EDITORIAL

This issue of *Communicare* goes to press not long after the 76th Annual Conference of the International Communication Association (ICA), held in Cape Town, South Africa, from 4 to 8 June 2026. The choice of venue was significant: this was the first time in the association's history that its annual conference took place on African soil. The conference, held at the Cape Town International Convention Centre under the theme "Communication and Inequalities in Context," drew thousands of scholars, academics, and practitioners from around the world. For a discipline that has long been criticised for its Western-centricity, hosting the conference in Africa was more than a symbolic gesture. It was an invitation to think deeply about unequal access to information, unequal participation in digital and academic systems, and the uneven distribution of communicative power.

From the perspective of this journal, the conference offered something that our daily channels of communication rarely allow: the chance to meet, in person, many of the people who make the journal possible. The editorial process is typically conducted at a distance through comments on a manuscript, responses to reviewers' letters and the editor's emails, and the back-and-forth of peer review. So, it was a great pleasure to meet several members of our editorial board and authors in person in Cape Town. Encounters like these remind us that behind every manuscript and review lies a community of passionate people whose dedication needs recognition.

In this issue:

Ajala, Salawu, and Adesina examine whether gamification could boost readership and engagement for Nigeria's Alaroye indigenous-language newspaper, drawing on telephonic interviews with Alaroye staff, as well as gamification and UX/UI experts. Findings show journalists initially had low awareness of gamification but recognised its potential to drive reader engagement, retention and cultural preservation.

Muleya and Rens examine how young people in the Elim region of Limpopo interpret television alcohol advertisements in light of their cultural, faith-based, and social values. The study finds that their readings are shaped by deep-seated cultural and moral commitments, producing both alignment with and resistance to dominant advertising ideologies.

Nkosi applies dramatistic analysis to eight ANC January 8th anniversary statements spanning the apartheid and democratic eras. He concludes that the ANC consistently privileged "scene" to serve shifting rhetorical purposes. His major finding is that the ANC used these speeches to shape audiences' acceptance of its framing of political contexts in response to the specific challenges each era presented.

Ndegwa and Nyaga's study explored young mothers' perspectives in a Nairobi informal settlement on Pumwani Maternity Hospital's communication strategies for promoting maternal nutrition. Findings show visual aids, one-on-one counselling, and family involvement enhance nutrition uptake, while low literacy and economic constraints remain key barriers.

Eze and Govender explore how role-model characters in David Jones's anti-drug-abuse music entertainment education shaped the Nigerian youths' adoption of positive role models and behaviours. Results show that while young people embraced positive behaviours modelled by these characters, any undesirable conduct portrayed could undermine the message.

Coker studied the forms of questions posed by 16 Ghanaian journalists to President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo at his first press conference, identifying five question types varying in deference and hostility that probed his governance philosophy, policy agenda, and economic vision. The study found the president gave detailed responses on gender, constitutionalism, and human rights, but was vague and evasive on economic and financial matters.

Tindi, Boateng and Koranteng's study of 400 schoolchildren in Accra found that Ghanaian children strongly prefer internet access via mobile devices at home over traditional media. The findings show relatively strong informational, social, and mobile skills, but limited familiarity with concepts such as disinformation and fact-checking beyond "fake news."

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