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# The Love and Hate Relationship: The Conflict between Public Relations Practitioners and Journalists in Turkey

## Özet

Halkla ilişkiler uygulamacıları ve gazeteciler yaptıkları işin doğası gereği birbirlerine bağımlı olmalarına rağmen aralarındaki ilişki ilgili literatürde genellikle "aşk ve nefret" ilişkisi olarak değerlendirilmektedir. Gazeteciler halkla ilişkiler uygulamacısı tarafından sağlanan bilgiye tam olarak güvenmemekte çünkü bu bilginin tamamen uygulamacının temsil ettiği işletmenin kendi gündemine göre hazırlandığına inanmaktadır. Halkla ilişkiler uygulamacıları ise genel olarak kendilerine olan bu güvensizliğin farkına olmakla birlikte onlar da gazetecilerin işletmelerine adil davranacağı konusunda güven problem yaşamaktadırlar. Halkla ilişkiler disiplinine ilişkin literature incelendiğinde söz konusu iki grubun arasındaki ilişkiyi aydınlatabilmek için yapılan çok sayıda çalışma ve araştırma ile karşılaşmak mümkündür. Farklı ülkelerde yürütülen araştırmalar genellikle benzer sonuçlar vermiş ve gazeteci-halkla ilişkiler uygulamacı ilişkisinde ciddi çatışmalar yaşandığını ortaya koymuştur. Bu makalede de amaç Türkiye'de söz konusu iki grup arasındaki hem kendilerine hem de birbirlerine yönelik algı farklarını ortaya çıkarmaktır. Çalışmada coorientational analiz yöntemi kullanılmış ve OPRA ölçeği kullanılmış; iki grup arasındaki ilişki güven, karşılıklı kontrol, ilişki kalitesi, ilişkiye adanmışlık, imaj ve yardım değişkenleri çerçevesinde değerlendirilmiştir. Elde edilen sonuçlar Türkiye'de halkla ilişkiler uygulamacıları ve gazeteciler arasında hem kendilerine hem de birbirlerine yönelik önemli algı farklılıkları olduğunu ortaya koymuştur.

## Anahtar Kelimeler

**Halkla ilişkiler, gazeteci**

## Abstract

The relationship between journalists and public relations practitioners has often been described as a "love-hate" relationship; yet, they are mutually dependent on one another. Journalists do not fully trust information generated by public relation practitioners because they think the information has been prepared primarily to promote the organizations' agenda. Public relations practitioners are aware that journalists' mistrust the materials they provide and as a result do not believe journalists will be fair to their organizations. The antagonistic climate between these two parties has been widely studied. These studies which were conducted in different countries have similar results and they show that the conflict between journalists and public relations practitioners. This article aims to provide a means to analyze the perceptual balance between journalists and public relations practitioners in Turkey; which will help public relations practitioners understand the source of conflicts. This study, using The Coorientational Analysis method, examined Turkish journalists' and public relations practitioners' perceptions and cross-perceptions of their relationship. . The scale consists of five relationship dimensions: trust, control mutuality, relationship satisfaction, relationship commitment and face and favor. And results show that there is a perceptual gap between journalists and practitioners.

## Key Words

**Public relations, journalist**

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## Introduction

PR has been defined as “the management of communication between organizations and its public” (Grunig and Hunt, 1984: 7). Cutlip, Center and Broom (2006) have suggested that PR is “the management function that establishes and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and its publics on whom its success or failure depends”. Of particular note, Vercic and Gruning (2000) suggested that “PR is situated in organizations and must be understood in relationship to organizational practices, economics, power, structure and culture”.

“The relationship between journalists and public relations practitioners has often been described as a ‘love-hate’ relationship”(Shin, Cameran, 2003b) ; yet, they are mutually dependent on one another. Journalists do not fully trust information generated by public relation practitioners because they think the information has been prepared primarily to promote the organizations’ agenda. Public relations practitioners are aware that journalists’ mistrust the materials they provide and as a result do not believe journalists will be fair to their organizations. The antagonistic climate between these two parties has been widely studied.

This article aims to provide a means to analyze the perceptual balance between journalists and public relations practitioners in Turkey; which will help public relations practitioners understand the source of conflicts. This study, using The Coorientational Analysis method, examined Turkish journalists’ and public relations practitioners’ perceptions and cross-perceptions of their relationship. The basic question of

this study is “How do Turkish public relations practitioners and journalists differ in their perceptions of their relationship? The questionnaire for this study applied OPRA –a cross cultural and multiple item scale for measuring organization public relationships developed by Huang (2001), to measure the relationship between journalists and public relations practitioners. The scale consists of five relationship dimensions: trust, control mutuality, relationship satisfaction, relationship commitment and face and favor.

“The tension between journalists and public relations (PR) practitioners is long-standing and also complex”(Delorme, Fedler, 2003:100). “The relationship between journalists and PR practitioners has often been described as a ‘love-hate’ relationship”(Shin, Cameran, 2003b); yet, they are mutually dependent on one another. “Journalists depend on PR practitioners for news material, and practitioners depend on editors for publicity” (Pincus et.al., 1993:29). “Source-reporter relationship between public relations practitioners and journalists is conflictual, involving stratagems on both sides of the relationship”(Shin, Cameran, 2005: 318). The relationships between reporters and people in public relations are seen from two sides. They rely on each other to help them do their jobs. Reporters often use PR people to get a story, and PR people use reporters to get a story told. Without the critical pipeline media provide to audiences, many PR efforts would flounder; conversely, media obtain much of their information from PR sources. “Industry studies have continuously demonstrated that while editors talk about crashing all PR efforts, much coverage is in fact dependent on PR sources”(Ambrosio, 1980; Mundy 1992).

“Thus far, all the studies on the relationship between journalism and PR have showed that journalists have a negative opinion about practitioners” (Neijens, Smit, 2006: 233). Journalists do not fully trust information generated by PR practitioners because they think the information has been prepared primarily to promote their organizations’ agenda. “Journalists believe that PR practitioners fake stunts to get free publicity, making it difficult for journalists to report legitimate stories, and violating basic rules of news writing” (Shaw, White, 2004: 494). PR practitioners are aware that journalists mistrust the materials they provide and as a result do not believe journalists will be fair to their organizations (Kang, 2007).

## Literature Review

### The Relationship Between Public Relationship Practitioners and Journalists

The relationship between PR practitioners and journalists and the perceptions and cross-perceptions have long been studied. More previous studies show PR serves as one of the sources to subsidize information for journalists and regard the relationship between practitioners and journalists as a source-reporter relationship. They confirm that journalists assess practitioners as weak source of power in spite of the influence of public relations on the news. They also corroborate the existence of misunderstanding, discord and conflict toward each other in the agenda-building process. “The journalists’ negative perceptions of PR and the practitioners are mostly related to an advocacy role inherent in the function of the source, and the conflict between prac-

tioners and journalists is mostly situated in the source-reporter relationship” (Shin, 2003: 32-33).

Journalists and PR professionals play distinct roles in representing their constituencies. At times, their interests come into conflict, and their relationship becomes strained. A key to appreciating this relationship is to understand the traditions and nature of the PR and journalism functions. In the fields of journalism and PR, both groups work toward informing the public. The groups differ in their definition of newsworthy and how the public should be informed. Tension, between the fields, dates back to the early 1900s, with publicity mongers. “Often PR professionals are seen as spin-doctors, hacks, creators of fluff, or truth benders because so many people think that the PR person’s job is to either lie or manipulate the truth until the public can’t tell which side is up” (Wats, 2003: 27). “A common misconception about public relations officials is that they twist or distort truths and provide inaccurate information to journalists who use PR practitioners as sources in their reports” (Waugh, 2007: 6).

While both journalists and PR practitioners need each other to effectively function in the news information process, there is inherent conflict in their interaction. Journalists have traditionally held suspicious or negative views of the influence of PR and practitioners and diminished their source credibility (Arnoff, 1976; Belz et al., 1989; Berkowitz 1993; Cutlip, 1962; Kopenhaver, 1985; Sallot et al. 1998; Shin and Cameron 2003, Pincus et. al., 1993; Ryan and Martinson, 1994). Although both practitioners and journalists recognize the contribution made by PR in the news process, journalists are always skeptical of the information

provided by, and the intentions of practitioners. “Journalists claim that PR people do not understand news and block the media’s access to organizational sources. PR practitioners argue that media people are biased against them and their clients and that they are often unfamiliar with the topics they write about” (Pincus et al., 1993:28).

In 1975 Aronoff researched relationship between journalist and PR practitioners in Texas. And this research showed that Texas journalists’ attitudes toward PR differed substantially from and were more negative than the attitudes held by practitioners toward themselves.(Aronoff, 1975) After Aronoff research in 1977 Jeffers conducted a research and found that journalists viewed PR practitioners as obstructionists who prevent journalists from obtaining the truth. “Journalists also considered themselves superior to practitioners in terms of status, ethics, and skills. Interestingly, many journalists viewed practitioners with whom they had regular contact as status equals”(Shaw, White, 2004:494). Kopenhaver, Martinson, and Ryan (1984) concluded that a sample of editors viewed PR much more negatively than did a sample of practitioners. Shin and Cameron (2003) found in a study conducted in South Korea that both practitioners and journalists disagree about and inaccurately predict the others’ view regarding source/reporter relationships. Neijens and Smit’s (2006) research has shown that PR practitioners were generally positive about their relationship with journalists. They considered the cooperation good, thought that good arrangements could be made, and did not experience an unhealthy tension. Journalists were less positive than PR practitioners but they did not have negative feelings. According the

result of this research “the two professions were not negative about their relationship, and they did not perceive an unhealthy tension. Both professions were also satisfied with the media reporting on organizations and did not think that too much attention is paid to personal stories or to differences of opinion. Conclude that there are differences in perception between practitioners and journalists, but that these were neither predominantly negative nor fundamental. This study, therefore, contradicts the findings of older studies, which showed an antagonistic relationship”. (Neijens, Smit, 2006: 239).

The current relationship between journalists and PR practitioners is strained and commonly misunderstood. “For years, journalists have charged that PR practitioners are unethical, manipulative, one-sided, and deceptive” (DeLorme, Fedler; 2003: 99). They also complain that PR practitioners serve special interests rather than the public. However, negativity is not one-sided. Some studies have found that practitioner’s attitudes toward journalists are equally biased. “PR practitioners response is that journalists have a narrow and self-righteous view of their work and know little about PR, a profession in which ethical conduct is important” (Kopenhaver, 1984: 14). “Sallot, Steinfatt, and Salwen explained, practitioners continually offer journalists unsolicited assistance in the performance of their jobs” (Pomerantz; 1989-1990 winter). “In one study on the current relationship between journalists and PR practitioners, Sallot, Steinfatt, and Salwen found that journalists and PR practitioners seemed to perceive the worst in each other, but that some differences were based on fact”(Delorme, Fedler, 1998:101). “With good reason, journalists perceive that practitioners have self-serving

motives for offering this service” (Sallot et al., 1998:374). Still, these researchers concluded that both journalists and PR practitioners are professionals who share similar news values and that both, in their own ways, serve beneficial social roles.

According to the journalists, PR officials think about the needs of their organization first, and less about what journalists need (Ryan, Martinson, 1988). Journalists view PR officials as withholding information, not being objective, and not focusing on the public interest (Belz et al., 1989). “Journalists hold generally negative attitudes toward public relations, with journalists denigrating practitioners’ news values and professional status” (Sallot, Johnson, 2006:152). Sallot, Steinfatt, and Salwen (1998), however, showed that the two groups shared similar news values, but that journalists, in particular, were unaware of this similarity.

Charron, characterized the nature of the relationship, between journalists and PR practitioners, as involving necessary dimensions of both cooperation and conflict. While the struggle for control over the production of news can create political conflict between the two groups they are interdependent economically and must negotiate and compromise in order to exchange resources and accomplish their goals. (Charron, 1989)

### Coorientation Theory

In the communication area most techniques developed to measure relationships focus on assessing relationship perceptions. These perceptual measures can be administered either one-way or two-way (Hon and Grunig, 1999). Hon and Grunig suggest that “the two-way measurement techniques

would be helpful to assess the perceptual gap between the organization and its publics”. The two-way measure technique in public relations incorporates The Coorientational model of interpersonal communication.

The Coorientation Theory in this regard figures highly in public relations textbooks (Cutlip et al., 1999; Grunig and Hunt, 1984; Pavlik, 1987), “yet its empirical verifications in the field of public relations are rare”. (Vercic et al., 2006: 1) The Coorientation Model of Communication was developed by Chaffee and McLeod at The University of Wisconsin in the late 1960s. “The model defines communication to be interpersonal act- that is, communication requires the participation of at least two persons”(Tan, 1985: 223). “Coorientation is an approach that examines how people who are connected relate to a common object by surveying each person’s thoughts about that object and learning what each person believes the other thinks about that same object”(Rankin; 2005: 34). “The Coorientation Model includes the dimensions of agreement, understanding, congruency, and accuracy to describe the state of attitudes and expectations that two parties have about an issue and each other in reference to that issue” (Jackowski, 1998: 71).

*Congruency* - the degree to which each of the sides believes that the idea or evaluation of the other side is similar to theirs. This variable is also called *perceived agreement*.

*Accuracy* - the degree to which the perceptions or evaluations of side B by side A approximate to the real ideas or cognitions of side B (The degree to which the approximations of one side match the real attitudes of the other.) “*Accuracy* is the extent to which one side’s estimate of the oth-

er's views is similar to other's actual views" (Broom, Dozier: 1990: 38).

*Agreement* - the degree to which two (or more) sides share similar evaluations of a particular issue of common interest.

*Understanding* - the degree of similarity between definitions given by two or more parties. In order to quantify the understanding, one needs to calculate the *difference* that conveys the gap between the cognitions of either side. The difference, therefore, poses the question: how far apart are the beliefs of these two groups? The smaller the difference, the greater the understanding between the two sides is and the greater the difference, the lower the level of understanding is. In order to measure the agreement, the same principles can be used as in measuring the level of understanding.

cators and stakeholders. "These indicators of successful communication contribute to long-term success measured by outcomes such as trust and commitment. The Coorientation Theory demonstrates the importance of taking a long-term view of the organization's relationships with its stakeholders" (Austin, Pinkleton; 2006: 277).

Most of The Coorientation studies have focused on dyads, although in these scenarios people are inevitably influenced by their own perception of the entire group, as well as their partners (McLeod and Chaffee, 1973). "Research on Coorientation can be broken down according to the unit of analysis. Some studies investigate coorientation between two individuals, others look at coorientation in small groups such as family; still others analyze coorientation between

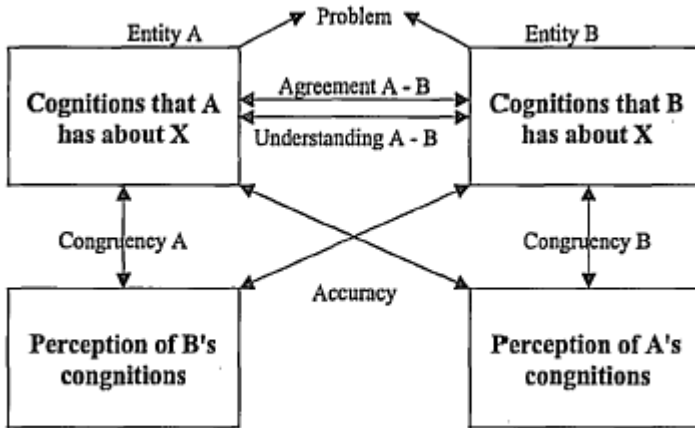


Fig. 1. Coorientation model. Source: adapted according to Cutlip et al. (1999).

"The elements of The Coorientation Model are the relationships between ideas and evaluations, as well as between perceived ideas and evaluations" (Vercic et al., 2006:2) . According to The Coorientation Theory, organizations must try to maximize levels of agreement, understanding and accuracy among the organization's communi-

larger groups such as formal organizations and communities" (Tan, 1985:227). "The Coorientational Approach provides a means to analyze the perceptual balance between an organization and its public towards certain issues, which can provide a better understanding of both parties' be-

liefs, and help organizations find out more about the source of conflicts” (Kang; 2007: 23).

Scholars recommend The Coorientation Approach as a way to eliminate discrepancies in the perceptions of an organization and its publics. The complementary nature of media and public relations work suggest a symbiotic relationship of mutual dependence. However, numerous studies have applied The Coorientation Model to examine the perceptions and cross-perceptions between two professional groups of public relations practitioners and journalists, and the majority of the studies showed discrepancies between two groups.(Shin, 2003)

## Method

### Aim and Hypothesis

The basic question of this study is “How do Turkish public relations practitioners and journalists differ in their perceptions of their relationship? Existing research indicates that a gap exists between PR practitioners’ and journalists’ perceptions and that of the two groups journalists perceive

the gap to be larger. In order to examine this phenomenon in a Turkish setting, the following hypotheses are used.

H1: PR practitioners and journalists will disagree on their relationship quality.

H2: Both professions will inaccurately estimate the other’s own perception of relationship quality.

H2a: Journalists will inaccurately estimate PR practitioner’s perceptions of their relationship quality.

H2b: PR practitioners will inaccurately estimate journalists’ perceptions of their relationship quality.

H2c: PR practitioners will estimate more accurately what journalists think about their relationship than journalists will estimate about what PR practitioners think about their relationship.

H3: Both professions’ perceptions will not be congruent with their estimations of the other’s perceptions of their relationship quality.

H3a: PR practitioners’ perception of the relationship quality will not be

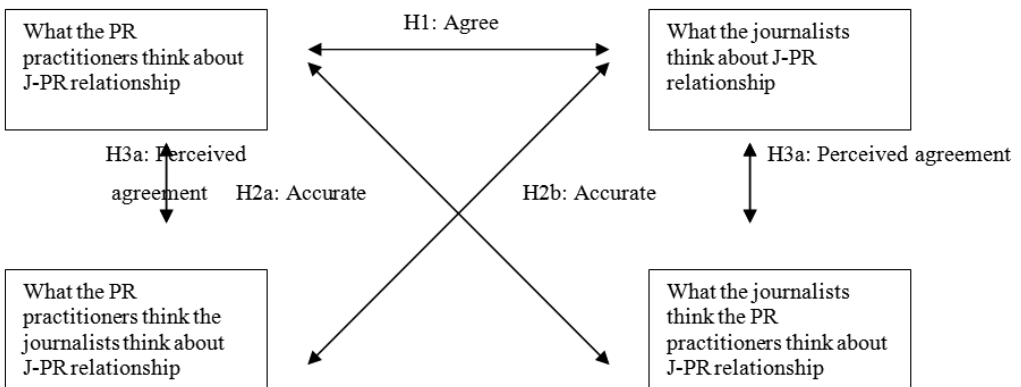


Figure 2: Hypothesis

congruent with their projections of journalists' perceptions.

H3b: Journalists' perceptions of relationship quality will not be congruent with their projections of PR practitioners' perception.

## Scale

The Survey Methodology is used in this study. The OPRA scale, a cross-cultural and multiple item scale, developed by Huan (2001), to measure organization-public relationships, is used in this study. The scale consists of five relationship dimensions. These dimensions are trust, control mutuality, relationship satisfaction, relationship commitment and face and favor.

"*Trust* is perceived to be an important value for organizations to maintain relationship with their publics" (Kang, 2007: 18). Trust is a widely accepted and critical construct both in interpersonal relationship and in organizational conflicts in which it is involved (Canary, Cupach, 1988, Carlson and Millard 1987, Huang 1994, Grunig and Huang 2000). Trust can be defined as others will not exploit one's goodwill (Yamagishi, 1986; Parks, et al. 1996).. Another definition trust suggests a willingness to risk oneself because the relational partner is perceived as benevolent and honest (Canary and Cupach, 1988: 308). To sum up, "trust highlights one's confidence in and willingness to open oneself to the other party".(Grunig and Huang; 2000: 44)

*Control mutuality* can be defined as the "degree to which parties agree on who has the rightful power to influence one another" (Grunig and Hon, 1999,3).

*Relationship satisfaction* was described by

Grunig and Hon (1999), as the extent to which each party feels favorably toward the other because positive expectations about the relationship are reinforced. Ferguson(1984) held that the degree to which both organization and public are satisfied with their relationship is one of the significant indicators for gauging the quality of an organization's relationship with its strategic public. "Unlike control mutuality and trust, relationship satisfaction involve cognitive dimensions, satisfaction encompasses affection and emotion" (Grunig and Huang, 2000: 45).

*Relation commitment* is described as the "extent to which each party believes and feels that the relationship is worth spending energy to maintain and promote". (Grunig and Hon, 1999: 3) "Affective commitment is an positive emotional feeling the public has toward an organization and the continuous commitment is the public's intention to continue actions".(Kang, 2007: 20)

*Face to favor* is a strategy that people use acquire resources from people who allocate them and build human networks (Hwang, 1987).

The relationship measure questions are divided into two parts; the first one is to assess the respondents' perception and the second one is to assess the respondents' projection of the opposite group's perceptions. Each question has a seven-point Likert type scale, where one is 'strongly disagree' and seven is 'strongly agree'.

The questionnaire was translated into Turkish by a researcher and presented to 40 Turks: twenty public relations practitioners and twenty journalists, to test whether the translated questionnaire was understood.

In the research convenience sampling



method was used. Questionnaire forms sent to selected personnel of agencies with certain size that are members of Turkish Public Relations Association (150 public relations agency personnel) via internet. For the journalists questionnaire forms sent to 8 Turkish newspapers and 8 magazines which have most circulation. (reporters and columnist, total: 120 journalists) At the end of the period give return of 98 online questionnaire from PR practitioners and 92 from journalists. In the data analysis SPSS program was used.

**Table 1: Respondents' Demographic Variables**

<b>Public Relations Practitioners</b>		
<b>Gender</b>		
	Frequency	Percent
Male	40	40,8
Female	58	59,2
<b>Education</b>		
	Frequency	Percent
HighSchool	2	2
College	58	59,2
Master	31	31,6
Ph.D.	7	7,1
<b>Organization Type</b>		
	Frequency	Percent
Inhouse	38	38,2
Agency	60	61,2
<b>Year of Experience</b>		
	Frequency	Percent
~2	12	12,2
2~5	16	16,3
5~10	21	21,4
10~15	36	36,7
15~20	12	12,2

<b>Journalists</b>		
<b>Gender</b>		
	Frequency	Percent
Male	51	55,4
Female	41	44,6
<b>Education</b>		
	Frequency	Percent
High School	24	26
College	46	50
Master	15	16,3
Ph.D.	7	7,6
<b>Organization Type</b>		
	Frequency	Percent
Newspaper	62	67,4
Magazine	30	32,6
<b>Years of Experience</b>		
	Frequency	Percent
~2	5	5,4
2~5	22	23,9
5~10	27	29,3
10~15	27	29,3
15~20	6	6,5
20~	5	5,4

**Table 2: Mean and Reliability of Each Variable (journalists)**

Dimension	Journalists' Self-Perception				Journalists' Estimation			
	Variable Name	M	SD	$\alpha$	Variable Name	M	SD	$\alpha$
Trust	JPRtruthful	2,55	0,75		JPREtruthful	2,88	0,80	
	JPRjust	2,29	0,81		JPREjust	2,73	0,58	
	JPRtrust	2,14	0,99		JPREtrust	3,41	1,00	
	JPRpromis	3,13	0,84		JPREpromis	3,29	0,86	
<b>Overall M.</b>		2,53		0,75		3,08		0,70
Control Mutuality	JPRsatiswo	2,04	0,71		JPREsatiswo	2,82	0,71	
	JPREqual	2,08	0,89		JPREequal	3,61	0,97	
	JPRmutual	2,24	1,07		JPREmutual	3,91	1,13	
	JPRsymm	2,17	0,92		JPREsymm	3,76	0,96	
<b>Overall M.</b>		2,13		0,83		3,52		0,78
Relationship Satisfaction	JPRneed	3,60	0,84		JPREneed	4,97	0,78	
	JPRprobrel	2,35	1,05		JPREprobrel	3,26	0,92	
	JPRsatisfy	2,01	0,83		JPREsatisfy	3,08	0,76	
	JPRrelation	1,99	0,88		JPRErelation	3,38	0,92	
<b>Overall M.</b>		2,49		0,69		3,67		0,71
Relationship Commitment	JPRcontirel	2,51	0,92		JPREcontirel	3,17	0,76	
	JPRmainrel	3,47	0,83		JPREmainrel	4,92	0,84	
	JPRlongrela	3,37	0,79		JPRElongrela	5,24	0,65	
	JPRinteract	2,46	0,97		JPREinteract	3,33	0,90	
<b>Overall M.</b>		2,95		0,73		4,17		0,61
Face and Favor	JPRperson	5,65	0,79		JPREperson	5,54	0,94	
	JPRfavor	5,25	0,83		JPREfavor	3,49	0,91	
	JPRface	3,50	0,97		JPREface	3,21	1,22	
	JPRloseface	2,53	0,67		JPREloseface	2,30	0,72	
<b>Overall M.</b>		4,23		0,16		3,64		0,30

**Table 3: Mean and Reliability of Each Variable (PR practitioners)**

Dimension	PR's Self-Perception				PR's Estimations			
	Variable Name	M	SD	$\alpha$	Variable Name	M	SD	$\alpha$
Trust	PRJtruthful	2,10	0,87		PRJETruthful	2,62	0,84	
	PRJjust	2,06	0,76		PRJEjust	2,52	0,89	
	PRJtrust	3,15	1,19		PRJETrust	2,54	1,07	
	PRJpromis	2,77	0,72		PRJEpromis	4,15	0,68	
<b>Overall M.</b>		2,52		0,83		2,96		0,70
Control Mutuality	PRJsatiswo	2,73	0,91		PRJEsatiswo	2,45	0,92	
	PRJequal	2,71	0,76		PRJEequal	2,28	0,89	
	PRJmutual	4,31	1,22		PRJEmutual	4,09	1,31	
	PRJsymm	3,12	1,00		PRJEsymm	2,30	1,06	
<b>Overall M.</b>		3,22		0,74		2,78		0,71

<b>Relationship</b>	PRJneed	4,82	0,87	PRJNeed	4,29	1,09
	PRJprobrel	3,09	1,10	PRJEprobrel	2,79	1,48
<b>Satisfaction</b>	PRJsatisfy	2,85	0,87	PRJEsatisfy	2,51	1,23
	PRJrelation	3,11	1,09	PRJERelation	2,27	1,09
<b>Overall M.</b>		3,47	0,72		2,96	0,69
<b>Relationship</b>	PRJcontirel	3,38	1,16	PRJEcontirel	2,76	1,13
	PRJmainrel	4,88	0,97	PRJEmainrel	4,31	0,94
<b>Commitment</b>	PRJlongrela	4,98	0,90	PRJELongrela	3,87	1,07
	PRJinteract	3,40	1,17	PRJEinteract	2,83	1,29
<b>Overall M.</b>		4,16	0,76		3,44	0,82
<b>Face and</b>	PRJperson	5,32	0,93	PRJEperson	5,31	0,88
	PRJfavor	3,04	0,73	PRJEfavor	5,47	0,84
<b>Favor</b>	PRJface	3,71	0,99	PRJEface	4,03	1,26
	PRJloseface	2,44	0,83	PRJElloseface	2,92	1,03
<b>Overall M.</b>		3,63	0,25		4,43	0,67

## Results

### Agreement

The first hypothesis (**H1**) posited that PR practitioners and journalists disagree on their relationship quality. The results supported the related hypothesis which means the overall relationship perceptions were significantly different. As a result PR practi-

*Trust:* The results showed that both PR practitioners and journalists perceived the quality of trust negatively (M of PR=2,52; M of J=2,53) and there was no significant difference in trust dimension ( $t = -0.09$ ,  $p = .922$ ) which means public relations practitioners and journalists do not trust each other at similar level.

*Control Mutuality:* PR practitioners and

**Table 4: Agreement**

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Mean of PR Practitioners' Self-Perception</b>	<b>Mean of Journalists' Self-Perception</b>	<b>Mean Differences</b>	<b>t- values</b>	<b>Sig. (2 ~ tailed)</b>
<b>Trust</b>	2,52	2,53	-0.00	-0.09	,922
<b>Control Mutuality</b>	3,22	2,13	1.08	10.15	,000
<b>Relationship Satis.</b>	3,47	2,49	0.98	9.72	,000
<b>Relationship Commit.</b>	4,16	2,95	1,20	11.64	,000
<b>Face and Favor</b>	3,63	4,23	-0.60	-9.02	,000
<b>Overall Relationship</b>	3,4	2,87	0.53	7.43	,000

tioners had more positive perceptions than journalists. ( $t = 7.43$ ,  $p = .000$ )

journalists showed different perspectives on control mutuality. ( $t = 10.15$ ,  $p = .000$ ) On

this dimension PR practitioners rated higher on control mutuality than journalists. (M of PR=3.22; M of J=2.13)

*Relationship Satisfaction:* PR practitioners rated higher on relationship satisfaction than journalists. (M of PR=3.47; M of J=2.49) The results were significantly different. ( $t=9.72$ ,  $p=.000$ )

*Relationship Commitment:* On this dimension PR practitioners and journalists had different perceptions (M of PR=4.16; M of J=2.95). Journalists as compared to PR practitioners were more negative regarding the relationship commitment and the results were significantly different. ( $t=11.64$ ,  $p=.000$ )

*Face and Favor:* It cannot be concluded from this result that the two professions agree or disagree on the face and favor because the reliability scores of both groups' self-perception on relationship satisfaction are low as well (Cronbach's  $\alpha$  of PR=.16; Cronbach's  $\alpha$  of J=.25) Therefore, this result cannot be reported as explaining the two groups' agreement on face and favor.

## Accuracy

To measure the accuracy of each group's estimation of other group's perception on their relationship, between-subject tests (independent sample t-tests) were conducted. Table 5 shows the comparisons of each group's self-perception and estimations of their counterpart's self-perceptions.

The hypothesis 2a (**H2a**) posited that journalists will inaccurately estimate PR practitioners' perceptions of their relationships quality and the hypothesis 2b (**H2b**) posited that PR practitioners will inaccurately estimate journalists' perceptions.

Both of these hypothesis were supported. For H2a, PR practitioners thought that journalists would perceive the relationship with practitioners better than the journalists actually did (M of PR practitioners' estimation= 3.31; M of J' self-perception 2.87;  $t=6.06$ ,  $p=.000$ ). For H2b, journalists estimated practitioners' self-perception more positive than what practitioners' actually perceive (M of J' estimation= 3.61; M of PR' self-perception=3.4;  $t=3.20$ ,  $p=.002$ ) But the hypothesis 2c (**H2c**) - PR practitioners estimate more accurately what journalists think about their relationship than what journalists estimate PR practitioners think about their relationship- was not supported.

*Trust:* Both professions did not estimate accurately their counterpart's self-perceptions of the trust dimension (M of PR's estimation=2.96, M of J's perceptions=2.53;  $t=4.99$ ,  $p=.000$ / M of J's estimations=3.08, M of PR practitioners self-perceptions=2.52;  $t=5.90$ ,  $p=.000$ )

*Control Mutuality:* Both groups failed to estimate their counterpart's actual perceptions on the control mutuality dimension. (M of PR's estimation=2.78, M of J's perceptions=2.13;  $t=6.12$ ,  $p=.000$ / M of J's estimations=3.52, M of PR practitioners self-perceptions=3.22;  $t=2.84$ ,  $p=.005$ )

*Relationship Satisfaction:* For the relationship satisfaction dimension, both PR practitioners and journalists failed to estimate eachother's self-perceptions. ((M of PR's estimation=2.96, M of J's perceptions=2.49;  $t=4.38$ ,  $p=.000$ / M of J's estimations=3.67, M of PR practitioners self-perceptions=3.47;  $t=2.18$ ,  $p=.030$ )

*Relationship Commitment:* For the relationship commitment dimension, the public relations practitioners failed to estimate

Table 5: Accuracy

Dimension	Mean of PR Practitioners' Estimation	Mean of Journalists' Self-Perception	Mean Differences	t-values	Sig. (2 ~ tailed)
Trust	2,96	2,53	0.42	4.99	.000
Control Mutuality	2,78	2,13	0.64	6.12	.000
Relationship Satis.	2,96	2,49	0.47	4.38	.000
Relationship Commit.	3,44	2,95	0.48	4.36	.000
Face and Favor	4,43	4,23	0.19	2.26	.025
Overall Relationship	3,31	2,87	0.44	6.06	.000

Dimension	Mean of Journalists' Estimation	Mean of PR Practitioners' Self-Perception	Mean Differences	t-values	Sig. (2 ~ tailed)
Trust	3,08	2,52	0.55	5.90	.000
Control Mutuality	3,52	3,22	0.30	2.84	.005
Relationship Satis.	3,67	3,47	0.20	2.18	.030
Relationship Commit.	4,17	4,16	0.00	0.07	.937
Face and Favor	3,64	3,63	0.00	0.11	.912
Overall Relationship	3,61	3,4	0.21	3.20	.002

the journalists' self-perception accurately (M of PR's estimation=3.44, M of J's perceptions=2.95;  $t=4.36$ ,  $p=.000$ ). Although there was no significant difference between journalists' estimation and practitioners' self-perceptions / M of J's estimations=4.17, M of PR practitioners self-perceptions=4.16;  $t=0.07$ ,  $p=.937$ ).

*Face and Favor:* There was significant difference between PR practitioners' estimation and journalists' self-perception (M

of PR's estimation=4.43, M of J's perceptions=4.23;  $t=2.26$ ,  $p=.000$ ). However journalists' estimations were not significantly different from PR practitioners' self-perceptions / M of J's estimations=3.64, M of PR practitioners self-perceptions=3.63,  $t=0.11$ ,  $p=.912$ ). But these results cannot conclude that journalists estimated practitioners' perceptions accurately because the reliability of this dimension is low. (Cronbach's  $\alpha$  of J's estimation = .30)

## Congruency

This part of the research shows how each group of journalists and PR practitioners shows congruency between self-perception and estimations of other group's perceptions. To compare the mean of each group's self-perceptions and estimation, within-subject tests (paired sample t-test) were conducted. The results supported related hypotheses; hypothesis 3a (**H3a**): PR practitioners' perceptions of the relationship quality will not be congruent with their projections of journalists' perceptions (M of PR's self perception=3.4, M of PR's estimation=3.31;  $t=3.07$ ,  $p=.003$ ) and hypothesis 3b (**H3b**): Journalists perceptions of the relationship quality will not be congruent with their projections of PR practitioners' perceptions (M of J's self perception=2.87, M of J's estimation=3.61;  $t=-15.88$ ,  $p=.000$ ).

*Trust:* Both group estimated the other group's perceptions would be incongruent with their own perceptions within the trust dimension. Journalists estimated practitioners' perception more positively their own perception and also PR practitioners estimated journalists' perceptions more positively. (M of PR's self-perception=2.52, M of PR's estimation=2.95;  $t=-7.32$ ,  $p=.000$  / M of J's self-perception=2.53, M of J's estimation=3.08;  $t=-9.16$ ,  $p=.000$ )

*Control Mutuality:* Both groups' estimation of other's perceptions were significantly different from their own perceptions (M of PR's self-perception=3.21, M of PR's estimation=2.77;  $t=7.79$ ,  $p=.000$  / M of J's self-perception=2.13, M of J's estimation=3.52;  $t=-11.88$ ,  $p=.000$ )

*Relationship Satisfaction:* Both group estimated the other group's perceptions would

be incongruent with their own perceptions within the relationship satisfaction dimension. PR practitioners estimated journalists' perception of relationship satisfaction more negatively than their own perceptions. (M of PR's self-perception=3.46, M of PR's estimation=2.96;  $t=8.67$ ,  $p=.000$ ). Journalists estimated PR practitioners' perceptions more positively than their own perceptions (M of J's self-perception=2.49, M of J's estimation=3.67;  $t=-16.98$ ,  $p=.000$ )

*Relationship Commitment:* PR practitioners estimated that journalists were less committed in their relationship than were the practitioners' self-perceptions (M of PR's self-perception=4.15, M of PR's estimation=3.43;  $t=10.13$ ,  $p=000$ ). And also there was significant difference in journalists' estimation and their own perceptions. Journalists estimated that PR practitioners were more committed in their relationship than were the journalists' self-perceptions (M of J's self-perception=2.95, M of J's estimation=4.17;  $t=-16.39$ ,  $p=000$ ).

*Face and Favor:* The reliability scores for face and favor dimension were low.

## Discussion and Conclusion

Research that has been carried out for decades on this relationship indicates that both journalists and public relations practitioners are skeptical of each other's roles (Pincus et al., 1993). At the heart of this problem is the perceptual climate – journalists, among others, think that public relations practitioners do not understand news; public relations practitioners, on the other hand, complain that journalists do not understand the public relations role (Bolinger, 2003). Because of this, relationship between PR practitioners and journalist always has been

**Table 5: Accuracy**

	Dimension	Mean of PR	Mean of PR	t- values	Sig. (2 ~ tailed)
		Practitioners' Self-Perception	Practitioners' Estimation		
Congruency of PR Practitioners' Perceptions	Trust	2,52	2,95	-7.32	.000
	Control Mutuality	3,21	2,77	7.79	.000
	Relationship Satis.	3,46	2,96	8.67	.000
	Relationship Commit.	4,15	3,43	10.13	.000
	Face and Favor	3,63	4,43	-11.10	.000
	Overall Relationship	3,4	3,31	3.07	.003
	Dimension	Mean of	Mean of	t- values	Sig. (2 ~ tailed)
		Journalists' Self-Perception	Journalists' Estimation		
Congruency of Journalists' Perceptions	Trust	2,53	3,08	-9.16	.000
	Control Mutuality	2,13	3,52	-11.88	.000
	Relationship Satis.	2,49	3,67	-16.98	.000
	Relationship Commit.	2,95	4,17	-16.39	.000
	Face and Favor	4,23	3,64	10.43	.000
	Overall Relationship	2,87	3,61	-15.88	.000

interesting and intriguing. “Since the 1960s more than 150 studies have examined some aspect of relations between public relations practitioners” (Sallot, Johnson, 2006:151) But in Turkey there isn't enough research about this relationship. The aim of this research is to examine Turkish PR practitioners' and journalists' perceptions and cross-perceptions regarding their relationship. The theory about relationship these both groups suggests that they have problematic relationship (Aronoff,1975; Kopenhaver, 1985; Ryan & Martinson, 1984; Sallot, Steinfatt, & Salwen, 1998; Shin & Cameron, 2003a-b) and the findings of this study confirmed the conflict between the two professions similarly previous research.

In this research a key question was to what extent public relations practitioners and journalists agree or disagree about the nature of relationship between two professions. Based on the previous studies, it was

supposed that public relations practitioners and journalists would exhibit different attitudes toward their roles, values, dependence, attitudes and dyadic adjustment (Shin, Cameron, 2004). It was predicted that public relations practitioners and journalists would disagree on their relationship quality with each other(H1), both professions would inaccurately estimate the other's own perception of relationship quality(H2) and both professions' perceptions would not be congruent with their estimations of the other's perceptions of their relationship quality(H3). All of these predictions were supported by the research results.

First of all, the results showed that the two professions' self-perceptions regarding their relationship quality were significantly different. Agreement in the coorientation model refers to the extent to which persons in two groups agree about an object or set of objects (Kopenhaver, Martinson, Ryan,

1984: 865). In spite of the fact that PR practitioners had a slightly positive perception about relationship quality than journalists for overall relationships (the mean scores of all dimension) both groups had below the neutral perspective according to the agreement analysis which means the perception of relationship quality between both groups was negative. These findings support Ryan and Martinson's (1984) observation that an antagonistic relationship between journalists and practitioners has existed almost as long as both professions have. Because both PR practitioners and journalists responded below the average, the results of this research supported that antagonistic atmosphere for both groups' perception in Turkey.

A majority of existing literature that examines the source-reporter relationship found the existence of an adversarial atmosphere between PR practitioners and journalists (Brody, 1984; Jeffers, 1977; Jo and Kim, 2004; Pincus et al 1993). And also Berkowitz and Lee mentioned that "in the United States and many other Western countries, the relationship between journalists and public relations practitioners has been characterized as one of distrust and even contempt, with a certain degree of social distance remaining between the two groups" (Berkowitz, Lee, 2004: 431) Journalists and public relations people have always had an ambivalent relationship. Simply put, there is mutual dependence, but also mutual caution and that doesn't lead to a trusting atmosphere. The analysis of the current results have well matched with these facts which were mentioned above. The agreement analysis showed that both groups do not trust each other at similar levels in Turkey. However both PR prac-

tioners and journalists should trust each other because journalists depend on PR practitioners for news material, and practitioners depend on editors for publicity. This finding suggests that "hate" between two professions in Turkey comes from mutual mistrust. As Canary and Cupach (1988) stressed, trust is a fundamental element in every relationship. Without the solid basis of trust, no relationship can be secure and robust. "A journalist who will not use information from a public relations person because he or she does not trust *any* practitioner may miss out on some good stories or include incomplete, unclear, or inaccurate information in articles. A practitioner who finds he or she is not trusted simply because of the position he or she holds will find it harder to do a job and may feel forced to use unethical means to get a message to the public. Neither situation benefits the news media, public relations, or society" (Kopenhaver, Martinson, Ryan, 1984: 884) In this situation mistrust between practitioners and journalists' is a serious problem in Turkey and if this problem is not solved the relationship quality and efficiency cannot improve and it may affect news media and firms negatively.

Another remarkable result was on relationship commitment. This dimension was the highest score for PR practitioners and they rated this dimension above the neutral but journalists did not have the same perception and they rated this dimension below the neutral perspective. This results shows that PR practitioners have more enduring desire to maintain valued relationship than journalists. (Moorman, Zaltman, Desphande, 1992:316) Moorman, Zaltman and Desphande (1992:316) also suggest that "people are unlikely to be committed



to something they do not value". When we consider this idea it is possible to say that PR practitioners appraise their relationship more valuable than journalists in Turkey. Hon and Gruning suggest that relationship commitment is "the extent to which one parties believes and feels that relationship is worth spending energy to maintain and promote" (Hon, Gruning, 1999:14) According to this suggestion, in Turkey, journalists do not feel that the relationship with PR practitioners is worthwhile. In agreement analysis journalist had only one score higher than PR practitioners which score was face and favor dimension. But reliability scores were not high enough to say something about face and favor dimension.

The results proved that PR practitioners and journalists failed to estimate their counterpart's perceptions accurately. Both groups estimated others' self-perceptions more favorably than they themselves actually did. The results showed that that the largest perceptual gap was on control mutuality dimension for PR practitioners while that the largest perceptual gap was on trust dimension for journalists.

Congruency in the coorientation model is the extent to which one group's attitudes are similar to their perceptions of a second group's attitudes. Both professions have incongruent estimations of other professions' perceptions of their own perceptions. Both groups estimated more positive than the other's self perceptions. The discrepancy between self-perception and the estimation of the other group's perception was larger in journalists' perception than PR practitioners'. Journalists estimated PR practitioners' perceptions more positive than journalists' self-perception on overall relation.

To sum up, it is possible to say that there is a serious conflict and gap between PR practitioners and journalists in Turkey. Both professional groups revealed pluralistic ignorance of the other party by disagreement, false dissensus and misunderstanding by underestimation or over estimation. The conflict is escalated to the extent by which public relations practitioners and journalists project ambiguous or conflicting expectations toward the role of the other profession. Shin (2003) mentioned that the strategies to manage the conflicts, negotiate solutions and build consensus to some extent may be different for public relations practitioners than for journalists in the source and reporter relationship. From the different roles, goals, values or needs, PR practitioners appear to take a problem-solving approach, while journalists tend to contend against public relation sources. Traditionally, PR practitioners need favorable news coverage more than journalists need public relations sources. Regardless of the contribution of public relations to news work, journalists strategically tend to disregard the impact of public relations. Considering with these thoughts and current research results together it is obvious that the conflict between two groups is result of the influence of variety of factors in Turkey. According to the results, relationship quality is not enough between practitioners and journalist and the perceptual gap creates conflict between them in Turkey. At this point, it is necessary that future research for finding **influential** factors, reasons for disagreement and needed conflict managing strategies in Turkey.

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