

## EVALUATION OF PUBLIC RELATIONS CURRICULUM ON STUDENT AND SECTOR EXPECTATIONS: A RESEARCH ON ISTANBUL PROVINCE<sup>1</sup>

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### ABSTRACT

Communication education is important for every sector today. Students who receive public relations education should be directed to success by teaching honesty not only for today but also in their profession, which is open to all kinds of changes they will face in the long term. This qualitative research is an important article aimed at questioning the actuality of public relations education and curriculum. In this context, it was ensured that students and public relations managers evaluate the public relations curriculum. The article allowed public relations students and public relations managers to evaluate public relations education and curriculum. The study was carried out in 2 different samples. In the first sample, interviews were conducted with 44 public relations students about public relations education and curriculum with a semi-structured in-depth interview method. In the second stage, with the semi-structured in-depth interview method, 11 public relations managers were interviewed about public relations education and curriculum. In the findings of the study, the importance of foreign language, practical and theoretical knowledge for a good public relations education was revealed. It was concluded that both sides pointed out only the inadequacy of practical education. It has also been concluded that it emphasizes the importance of applied public relations. Accordingly, the importance of including applied education in the curriculum has emerged.

**Keywords:** Public Relations, Public Relations Education, Public Relations Students, Public Relations Managers.

### ÖĞRENCİ VE SEKTÖR BEKLENTİLERİ ÜZERİNE HALKLA İLİŞKİLER MÜFREDATININ DEĞERLENDİRİLMESİ: İSTANBUL İLİ ÜZERİNE BİR ARAŞTIRMA

### ÖZ

<sup>1</sup> Ethical approval for our study was obtained from the social sciences research ethics committee of Marmara University. Approval date and Approval number: 2020-12-10

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İletişim eğitimi günümüzde her sektör için önem taşımaktadır. Halkla ilişkiler eğitimi alan öğrenciler, sadece bugün için değil, uzun vadede karşılaşacakları her türlü değişime açık olan mesleklerinde de dürüstlüğü öğretmek başarıya yönlendirilmelidir. Bu nitel araştırma, halkla ilişkiler eğitimi ve müfredatının güncelliğini sorgulamayı amaçlayan önemli bir makaledir. Bu kapsamda öğrencilerin ve halkla ilişkiler yöneticilerinin halkla ilişkiler müfredatını değerlendirmeleri sağlanmıştır. Bu makalede halkla ilişkiler öğrencilerinin ve halkla ilişkiler yöneticilerinin halkla ilişkiler eğitimi ve müfredatı hakkında bir değerlendirme yapılmıştır. Çalışma 2 farklı örnekle gerçekleştirildi. İlk aşamada 44 halkla ilişkiler öğrencisiyle yarı yapılandırılmış derinlemesine görüşme yöntemi ile halkla ilişkiler eğitimi ve müfredatı hakkında görüşmeler yapılmıştır. İkinci aşamada yarı yapılandırılmış derinlemesine görüşme yöntemi ile 11 halkla ilişkiler yöneticisiyle halkla ilişkiler eğitimi ve müfredatı hakkında görüşülmüştür. Çalışmanın bulgularında ise, iyi bir halkla ilişkiler eğitimi için yabancı dil, uygulama ve teorik bilginin ayrı ayrı önemi ortaya çıkmıştır. Her iki tarafın da sadece uygulamalı eğitimin yetersizliğine dikkat çektiği sonucuna varılmıştır. Ayrıca uygulamalı halkla ilişkilerin önemini vurguladığı sonucuna varılmıştır. Buna göre uygulamalı eğitimin müfredata dahil edilmesinin önemi ortaya çıkmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Halkla İlişkiler, Halkla İlişkiler Eğitimi, Halkla İlişkiler Öğrencileri, Halkla İlişkiler Yöneticileri

## INTRODUCTION

Students who receive public relations education should be directed to success by teaching honesty not only for today but also in their profession, which is open to all kinds of changes they will face in the long term. While doing all these, it is necessary to grasp the expectations of students and private companies; therefore, it is important that education must be high quality. In this respect, expectations of the public relations sector and public relations students should be known and the curriculum should be updated in the most effective way. This could lead to an effective public relations curriculum. To make public relations education scientifically qualified, it is the duty of the departments providing education in this field to follow the innovations, to add to the curriculum and to be compatible with the education to be provided. The study reveals the expectations of the public relations students and the expectations of the sector and contributes to the field in terms of considering the curriculum of public relations education in line with these expectations.

In this context, there are many important studies about public relations curriculum. Some of these studies; In the research titled “A Field Survey on Attitudes of Students for Student-Run PR Agencies as An Applied Education Tool Within the Scope of Public Relations Education” a questionnaire has been conducted

to the students training in student-run agencies at state (Becan and Yıldırım, 559: 2020). "U.S. Public Relations Students Perceptions of PR: What College Students Think About PR Education and the PR Profession", it has been found that many students are anxious about finding a job after graduation (Fullerton and McKinnon, 2015: 1). In the research named "A study of communication education and student allocation in Turkey in term of employment problem", he has found the existence of a serious imbalance between quotas of communication education (Uzun, 2007: 117). In the research titled "An Investigation on Curriculum of Departments of Public Relations in Turkey in The Context of Strategic Communication" curriculums of departments of the public relations in communication faculties has been examined (Güllüpnar, 2015: 18). As can be seen, many important studies have been done on the public relations education and public relations curriculum. Within the scope of our study, both student expectations and expectations of the sector were examined. This situation points out the importance of the study. In this regard, it is important to examine current public relations curricula in another study. In this way, it will be possible to measure to what extent the expectations of students and public relations experts are met within the curriculum. Based on the results of the research, a curriculum proposal that meets the expectations of the sector and students can be presented.

Students first learn their professional education at universities. Both theoretical and practical training are given at universities. While preparing students for the profession, it is important to pay attention to their wishes and expectations in order to increase the quality of education. In order to adapt to the changing world conditions and to follow the developments in the field better, students should be given theoretical education as well as practical education that will affect business life.

Communication tools have also changed with the developing technology. This changing and developing process changes the public relations profession. In this case, the expectations of the agencies also change. Besides, students' expectations from the public relations profession have changed. In this study, the public relations

managers and students' expectations from the public relations training were evaluated.

## **1.Literature Review**

### **1.1. Professional Public Relations**

Although it is stated in some sources that the concept of public relations was first used in a speech in Yale in 1882, it is known that it was included in the yearbook of the Association of American Railroads in 1897, close to its current meaning. Edward L. Bernays, who has an important place in the public relations profession, described himself as a "public relations consultant" in 1921. Public relations emerged as a concept, a specialty and an academic discipline with the book "Crystallization Public Opinion (1923)" (Yıldız, 2010: 25). There are various explanations in the definition of public relations. Although there are no general consensus on the definition of public relations, public theories define all theorists as communication management. An example of this is the definition of Gruning and Hunt (1984: 6), who see public relations as follows; "Management of communication between an organization and the public" (Sofuoğlu,2008:3). Ivy Lee and Edward Bernays are the people who accept public relations as a profession in the modern sense and put forward the principles of public relations that are still valid today (Doğan, 2015:24).

When analyzed in general terms public relations aims to raise awareness and attract attention among certain groups called 'publics' and 'stakeholders. With the establishment of IPRA in 1955, there have been many important developments. It played a leadership role in defining aspects of public relations practice such as codes of conduct and ethics, early planning of public relations education and training and seeking recognition for public relations as a profession (Tench and Yeomans, 2017: 4). Practitioners of the public relations profession continue their activities to achieve these goals. Public relations discipline is associated with many disciplines. The spread of institutions to wider areas due to social changes and globalization and the need for correct communication while performing their activities accelerated the process of public relations becoming a profession (Balta Peltekoğlu, 2018:1). Public

relations have not developed at the same time and all over the world. The country's conditions, academic studies and field practices have shaped public relations. As in many countries, the development of public relations in Turkey also has similar characteristics. The emergence of public relations and its acceptance as a field of practice led to changes in the future of the countries of the 1960s. Modernization efforts and the idea of development shaped this period. Industrialization caused the need for public relations (Sezgin, Hekimoğlu et. all, 2018:1083).

The definition of the British Public Opinion Institute said, "Public relations is a planned and continuous effort to create mutual understanding between an organization and the public and to maintain it in the long term (Wilcox, Ault and Agee, 1998: 5). Public relations work for the first time in Turkey was seen in state institutions. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs "General Directorate of Information" and the Ministry of National Defense "Press and Public Relations Department" are the first examples ([www.brandingturkiye.com](http://www.brandingturkiye.com)). Public Relations includes two-way communication and the benefit of the public. Therefore, the MEHTAP project, listening to people and related institutions, includes the public in the decision process. Emphasizing the importance of communication between the central administration and the public, this project highlights the two-sidedness of communication (Balta Peltekoğlu, 2018: 137). In this direction the public relations discipline should benefit both sides.

Professionals in the public relations sector do not only communicate for themselves. They manage, plan and execute communication as a whole for the organization (Grunig and Hunt, 1984: 6). Especially, practitioners working in the field of public relations should have certain skills.

Should professionals have communication skills, media knowledge, management knowledge, problem-solving skills, motivation and intellectual curiosity? (Broom, 2009: 48-49). Communication will play more important role compared to today. In this direction, Public Relations practitioner will have more communication tools and tactics than ever before in order to implement its strategies. Public relations practitioners will take part in high-level important decisions, With the opportunity to make a real difference in everything done, the entire profession

will be upgraded and motivated (Jernstedt, 2002: 82). Public Relations is a very social discipline. It can be said that it has a mixture of analytical and advanced communication, Besides, to its functional, managerial and negotiating capabilities. Accordingly, he understands people and human psychology (Putra, 2009: 62). According to this information, public relations education should cover subjects such as management science, public administration, personnel management, and business management in order for practitioners to be competent in managerial decision-making processes. In education, mass communication, research and measurement, media studies, press law issues should also be included in order to reveal correct and effective studies while applying corporate communication studies. On the other hand, public relations practitioners are required to receive education in social sciences, psychology and sociology, and foreign language, which will enable them to gain the level of intellectual knowledge in every institution and in every field (Karapınar,2019:20).

According to Theaker, more investment is required for staff, and these investments should include the desire to adopt new and more professional practices. Senior Public Relations Managers need to significantly strengthen their financial and general management skills, if they have a goal such as admission to the top table. In particular, managers need to support the increasing investment trends in corporate social responsibility programs (Theaker, 2012: 443). In the light of this information, there is a need for public relations practitioners who care about social responsibility, development, to have financial and managerial skills. When Grunig's article is examined, the importance of the public with the phrase is emphasized as "Public relations is the practice of public responsibility" (Grunig, 1993: 146).

Public relations practitioners, like many professions, are in contact with other professional groups within the framework of professional ethics. Journalists are one of these professions. According to Shin and Cameron, public relations practitioners and journalists are dependent on each other in the source - reporter relationship (2005: 321). In public relations, there are some areas in which it has relations such as relations with public institutions and organizations, relations with media and relations developed with society.

Public relations practitioners make use of the internet by following current developments. In this way, they can perform analyzes, reach their target audiences and communicate. Actually, there are studies in this area. For example, there is a study of how public relations practitioners use each web site as a communication tool (Hill and White, 2000: 31).

### **1.1.2. Public Relations Education**

Public relations profession has become widespread as the industry grows and develops day by day in the USA. With the establishment of public relations departments of companies or obtaining public relations services from outside, the need for qualified personnel trained in the field has also increased. As a result of this, public relations courses started to be given in universities (Keloğlu and İşler, 2007: 132-133).

In Turkey, the first public relations training in 1966 at Ankara University Faculty of Political science journalism began in high school. In 1983, it was named as press and broadcast college. In 1992, these schools were united under the name faculty of communication (Balta Peltekoğlu, 2018:132).

In 1992, the number of Communication Faculties increased to 7, and after this year, new communication faculties were established within the State Universities. As of 1993, departments of communication faculties have been placed in departments by the Higher Education Council. For the public relations department, the main branches of "public relations, interpersonal communication, research methods, advertising and promotion" have been included (Tokgöz, 2003: 23). The importance of public relations education is increasing day by day. The department of public relations in Turkey are very numerous in state universities both in private universities. The public relations departments at universities in Turkey are located with different names. These are: public relations, public relations and publicity, public relations and advertising. According to the data of 2021 under the name of Public Relations in Turkey, there are three private universities in the licensing department. Under the name of Public Relations and Publicity, there are twenty-seven public universities and thirteen private universities. The number of universities

that are Public Relations and Publicity Vocational Schools is forty-two as public university and twenty-eight as private university(yokatlas.yok.gov.tr). This shows that the emphasis on education compared to public relations in Turkey.

Public relations education takes place in the form of a comprehensive, as two-way communication process that encompasses both the internal and external environment in order to promote a better understanding of the organization's role, goals, achievements and needs (Okafor and Nwatu, 2018: 2). Many researches have been conducted to date to improve the content of public relations education (Solmaz et. all., 2017: 273; Canpolat, 2013: 139; Deren and Tuncer, 2011: 133; Güllüpunar, 2015: 17; Bakan, 2014: 64 Öztürk and Şardağı, 2019: 125; Solmaz et. all. 2012: 253; Taylor, 2001: 73).

A research on public relations education includes the following questions: "What are public relations students' attitudes about their PR education? Why were they drawn to study PR?" (Fullerton and McKinnon, 2015: 1). A study illustrating recent research shows that public relations education is inadequate to build global and multi (Interter) cultural perspectives (Bardhan, 2003: 164).

This situation reflects the perspective of public relations students. With our study, both student expectations and sector expectations were revealed. This situation points out the importance of our study and its difference from other studies.

As a result of these researches, information such as providing students with a solid social sciences base, specializing in management, using the right research techniques, having basic knowledge about ethics and theory, mastering technology, developing writing skills, and providing internship opportunities were reached (Hornoman, 2000: 22). Public relations education has been on the agenda of IPRA for many years. IPRA has done many projects to improve public relations education. Besides, , education is the primary focus of companies and academics who are public relations practitioners all over the World (Solmaz et. all, 2017: 257).

Public relations education is not only sufficient in the implementation of the profession. Besides, to vocational education, it is also necessary to have a general culture, to have a regular study program, and to use the mother tongue effectively



both orally and in writing. Universities strive for students to reach their academic goals, apply content analysis, examine the structure of the media, and search for findings that will contribute to education (Gülsünler, 2008: 78).

## **2. The Aim Of The Study**

It is important to measure the expectations of public relations managers as well as the public relations curriculum and to question the timeliness of the public relations curriculum.

Under the changing conditions, determining the expectations of public relations students and public relations managers from communication education can lead to the emergence of a public relations education that will bring both parties together at the middle point. In this study, the main aim is to find a public relations education that will bring both parties together at the middle point.

## **3. Data Analysis Method**

A semi-structured in-depth interview method was preferred to measure the students and expectations of Public Relations managers towards the public relations curriculum.

The in-depth interview is a technique designed to elicit a vivid picture of the participant's perspective on the research topic. Detailed interview is an effective qualitative method for getting people to talk about their personal feelings, opinions, and experiences (Milena et al., 2008: 1279). The aim of in-depth interviewing is not to get answers to questions, but to understand the experience of the participants and the meaning they make of those experiences (Seidman, 1991). In the light of this information, thematic analysis in the semi-structured in-depth interview method was used.

Thematic analysis (Aronson, 1994; Taylor and Bogdan, 1984) was used for analyzing all text-based data. The process begins with listing patterns of experiences from the transcribed interviews. The next step involves identifying all data that relate to already classified patterns.

Since it is not possible to reach all persons aged 18 and over in our country within the scope of time and possibility, non-random sampling method was used since a list of all the people forming the working universe could not be found (Böke, 2009: 122).

In the analysis of semi-structured in-depth interviews (Study 1 and Study 2), the MAXQDA qualitative research program was used. The MAXQDA® is a software package for analyzing qualitative data that can be used for content analysis. Shows that MAXQDA® and NVIVO® can provide benefits for the three stages of thematic content analysis. (Oliveira et al., 2016: 76-81).

### **3.1. Research questions**

Research Question 1: What is the expectation of students from public relations education?

Research Question 2: What do public relations managers expect from public relations students and curriculum?

### **3.2. Measures**

Within the scope of this study, 2 studies were handled in an integrated manner. In these 2 studies;

Study 1: Students expectations from public relations education were measured.

Study 2: Public Relations managers' expectations from students and the curriculum were measured.

#### **3.2.1.Study 1**

Within the scope of Study 1, expectations of students from public relations education were determined. In this regard, students were asked about the adequacy of education, their deficiencies in finding a job and which education model would be effective.

When the age ranges of the participants of the study were examined, a total of 44 participants; 26 of them are between the ages of 18-25, 17 of them are between

the ages of 26-33 and 1 person is between the ages of 42-49. In this interview study applied to all of the associate, undergraduate, graduate and doctorate education levels; A total of 44 people, 15 people at associate level, 12 people at undergraduate level, 9 at graduate level and 8 at doctorate level, were conducted.

**Table 1. Adequacy of Education in Terms of Finding A Job in The Sector**

	Number	Percent
Inadequate in Finding a Job	28	63,64
Adequate in Finding a Job	16	36,36
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>100,00</b>

“Do you find your education at your university sufficient in terms of finding a job in the sector?” When the answers given to the question are examined in general, it is coded as “Inadequate in terms of Finding a Job” and “adequate in terms of Finding a Job”. When the answers given are evaluated, it is seen that the public relations student have the view that the education given at universities with a rate of 63.64% is insufficient in finding a job.

**Table 2: Courses That Can Improve Competence in The Sector**

	Number	Percent
Public Relations Campaigns and Practice	19	14,39
Advertising	17	12,88
Brand Management	15	11,36
Public Relations	14	10,61
Crisis Management	11	8,33
Professional Foreign Language	8	6,06
Corporate Communications	6	4,55
Corporate Social Responsibility	6	4,55
Media and Media Planning applied	6	4,55
Interpersonal Communication	5	3,79
Presentation Techniques	4	3,03
Event Management	4	3,03
Psychology	3	2,27
News and Copywriting	3	2,27
Editing	2	1,52

<b>Research Methods and Techniques</b>	2	1,52
<b>Intern</b>	2	1,52
<b>Communication Ethics</b>	2	1,52
<b>Interview Techniques</b>	2	1,52
<b>Propaganda</b>	1	0,76
<b>Total</b>	132	100,00

“What are the first 3 courses you think will give you competence in the sector (practice)?” When the answers given to the question are examined, it is seen that a total of 20 courses are recommended. However, it is seen that the participants are concentrated in "public relations campaign and implementation", "advertising" and "brand management" courses.

**Table 3: Education Method That May Benefit in Finding a Job**

	Number	Percent
<b>Applied Courses</b>	29	65,91
<b>Applied and Theory Courses</b>	15	34,09
<b>Theory Courses</b>	0	0,00
<b>Total</b>	44	100,00

"What kind of education should you take in the courses you think might be helpful in finding a job in the sector?" The answers given to the question are gathered under 3 codes as " Applied Courses", " Applied and Theory Courses" and "Theory Courses". Accordingly, it is seen that not only theoretical education is preferred but applied-oriented education is preferred with a rate of 65.91%. It is seen that the education, in which applied, and theory are combined, is preferred with a rate of 34.09%.

**Table 4: The Effect of University Internship Opportunities on Finding A Job**

	Number	Percent
<b>Effective</b>	36	81,82
<b>Ineffective</b>	4	9,09
<b>I Did Not Do An Internship</b>	4	9,09
<b>Total</b>	44	100,00

“How do universities have internship opportunities in finding a job? What kind of competence does it give you in the sectoral sense? ” When the question is examined, a total of 3 codes were created: “effective”, “ineffective” and “I did not do an internship”. While the participants, who advocate the effect of internship opportunities in finding a job, have a rate of 81.82%, there is a 9.09% group of participants who claim that they are ineffective.

**Table 5: Lack of Education Feeling in Job Interview**

	Number	Percent
Lack of Applied Course	16	36,36
No Lack	8	18,18
Foreign Language	7	15,91
I Did Not Go to Job Interview	6	13,64
Not Having Sufficient Equipment	4	9,09
Undecided	2	4,55
Insufficient Education	1	2,27
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>100,00</b>

“Is there anything you feel missing about training when you go to a job interview to work in the industry?” When the answers given to the question are examined, it is seen that a total of 7 coding were made. Particularly, the participants seem to have a lack of applied course. Participants who stated that they did not feel deficient afterwards, followed by the participants who stated that they felt deficient in foreign language.

**Table 6: Adequacy of Applied Education at Universities**

	Number	Percent
Insufficient	26	59,09
Sufficient	13	29,55
Undecided	5	11,36
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>100,00</b>

"Do you find the applied education at universities sufficient?" When the answers given to the question are examined, it is seen that 3 coding, namely "inadequate", "sufficient" and "undecided", have been made. It is seen that 59.09% of the participants find applied education inadequate, whereas a group of 29.55% of participants shows that applied education is sufficient. However, when the results of the answers given to other questions are examined, it is seen that applied education is insufficient in a way that confirms those answers.

**Table 7: The Ratio of Applied Education to Theoretical Education**

	Number	Percent
%50 Applied Education - %50 Theoretical Education	20	45,45
%60 Applied Education - %40 Theoretical Education	10	22,73
%70 Applied Education - %30 Theoretical Education	6	13,64
%30 Applied Education - %70 Theoretical Education	3	6,82
%75 Applied Education - %25 Theoretical Education	2	4,55
%40 Applied Education - %60 Theoretical Education	2	4,55
%80 Applied Education - %20 Theoretical Education	1	2,27
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>100,00</b>

"How much do you think the ratio of vocational education to theoretical education should be?" When the answers given to the question are examined, it is seen that a total of 7 coding were made. In this direction, it is seen that a 45.45% participant group supports that vocational education should be equal to theoretical education. When the later answers are examined, it is seen that vocational education should be above the theory in general.

**Table 8: Applied Courses for Professional Competence**

	Number	Percent
Suitable for Sector	25	56,82
Interactive	8	18,18
Innovator	8	18,18
Should Be Supported by Internship	2	4,55
Easy to Access	1	2,27
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>100,00</b>

"How do you think the applied courses should be for professional competence?" The answers to the question were collected under 5 codes in total. In this regard, it is seen that the necessity of applied courses to be suitable for the sector (56.82%) is advocated. It was also stated by the participants that interactive, innovative, internship-supported and easy-to-access courses should be available.

**Table 9: The Ratio of Theoretical Education to Applied Education**

	Number	Percent
%50 Theoretical Education - %50 Applied Education	20	45,45
%40 Theoretical Education - %60 Applied Education	10	22,73
%60 Theoretical Education - %40 Applied Education	4	9,09
%70 Theoretical Education - %30 Applied Education	3	6,82
%30 Theoretical Education - %70 Applied Education	2	4,55
%25 Theoretical Education - %75 Applied Education	2	4,55
%30 Theoretical Education - %70 Applied Education	2	4,55
%20 Theoretical Education - %80 Applied Education	1	2,27
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>100,00</b>

"How much do you think the ratio of theoretical education to applied education should be?" It is seen that 8 coding was done in the question. Another question asked to the students is "How much do you think the ratio of applied education to theoretical education should be?" It is seen that there is a density (45.45%) in the view that applied and theoretical education should be equal. Afterwards, it is seen that theoretical education should be less than vocational education.

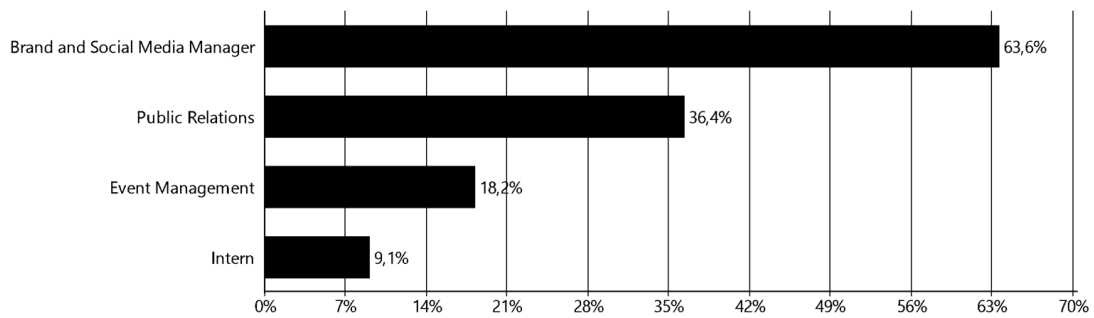
### 3.2.2. Study 2

This section contains data on what the industry expects from students and public relations education. Accordingly, the research has been handled in a holistic way, "Expectations of students from public relations education"(Study 1) and "expectations of the sector from public relations students and education"(Study 2) were investigated. Within the scope of this study, 11 public relations managers were

interviewed through in-depth interviews. The obtained data was analyzed with MAXQDA program as in Study 1.

The figures below show the public relations managers expectations from public relations education and students.

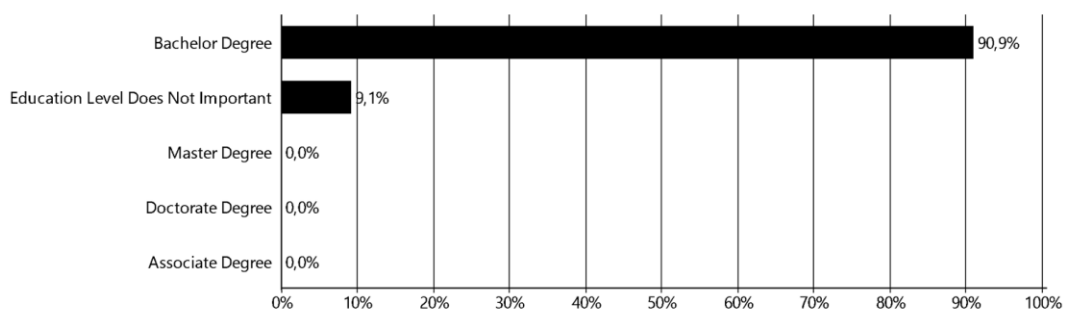
**Figure 1. Units Prioritized for Employment in Public Relations Managers**



Especially considering today's digitalization, it is seen that their agencies give priority to social media managers in direct proportion to this situation. Afterwards, it is seen that public relations employees are also present.

The fact that the interns are also included in the ranking shows that the agencies provide equal opportunities to the people at all levels of the employees. It shows that importance is also given to new personnel development. Another conclusion is that event management is important in agencies.

**Figure 2. The Education Criteria Level of Public Relations Staff Preferred by Public Relations Managers**

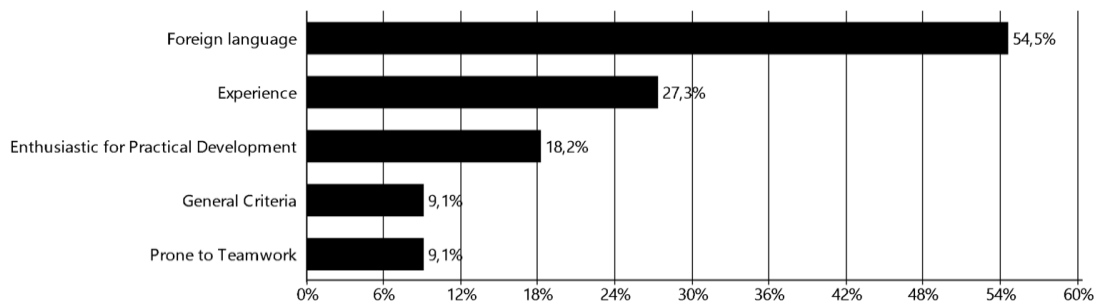




When asked about the importance of university level for public relations managers, it is seen that they include "employees at least at the undergraduate level".

It is stated that the people working in the public relations unit should be graduates of the faculty of communication, because theoretical and practical vocational training is provided at the undergraduate level to increase communication efficiency and make it effective.

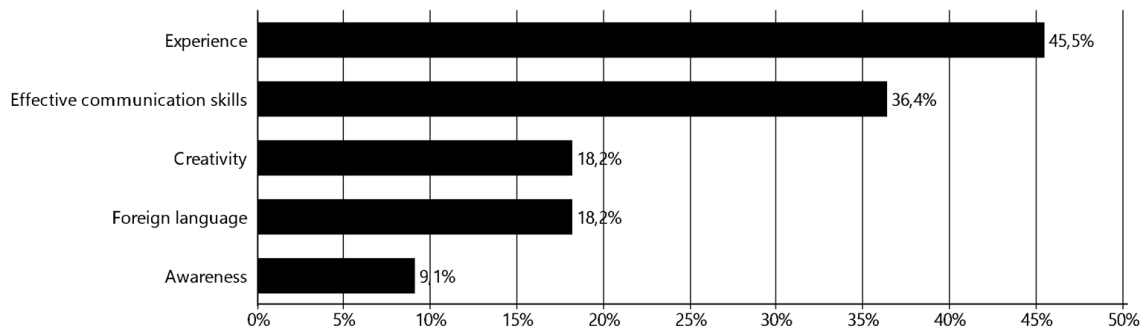
**Figure 3. The Criteria That Public Relations Managers Are Looking for When Performing Public Relations Staff Recruitment**



"What are the criteria you are looking for when recruiting public relations personnel for your workplace?" When the answers given to the question are examined, it is seen that the foreign language condition comes to the fore. It is also seen in the researches especially for students (Study 1) that the students have problems about foreign language. In addition to this, shows that Public relations managers give importance to the foreign language condition (Study 2).

It's important to know more than one foreign language. Also, being particularly prone to teamwork is a must have for a communication graduate. Public relations graduates should be able to empathize, give importance to mutual understanding, that is, be the person who manages the communication. All these communication abilities go towards specialization when supported by work experience as well as theoretical education day by day. Another important issue is to be open to innovations. Communication employees are expected to be those following the agenda.

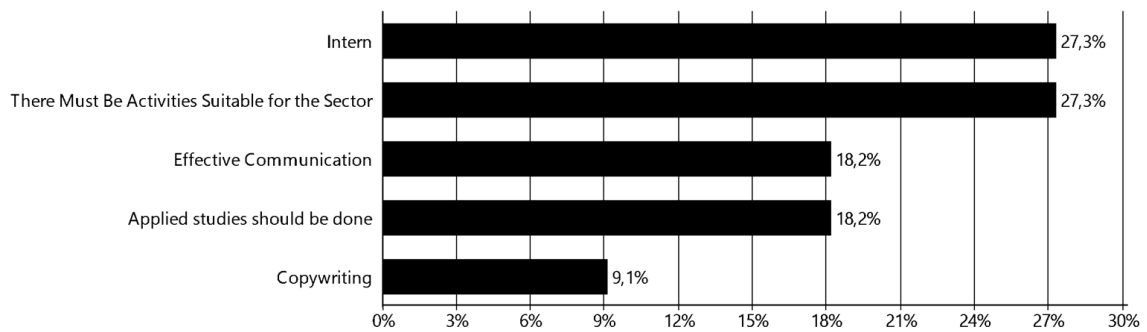
**Figure 4. The Expectations of Public Relations Managers to The Education of Public Relations Staff**



"What are your expectations from in the Education of the public relations staff that you will take to your workplace?" When the answers given to the question are examined, the importance of the applied is seen. In fact, the necessity of applied education was also expressed by the students during the interviews with the students.

The expectations of the public relations managers are compatible with the fact that those who have public relations education take the courses that are practical. Many public relations managers attach importance to work experience and this experience is provided through applied courses or internships for sectoral experience throughout their undergraduate education. Apart from this, effective communication skills are realized with theoretical trainings. In this sense, both theoretical and practical courses gain importance in schools. Besides, people should not only be educated at school, but also need to improve themselves with their own efforts. People who provide efficiency to both public relations agencies and they are preferred.

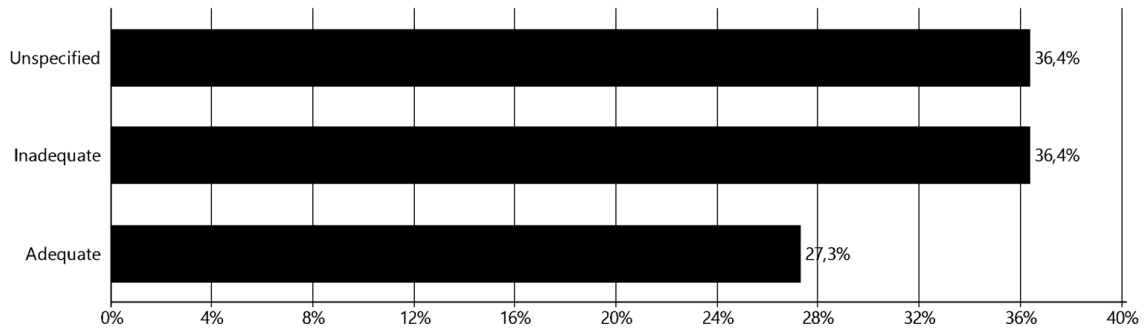
**Figure 5. The Topics That the Public Relations Managers Place Importance On the Field of University Education**



"According to you, what should be considered as a field of applied in the university education of the staff?" Considering the answers given to the question, the need for universities to give applied education within the scope of these courses is emphasized by the agencies. Then, it was emphasized that the applied should be suitable for the sector.

According to the information in the chart, employees must definitely receive internship training in the sector. Besides, effective writing in terms of effective communication, media literacy and good training in speaking are required. While studying at the university, theoretical information should be concretized with sectoral up-to-date news tracking. It is necessary to have information about how activities are carried out in the sector. Internship is also important for students to be encouraged. Some features expected from public relations students (assertiveness, courage, creativity) can be formed through internship.

**Figure 6. The Opinions of Public Relations Managers on The Competence of Education at The University**

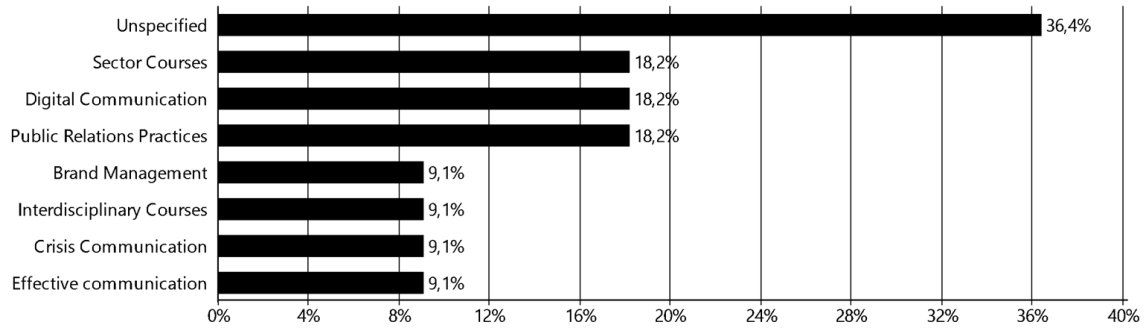


"What are your thoughts on the adequacy of Public Relations Education?"

When the question is examined, it is seen that an average answer is received. The number of people who think they are adequate and insufficient is close to each other.

The reason for the insufficiency of the education received at the universities by the public relations students may be the reasons such as the inadequacy in the applied area or the students not developing themselves. It is stated that there should be university education and also it should be supported with experience in business life. All education should start from a young age and increasingly participate. The earlier students start self-development, the more they experience. At the same time, they get to know very important people and make references.

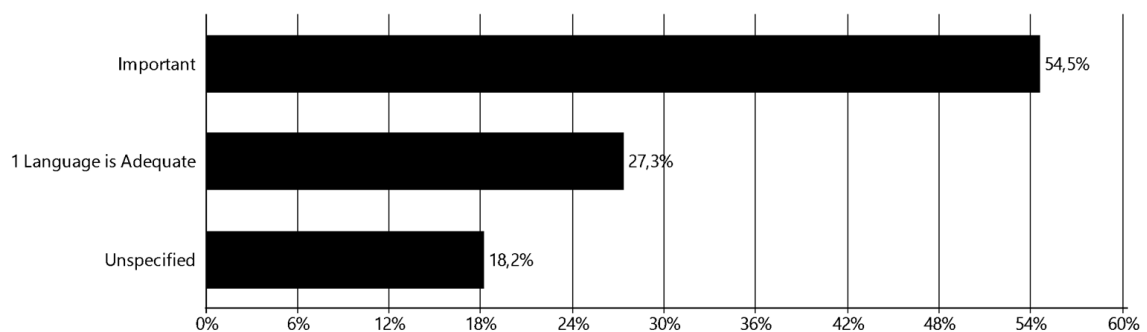
**Figure 7. Which Courses Are Important According to Public Relations Managers**



"Which courses do you think are important?" When we look at the question, it is seen that the sector courses about practice come to the fore. In this case, it can be seen that the agencies give priority to the practical education.

According to the data in the figure, the agencies stated that the sector courses are important. Communication types varies today. With the development of technology, communication environments are renewed. Besides, to the courses in the sector, the focus is on social media. Two-way communication can be established with the target audience and any complaints can be learned in a short time through social media. Agencies also emphasize that courses on these issues are important.

**Figure 8. The Importance of Knowing More Than 1 foreign Language According to Public Relations Managers**

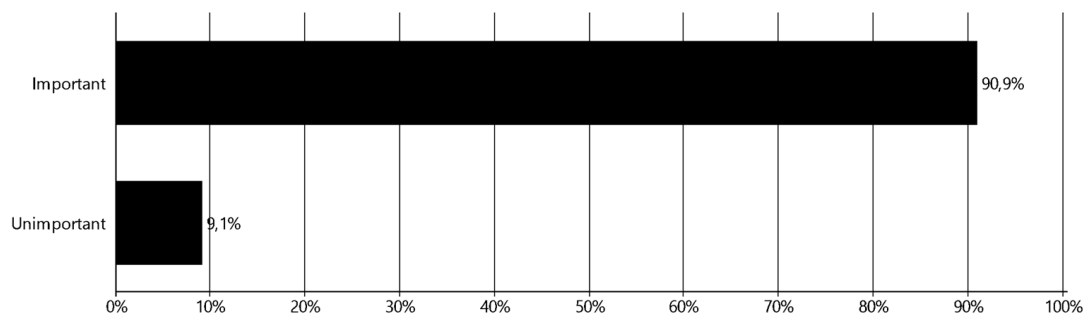


"Is it an important factor for you to know more than 1 foreign language of the public relations staff you will take to your workplace?" When we look at the

question, it can be seen by public relations managers that it is preferable to know more than one foreign language.

More than one foreign language is important in every profession. Because, as there are employees from different languages in the sector, the target audience also varies. According to the answer in their agency in the figure, people should improve themselves in language as in every field, and they should be willing to learn more than one foreign language.

**Figure 9. The Importance of Compulsory Internship According to Agencies**



“Is it important for you that students do compulsory internships? and Do you think that it contributes to their education?” When we look at the question, it is seen how much importance the agencies attach to internships.

According to the information in the figure. Students who study at the university must definitely do an internship. Internship should not be left to the student's preference and should be compulsory. Students gain real experience in the industry during the internship period. In this sense, compulsory internship contributes to the sharing of the workload of the companies, and it also contributes to the students in their career life in terms of experience and reference.

## RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Significant results were obtained within the scope of this research, which was conducted within the scope of Study 1 and Study 2 where public relations education was handled in an integrated manner. Firstly, the expectations of the students regarding the public relations profession were revealed. Useful courses have been unearthed for students. Besides, evaluations were made on the adequacy of the education provided to the students. In this evaluation, it was revealed that the students' theory courses were sufficient. It was also revealed that universities should focus on practical courses. Students find courses such as public relations practices, advertising, crisis communication and digital media useful. Also, students of the public relations department state that public relations education is insufficient to enter business life. Accordingly, it is an important requirement for the curriculum to be based on sector-student collaboration in order for students to take part in business life. It is important to get opinions and suggestions from students and practitioners.

There are public relations students who have difficulties in finding a job, on the other hand, there are public relations managers who say that the public relations students who come to work in their agencies lack education.

The second study is about the expectations of public relations managers from public relations graduates and curriculum

Public relations managers care about university education. Public relations managers stated that there should be both theoretical and practical courses in education at the university and work experience is very important for public relations agencies. Besides, staff should know more than one foreign language, according to public relations managers. Public relations managers allocate the most employment to digital media units. Public relations managers prefer the self-improving and creative ones. According to public relations managers, compulsory internship should be included in university education.

The opinions of public relations managers and the students are compatible with each other. When students are asked about the courses they think will bring competence in the sector, it is seen that the “Public Relations Campaigns and Applied” course, which is an applied course, comes to the fore for the students

argued that applied courses would be effective for them to find a job. When asked about the public relations education of the agencies that are in the position of practitioners in direct proportion with this view, similar answers were received, and it was seen that they argued that the applied courses should be at the forefront.

It seems that the students have a deficiency in English. Accordingly, it is seen that practitioners want an advanced level of English. Therefore, it is seen that vocational English course should be brought to the fore even more.

Students advocate that they should progress in a suitable way to the sector in their applied courses. As a matter of fact, it is observed that public relations managers take a proportional approach with this idea and argue that the progress of the courses in cooperation with the sector will be effective.

Students who do not have the opportunity to integrate into the sector in theoretical courses emphasize especially the low level of applied courses. For this reason, students who want to enter the sector after 4 years of education may encounter a foreign environment. Collaborating with companies and universities will be an important solution to increase practical courses and to support theoretical courses with current examples and to bring knowledge of public relations students to life. To draw a general conclusion about all of these, it is a profession that has honesty and develops by adapting easily to the developing technology, and also balances mutual expectations on the basis of public relations that serve as a bridge between the institution and the target audience. Therefore, an ideal public relations activity should meet the expectation between these parties.

For this reason, the public relations profession, a field that should always exist in the future, should be carried out in line with the expectations and wishes of the practitioners, university professors and students who receive public relations training should work with institutions and companies that provide training for this purpose.

A detailed examination of the university curricula can be done by other studies in terms of improving the research conducted. Thanks to the work that other researchers can develop, an ideal public relations curriculum can be proposed by



demonstrating to what extent the public relations curriculum meets the industry expectations and student expectations.

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