relationship-building activities such as community engagement, fundraising events, volunteer programmes, and corporate partnerships (Mato-Santiso, Rey-García, & Sanzo-Pérez, 2021). Moreover, much of the existing evidence originates from developed economies characterised by advanced digital infrastructure and established philanthropic traditions (Werke & Bogale, 2024). Comparatively little empirical research has examined how digital communication supports fundraising and stakeholder engagement within resource-constrained nonprofit organisations in African and other developing-country contexts. Consequently, there remains limited evidence on employees' perceptions of the role of digital communication in supporting stakeholder engagement and organisational visibility within Nigerian nonprofit organisations, reinforcing the need for the present study (Di Lauro, Tursunbayeva, & Antonelli, 2019).

2.4. Conceptual Background

This study is informed by Relationship Marketing Theory and Stakeholder Theory, which together provide a complementary conceptual framework for interpreting employees' perceptions of promotional strategies, digital communication, fundraising activities, and stakeholder engagement within nonprofit organisations. Relationship Marketing Theory explains how organisations seek to develop enduring relationships with donors and supporters, while Stakeholder Theory broadens this perspective by recognising that nonprofit organisations depend on the continued engagement of multiple stakeholder groups to achieve their social objectives.

Relationship Marketing Theory proposes that long-term organisational success is achieved by building trust, commitment, and mutually beneficial relationships rather than focusing solely on discrete transactions (Berry, 1983; Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Within nonprofit organisations, charitable giving is widely regarded as relationship-driven, with donor trust, organisational credibility, satisfaction, and perceived social impact influencing continued support more than individual fundraising campaigns (Sargeant & Shang, 2010). Consequently, promotional activities are viewed as important mechanisms for communicating organisational value, strengthening stakeholder confidence, and supporting long-term donor relationships through transparency, accountability, and the demonstration of organisational impact.

Stakeholder Theory complements this perspective by recognising that nonprofit organisations create value through relationships with a broad network of stakeholders, including donors, volunteers, beneficiaries, employees, community

organisations, governments, and corporate partners (Freeman, 1984). Effective communication enables organisations to engage these diverse stakeholder groups, strengthen organisational legitimacy, and align stakeholder expectations with organisational objectives (Freeman, Phillips, & Sisodia, 2010). More recent literature similarly highlights that organisational value is increasingly created through collaborative engagement among multiple stakeholders rather than through one-way communication alone (Aksoy et al., 2022).

The increasing use of digital communication further reinforces these theoretical perspectives. Organisational websites, social media platforms, email marketing, and online fundraising systems facilitate ongoing interaction with stakeholders, improving transparency, trust, and engagement while extending organisational reach (Lovejoy & Saxton, 2012; Saxton & Wang, 2014). Similarly, Mato-Santiso, Rey-García and Sanzo-Pérez (2021) argue that nonprofit organisations increasingly integrate multiple communication channels to strengthen stakeholder relationships, while Werke and Bogale (2024) identify digital communication as an important component of contemporary nonprofit marketing strategies. Together, these studies suggest that digital communication complements traditional promotional activities by supporting the relational mechanisms emphasised by both Relationship Marketing Theory and Stakeholder Theory.

Drawing on these complementary perspectives, this study conceptualises promotional strategies and digital communication as organisational practices that employees may perceive as supporting fundraising activities, stakeholder engagement, organisational visibility, and long-term organisational sustainability. Rather than testing the underlying theories, Relationship Marketing Theory and Stakeholder Theory provide an interpretive framework for understanding employees' perceptions of promotional strategies within the context of Nigerian nonprofit organisations.

2.5. Research Gap

The literature demonstrates that nonprofit marketing has evolved from a promotional activity to a strategic capability that supports fundraising, stakeholder engagement, organisational legitimacy, and long-term sustainability (Kotler, Keller, & Chernev, 2022; Werke & Bogale, 2024). Existing research also highlights the growing importance of relationship marketing, integrated marketing communications, and digital engagement in strengthening stakeholder relationships and organisational sustainability (Mato-Santiso, Rey-García, & Sanzo-Pérez, 2021).

Despite these advances, important gaps remain. First, most empirical research has been conducted in North America and Western Europe, where institutional environments, philanthropic traditions, donor behaviour, and digital infrastructure differ substantially from those of developing countries (Werke & Bogale, 2024). Consequently, there is limited evidence regarding employees' perceptions of promotional strategies within resource-constrained nonprofit organisations in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Second, previous studies have typically examined fundraising, stakeholder engagement, promotional activities, and digital communication as separate research streams. Comparatively little attention has been given to how traditional promotional strategies and digital communication are perceived to support fundraising, organisational visibility, stakeholder engagement, and membership development within a single analytical framework (Mato-Santiso, Rey-García, & Sanzo-Pérez, 2021; Werke & Bogale, 2024).

Finally, empirical evidence from Nigeria remains limited despite the country's expanding nonprofit sector and increasing reliance on integrated communication strategies to compete for donor support and public attention (Werke & Bogale, 2024). Consequently, there is a need for context-specific evidence to improve understanding of employees' perceptions of the role of promotional strategies and digital communication within resource-constrained nonprofit organisations.

To address these gaps, this study examines employees' perceptions of promotional strategies among selected nonprofit organisations in Nigeria. Guided by Relationship Marketing Theory and Stakeholder Theory, the study explores how employees perceive the role of promotional activities in supporting fundraising, stakeholder engagement, membership development, and organisational visibility, while also considering the complementary role of digital communication.

Accordingly, the study addresses the following research questions:

RQ1: What are employees' perceptions of the role of promotional strategies in supporting fundraising effectiveness within Nigerian nonprofit organisations?

RQ2: What are employees' perceptions of the contribution of promotional strategies to stakeholder engagement and membership development?

RQ3: How do employees perceive the role of digital communication in supporting promotional activities within Nigerian nonprofit organisations?

3. Method

3.1. Research Design

This study employed a quantitative cross-sectional survey design to examine employees' perceptions of promotional strategies within nonprofit organisations in Nigeria. A quantitative approach was appropriate because it enabled the systematic collection of standardised data from employees and facilitated the use of descriptive statistics to examine patterns in their perceptions of promotional activities, fundraising, stakeholder engagement, organisational visibility, membership development, and digital communication (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). A cross-sectional design was selected because the study captured employees' perceptions at a single point in time rather than examining changes over time (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2023).

The study was conducted in three established Nigerian nonprofit organisations: the New Era Foundation, the Murtala Mohammed Foundation, and the Nigerian Heart Foundation. These organisations were selected because they operate in education, healthcare, youth development, humanitarian assistance, and commu-

nity engagement, while relying on fundraising, stakeholder participation, and public communication to achieve their missions. Their characteristics provided an appropriate context for examining employees' perceptions of promotional strategies within the Nigerian nonprofit sector.

Consistent with the study objectives, the survey examined employees' perceptions of the role of promotional activities in supporting fundraising effectiveness, membership development, organisational visibility, stakeholder engagement, and digital communication.

3.2. Research Context and Sample

The study targeted employees from three participating nonprofit organisations in Nigeria: The New Era Foundation (n = 97), the Murtala Mohammed Foundation (n = 91), and the Nigerian Heart Foundation (n = 108). These organisations were selected because they rely on fundraising, stakeholder engagement, and public communication to achieve their organisational missions while operating across different areas of charitable activity, including education, healthcare, humanitarian assistance, and community development.

Eligible participants comprised employees who possessed extensive knowledge of their organisations' day-to-day operations and were therefore considered capable of providing informed assessments of promotional activities, fundraising practices, stakeholder communication, and organisational processes. To ensure that respondents had relevant organisational experience, participation was limited to employees actively involved in organisational operations. Participants represented a range of functional areas, including programme delivery, administration, finance, communications, and general management, thereby providing diverse organisational perspectives on promotional strategies and digital communication.

Questionnaires were distributed to all eligible employees across the three organisations, resulting in 296 usable responses from a target population of 320 employees, representing a 92.5% response rate. Although responses were obtained from all three participating organisations, the study was designed to examine employees' collective perceptions of promotional strategies rather than compare organisations individually. Consequently, the data were analysed at the aggregate level to provide an overall assessment of employees' perceptions across the participating nonprofit organisations.

3.3. Data Collection

Primary data were collected using a structured self-administered questionnaire administered to managerial and non-managerial employees of the New Era Foundation, the Murtala Mohammed Foundation, and the Nigerian Heart Foundation. These participants were considered well placed to provide informed assessments of organisational promotional practices because of their direct involvement in organisational operations and their extensive knowledge of fundraising activities, stakeholder communication, programme delivery, and day-to-day organisational

processes.

The target population comprised 320 employees across the three participating organisations. Questionnaires were distributed to all eligible employees, yielding 296 completed and usable responses, representing a response rate of 92.5%. This high response rate reduced the potential for non-response bias and provided a robust basis for the subsequent descriptive analysis.

Participation in the study was voluntary. Respondents were informed of the purpose of the research and assured that their responses would remain anonymous and confidential. No personally identifiable information was collected, and participation implied informed consent.

3.4. Measures

Data were collected using an author-developed structured questionnaire designed to examine employees' perceptions of promotional strategies within nonprofit organisations. The questionnaire was developed specifically for this study following a comprehensive review of the nonprofit marketing literature and aligned with the study objectives and research questions. Item development was informed by established concepts relating to promotional strategies, fundraising, stakeholder engagement, organisational visibility, membership development, and digital communication reported in previous nonprofit marketing research, including studies by Saxton and Wang (2014), Mato-Santiso, Rey-García and Sanzo-Pérez (2021), and Werke and Bogale (2024). Rather than adopting an existing measurement scale in its entirety, questionnaire items were developed to reflect the organisational and institutional context of Nigerian nonprofit organisations.

The questionnaire consisted primarily of closed-ended statements measured using a four-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 4 (Strongly Agree). The four-point response format was selected to encourage respondents to indicate either agreement or disagreement with each statement while avoiding a neutral midpoint, thereby facilitating consistent quantitative analysis.

Prior to the main survey, the questionnaire was pilot tested with 20 employees to assess the clarity, relevance, comprehensibility, and content coverage of the questionnaire items. Feedback from the pilot study informed minor revisions to the wording and sequencing of selected items before the questionnaire was administered to the full study population. Given the exploratory nature of the study and the use of an author-developed instrument, emphasis was placed on establishing content validity through alignment with the literature, study objectives, research questions, and pilot testing.

As the questionnaire was developed specifically for this study, formal psychometric reliability testing (such as Cronbach's alpha) was not undertaken. Instead, the study prioritised ensuring that the questionnaire items were conceptually aligned with the relevant literature and appropriate for the Nigerian nonprofit context. This limitation is acknowledged and considered in the interpretation of the findings.

3.5. Data Analysis

Completed questionnaires were coded and analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The analysis employed descriptive statistics, specifically frequencies and percentages, to summarise respondents' demographic characteristics and employees' perceptions of promotional strategies, the role of promotional activities in supporting fundraising effectiveness, organisational visibility, stakeholder engagement, membership development, and digital communication.

Descriptive statistics were considered appropriate because the study sought to address the research questions by describing employees' perceptions of promotional strategies within the participating nonprofit organisations rather than testing causal relationships or statistically significant associations between variables. Given the exploratory nature of the study and its objective of providing an overview of employees' perceptions rather than testing hypotheses, descriptive statistics were considered sufficient to address the research questions. Accordingly, the analysis focused on identifying patterns in respondents' perceptions and providing an overall assessment of how employees perceived the role of promotional strategies and digital communication in supporting fundraising effectiveness, stakeholder engagement, organisational visibility, and membership development across the participating organisations.

4. Results

4.1. Respondent Characteristics

A total of 296 valid questionnaires were analysed, representing a 92.5% response rate. Respondents comprised employees from the three participating nonprofit organisations and reflected diverse demographic characteristics. As shown in **Table 1**, most respondents were male (66.6%), while 33.4% were female. The largest age group was 51 years and above (28.7%), followed by respondents aged 41 - 50 years (22.6%). In terms of educational attainment, most respondents held NCE/OND qualifications (35.8%) or secondary school qualifications (33.1%), while 31.1% possessed bachelor's or postgraduate degrees. Regarding marital status, 41.9% of respondents were single, 37.2% were married, 18.9% were divorced, and 2.0% were widowed. Overall, the demographic profile indicates that the study included respondents with varied demographic backgrounds, providing a diverse sample for examining employees' perceptions of promotional strategies within the participating nonprofit organisations.

4.2. Employees' Perceptions of Promotional Strategies and Fundraising Effectiveness

Table 2 presents employees' perceptions of the role of promotional strategies in supporting fundraising effectiveness and related organisational outcomes. Overall, respondents expressed positive perceptions across all survey items. Approximately two-thirds of respondents (66.2%) agreed or strongly agreed that promo-

tional strategies support fundraising and membership development, while 67.6% agreed that promotional activities support organisational marketing objectives. A higher proportion of respondents (75.3%) agreed that promotional activities improve organisational performance, and the highest level of agreement (90.5%) was recorded for the statement that promotional strategies enhance organisational effectiveness.

Table 1. Demographic profile of respondents (N = 296).

Characteristic	Category	n	%
Gender	Male	197	66.6
	Female	99	33.4
Age (years)	<20	44	14.9
	21 - 30	45	15.2
	31 - 40	55	18.6
	41 - 50	67	22.6
	≥51	85	28.7
Highest educational qualification	SSCE/GCE/WASC	98	33.1
	NCE/OND	106	35.8
	Bachelor's degree (HND/BSc/BA/B.Ed.)	64	21.6
	Postgraduate degree (MSc/MBA/MA/M.Ed.)	28	9.5
Marital status	Single	124	41.9
	Married	110	37.2
	Divorced	56	18.9
	Widowed	6	2.0

Source: Author's survey.

Table 2. Employees' perceptions of promotional strategies and fundraising effectiveness.

Survey Statement	Agree/Strongly Agree (%)	Disagree/ Strongly Disagree (%)
Promotional strategies improve fundraising and membership development	66.2	33.8
Promotional activities support organisational marketing objectives	67.6	32.4
Promotional activities improve organisational performance	75.3	24.7
Promotional strategies enhance organisational effectiveness	90.5	9.5

Source: Author's survey.

Overall, the findings indicate that employees generally perceived promotional

strategies as playing an important role in supporting fundraising effectiveness, membership development, organisational performance, and organisational effectiveness within the participating nonprofit organisations.

4.3. Employees' Perceptions of Digital Communication and Organisational Visibility

Table 3 presents employees' perceptions of digital communication and organisational visibility within the participating nonprofit organisations. Overall, respondents expressed positive perceptions across all survey items. The highest level of agreement (90.5%) was recorded for the statement that nonprofit organisations should maintain a strong web presence. This was followed by agreement that sharing organisational achievements enhances public awareness (87.2%), that social media strengthens communication with stakeholders (84.5%), and that organisations should provide informative and engaging websites (81.1%). Agreement was comparatively lower for the statement that social media increases the reach of organisational information (66.2%), although this remained the majority view. Overall, the findings indicate that employees generally perceived digital communication as supporting organisational visibility and stakeholder communication within the participating nonprofit organisations.

Table 3. Employees' perceptions of digital communication and organisational visibility.

Survey statement	Agree/Strongly Agree (%)	Disagree/Strongly Disagree (%)
Nonprofit organisations should maintain a strong web presence	90.5	9.5
Organisations should provide informative and engaging websites	81.1	18.9
Social media strengthens communication with stakeholders	84.5	15.5
Social media increases the reach of organisational information	66.2	33.8
Sharing organisational achievements enhances public awareness	87.2	12.8
Promoting organisational activities through social media improves visibility	84.5	15.5

Source: Author's survey.

4.4. Employees' Perceptions of Stakeholder Engagement and Organisational Support

Table 4 presents employees' perceptions of stakeholder engagement and organisational support within the participating nonprofit organisations. Overall, respondents expressed positive perceptions across all survey items. Most respondents (75.7%) agreed or strongly agreed that supporters help strengthen the organisation's visibility and reputation. Similarly, 73.0% agreed that supporters actively

promote the organisation through their personal networks, while an equal proportion agreed that providing supporters with appropriate tools enhances organisational communication and outreach. Overall, the findings indicate that employees generally perceived stakeholder support and advocacy as important components of promotional activities within the participating nonprofit organisations.

Table 4. Employees' perceptions of stakeholder advocacy and organisational support.

Survey statement	Agree/Strongly Agree (%)	Disagree/Strongly Disagree (%)
Supporters help strengthen the organisation's visibility and reputation	75.7	24.3
Supporters actively promote the organisation through their personal networks	73.0	27.0
Providing supporters with appropriate tools enhances organisational communication and outreach	73.0	27.0

Source: Author's survey.

5. Discussion

5.1. Promotional Strategies and Fundraising Effectiveness (RQ1)

This section addresses Research Question 1, which examined employees' perceptions of the role of promotional strategies in supporting fundraising effectiveness within Nigerian nonprofit organisations.

The findings indicate that employees generally perceived promotional strategies as supporting fundraising effectiveness, membership development, organisational performance, and overall organisational effectiveness. Most respondents agreed that promotional activities support organisational marketing objectives and fundraising-related activities, suggesting that employees viewed promotion as an important organisational capability rather than simply a communication function. These findings represent employees' perceptions of organisational practices and should not be interpreted as objective evidence of fundraising effectiveness or organisational performance.

These findings are consistent with previous nonprofit marketing research, which highlights the importance of relationship-building, stakeholder trust, and strategic communication in supporting fundraising and organisational sustainability (Sargeant & Shang, 2010; Mato-Santiso, Rey-García, & Sanzo-Pérez, 2021). More recent literature similarly argues that successful fundraising increasingly depends on relationship-oriented marketing and sustained stakeholder engagement rather than isolated promotional campaigns (Van Steenburg et al., 2022).

Relationship Marketing Theory provides a useful framework for interpreting these findings. The theory proposes that long-term organisational success depends on building trust, commitment, and enduring relationships with stakeholders rather than relying solely on discrete promotional activities (Morgan & Hunt,

1994). From this perspective, employees' positive perceptions may reflect a belief that promotional strategies help strengthen stakeholder relationships by communicating organisational values, demonstrating accountability, and reinforcing organisational credibility. Likewise, Stakeholder Theory suggests that organisations create value by effectively managing relationships with multiple stakeholder groups (Freeman, 1984; Freeman, Phillips, & Sisodia, 2010). Accordingly, employees appear to perceive promotional activities as supporting broader organisational legitimacy and stakeholder confidence alongside fundraising objectives.

The study contributes context-specific evidence from Nigerian nonprofit organisations by demonstrating that employees perceive promotional strategies as important organisational resources within resource-constrained environments. While previous research has largely focused on nonprofit organisations in developed economies, these findings suggest that employees within Nigerian nonprofit organisations similarly recognise the strategic importance of relationship-oriented promotional practices. Although the findings are based on employees' perceptions rather than objective measures of organisational performance, they extend current understanding of nonprofit marketing within an under-researched developing-country context.

5.2. Stakeholder Engagement and Membership Development (RQ2)

This section addresses Research Question 2, which examined employees' perceptions of the contribution of promotional strategies to stakeholder engagement and membership development within Nigerian nonprofit organisations.

The findings indicate that employees generally perceived stakeholder engagement as an important component of nonprofit promotional activities. Most respondents agreed that supporters help strengthen organisational visibility and reputation, actively promote the organisation through their personal networks, and enhance communication and outreach when provided with appropriate resources. These findings suggest that employees viewed stakeholder advocacy and organisational support as important mechanisms for strengthening stakeholder engagement and promoting organisational objectives. However, these findings reflect employees' perceptions of organisational practices rather than objective measures of stakeholder engagement or organisational performance.

These findings are consistent with previous research, which highlights stakeholder participation and relationship-building as central to successful nonprofit marketing and organisational sustainability (Sargeant & Shang, 2010; Mato-Santiso, Rey-García, & Sanzo-Pérez, 2021). Evidence from South African nonprofit organisations similarly demonstrates that collaborative partnerships between donors and nonprofit organisations contribute to stronger stakeholder relationships and organisational sustainability (Mpofu & Govender, 2022). More recent literature similarly argues that stakeholder engagement is strengthened when organisations encourage active participation, advocacy, and collaborative relationships with supporters (Aksoy et al., 2022; Werke & Bogale, 2024).

Stakeholder Theory provides a useful framework for interpreting these findings. The theory proposes that organisations achieve their objectives by effectively managing relationships with multiple stakeholder groups rather than focusing solely on organisational outputs (Freeman, 1984; Freeman, Phillips, & Sisodia, 2010). This interpretation is consistent with emerging African research emphasising stakeholder relationship management as a strategic capability for nonprofit organisations (Meyer & Barker, 2020). From this perspective, employees' positive perceptions may reflect a belief that stakeholder advocacy strengthens organisational legitimacy, enhances visibility, and encourages broader community support. Relationship Marketing Theory offers a complementary explanation by suggesting that trust, commitment, and ongoing engagement foster enduring stakeholder relationships that support long-term organisational success (Berry, 1983; Morgan & Hunt, 1994).

The study contributes context-specific evidence from Nigerian nonprofit organisations by demonstrating that employees perceive stakeholder engagement and supporter advocacy as important organisational resources within resource-constrained environments. Although these findings are based on employees' perceptions rather than objective measures of stakeholder engagement, they extend current understanding of how nonprofit employees view the role of stakeholder relationships in supporting organisational sustainability within a developing-country context.

5.3. Digital Communication and Promotional Activities (RQ3)

This section addresses Research Question 3, which explored employees' perceptions of the role of digital communication in supporting promotional activities within Nigerian nonprofit organisations.

The findings indicate that employees generally perceived digital communication as an important component of nonprofit promotional activities. Respondents expressed positive perceptions of maintaining a strong organisational web presence, using social media to communicate with stakeholders, and sharing organisational achievements to enhance public awareness. These findings suggest that employees viewed digital communication as supporting organisational visibility, stakeholder communication, and broader promotional activities. However, these findings reflect employees' perceptions of organisational practices rather than objective measures of digital communication effectiveness or organisational performance.

These findings are consistent with previous research, which highlights the growing importance of digital communication in supporting nonprofit marketing through websites, social media, and other online platforms that facilitate communication with donors, volunteers, beneficiaries, and the wider public (Lovejoy & Saxton, 2012; Saxton & Wang, 2014). Emerging evidence from developing-country contexts, including Nigeria, further suggests that integrating digital and traditional communication channels can strengthen fundraising and stakeholder en-

agement within resource-constrained environments (Ogwu et al., 2022). More recent studies similarly argue that digital communication is most effective when integrated with broader stakeholder relationship strategies to strengthen organisational visibility and long-term stakeholder engagement (Mato-Santiso, Rey-García, & Sanzo-Pérez, 2021; Werke & Bogale, 2024).

Relationship Marketing Theory provides a useful framework for interpreting these findings. The theory proposes that long-term stakeholder relationships are strengthened through continuous communication, trust, and mutual commitment rather than isolated promotional activities (Berry, 1983; Morgan & Hunt, 1994). From this perspective, employees' positive perceptions may reflect a belief that digital communication facilitates ongoing stakeholder interaction by increasing organisational transparency, reinforcing organisational credibility, and supporting regular engagement with stakeholders. Stakeholder Theory provides a complementary explanation by recognising that nonprofit organisations depend on effective communication with diverse stakeholder groups to achieve their organisational objectives (Freeman, 1984; Freeman, Phillips, & Sisodia, 2010). Employees' perceptions therefore suggest that digital communication is viewed as an important mechanism for supporting organisational visibility and maintaining relationships with key stakeholder groups.

The study contributes context-specific evidence from Nigerian nonprofit organisations by demonstrating that employees perceive digital communication as an important organisational resource for supporting promotional activities within resource-constrained environments. Although these findings are based on employees' perceptions rather than objective measures of digital communication effectiveness, they extend current understanding of how nonprofit employees view the role of digital communication in strengthening organisational visibility and stakeholder engagement within a developing-country context.

5.4. Theoretical Implications

The findings reinforce the relevance of Relationship Marketing Theory and Stakeholder Theory as useful interpretive frameworks for understanding employees' perceptions of promotional strategies, digital communication, and stakeholder engagement within nonprofit organisations operating in developing economies. Although the study did not seek to test these theories directly, the findings demonstrate their value in explaining how employees perceive promotional activities as supporting organisational practices and stakeholder relationships.

Relationship Marketing Theory helps explain why employees viewed promotional strategies and digital communication as mechanisms for strengthening trust, commitment, transparency, and long-term stakeholder relationships rather than simply supporting short-term fundraising activities (Berry, 1983; Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Similarly, Stakeholder Theory provides a broader perspective by suggesting that organisations create value through effective communication and engagement with multiple stakeholder groups (Freeman, 1984; Freeman, Phillips, &

Sisodia, 2010). Together, these theoretical perspectives provide a complementary explanation for why employees perceived stakeholder engagement, digital communication, and promotional strategies as interconnected organisational resources that support organisational legitimacy and sustainability.

The study also contributes to the nonprofit marketing literature by providing context-specific, perception-based evidence from Nigerian nonprofit organisations, where empirical research remains comparatively limited. Emerging evidence from African nonprofit contexts has begun to examine issues such as accountability, organisational legitimacy, and stakeholder relationships, including research from the Democratic Republic of Congo (Urquía-Grande, Estébanez, & Alcaraz-Quiles, 2022) and South Africa (Meyer & Barker, 2020). However, studies examining employees' perceptions of promotional strategies and digital communication within nonprofit organisations remain scarce. While recent studies have highlighted the growing importance of relationship-oriented marketing, stakeholder engagement, and digital communication in strengthening nonprofit sustainability (Aksoy et al., 2022; Van Steenburg et al., 2022; Werke & Bogale, 2024), much of this evidence is derived from developed economies or global reviews. By examining employees' perceptions within Nigerian nonprofit organisations, the present study extends this literature by demonstrating how these established theoretical perspectives can be interpreted within a resource-constrained developing-country context.

Although the findings are based on employees' perceptions rather than objective measures of organisational performance, they provide a foundation for future research examining these theoretical relationships using multiple stakeholder perspectives, longitudinal research designs, and objective organisational performance indicators. Such research would further strengthen understanding of how promotional strategies, stakeholder engagement, and digital communication influence nonprofit sustainability across different institutional contexts.

6. Practical Implications

The findings suggest that employees perceive promotional strategies as important organisational capabilities that support fundraising, stakeholder engagement, and long-term organisational sustainability. Although these findings are based on employees' perceptions rather than objective measures of organisational performance, they offer practical insights for nonprofit managers, fundraising professionals, policymakers, and organisational leaders seeking to strengthen organisational capacity within resource-constrained environments.

First, nonprofit organisations may benefit from adopting integrated promotional strategies that align fundraising campaigns with broader marketing communication objectives. Coordinating promotional activities across traditional and digital communication channels may improve message consistency, strengthen organisational visibility, and reinforce stakeholder confidence.

Second, organisations should strengthen their digital communication capabili-

ties. Maintaining an informative and regularly updated website, together with the strategic use of social media, may enhance stakeholder communication, demonstrate organisational activities, and increase public awareness. Digital platforms can also be used to share programme achievements, acknowledge stakeholder contributions, and encourage ongoing engagement.

Third, nonprofit organisations should prioritise relationship-oriented fundraising. The findings suggest that maintaining engagement with existing supporters is perceived to be as important as attracting new donors. Regular communication, transparent reporting, and recognition of stakeholder contributions may strengthen trust and encourage continued financial and non-financial support.

The findings also highlight the perceived value of stakeholder advocacy. Consistent with evidence from South African nonprofit organisations, collaborative donor–NGO partnerships can strengthen stakeholder relationships and support organisational sustainability (Mpofu & Govender, 2022). Building on these findings, nonprofit organisations should encourage volunteers, beneficiaries, donors, and community members to share organisational achievements and experiences, as this may extend organisational reach and enhance organisational credibility at relatively low cost. Consequently, creating opportunities for stakeholder participation and advocacy should form an integral part of broader communication strategies.

For nonprofit organisations operating in developing economies, the findings suggest that digital communication is likely to be most beneficial when it complements rather than replaces traditional engagement activities. Community outreach, fundraising events, organisational partnerships, and face-to-face communication remain important mechanisms for building trust and sustaining stakeholder relationships, particularly where access to digital technologies is uneven.

Finally, policymakers, donor agencies, and capacity-building organisations should recognise marketing communication as an important organisational capability. Investment in staff training, digital infrastructure, and communication capacity may strengthen nonprofit organisations' ability to mobilise resources, engage stakeholders, and enhance organisational sustainability. While the present findings are perception-based, they nevertheless highlight practical areas that organisations may consider when developing communication and fundraising strategies.

7. Limitations and Future Research

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the study focused on employees from three nonprofit organisations in Nigeria. Although this provided valuable context-specific insights, the findings may not be generalisable to other nonprofit organisations or national settings. Future research should examine a broader range of organisations across different sectors and countries to assess the transferability of the findings.

Second, all data were collected from employees using a single self-administered

questionnaire at one point in time. Consequently, the findings may be influenced by self-report bias, including social desirability bias, whereby respondents may have provided more favourable assessments of their organisations' promotional practices. The use of a single data source also introduces the possibility of common method bias, which may have increased the consistency of responses across the measured constructs. Although anonymity and confidentiality were emphasised to encourage honest responses, future research could reduce these limitations by incorporating multiple data sources, including donors, volunteers, beneficiaries, organisational leaders, and objective organisational performance indicators.

Third, the cross-sectional design captured employees' perceptions at a single point in time and therefore cannot establish causal relationships or examine how promotional strategies evolve over time. Longitudinal research would provide valuable insight into how communication strategies, stakeholder engagement, and fundraising practices develop and adapt in changing organisational and institutional environments.

Fourth, although the questionnaire was developed through a review of the literature and refined through pilot testing to improve clarity and face validity, formal psychometric evaluation, including internal consistency reliability and construct validity, was not undertaken. Future studies should validate the instrument using reliability measures such as Cronbach's alpha together with exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis before applying it to larger samples or different non-profit contexts.

Future research should also examine how promotional strategies and employees' perceptions evolve in response to emerging developments such as artificial intelligence, personalised stakeholder engagement, and data-driven fundraising. Comparative studies across nonprofit sectors, organisational sizes, and national contexts would further enhance understanding of how institutional conditions shape promotional practices and stakeholder engagement. Mixed-methods research could also provide deeper insight into how promotional strategies are developed, implemented, and experienced from the perspectives of multiple stakeholder groups.

Despite these limitations, the study contributes context-specific empirical evidence from an under-researched setting and extends understanding of employees' perceptions of promotional strategies, digital communication, and stakeholder engagement within Nigerian nonprofit organisations. The findings provide a foundation for future research examining nonprofit marketing and stakeholder engagement in developing-country contexts.

8. Conclusion

This study examined employees' perceptions of the contribution of promotional strategies to fundraising effectiveness, stakeholder engagement, organisational visibility, and organisational sustainability within selected nonprofit organisa-

tions in Nigeria. The findings indicate that employees generally perceived promotional strategies as important organisational capabilities that support fundraising while strengthening stakeholder relationships and enhancing organisational visibility. Respondents also recognised the growing importance of digital communication, particularly organisational websites and social media, as complementary mechanisms for supporting stakeholder engagement and organisational communication.

Drawing on Relationship Marketing Theory and Stakeholder Theory, the study demonstrates the usefulness of these theoretical perspectives in interpreting employees' perceptions of promotional strategies within nonprofit organisations. The findings suggest that employees perceive promotional strategies as extending beyond short-term fundraising activities to support trust, stakeholder commitment, and long-term organisational sustainability. They also highlight the perceived value of integrating traditional promotional approaches with digital communication to strengthen stakeholder relationships and organisational visibility.

The study makes three principal contributions. First, it provides context-specific empirical evidence from the Nigerian nonprofit sector, addressing a geographical gap in the nonprofit marketing literature and complementing the emerging body of African nonprofit research on digital fundraising, accountability, and stakeholder relationships (Ogwu et al., 2022; Urquía-Grande, Estébanez, & Alcaraz-Quiles, 2022; Werke & Bogale, 2024). Second, it extends understanding of promotional strategies by demonstrating how employees perceive their contribution to organisational outcomes beyond fundraising, including stakeholder engagement and organisational visibility. Third, it offers practical insights for nonprofit managers seeking to develop integrated communication strategies that support organisational sustainability within resource-constrained environments.

Overall, the study suggests that employees perceive effective nonprofit marketing as depending not on individual promotional tools but on the strategic integration of communication activities that build trust, strengthen stakeholder relationships, and support long-term organisational sustainability. Although the findings are based on employees' perceptions rather than objective measures of organisational performance, they provide a valuable foundation for future research examining promotional strategies, stakeholder engagement, and digital communication within nonprofit organisations in developing-country contexts.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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