FUTURE OF PR/COMMS AND THEIR SOCIAL IMPACT

Futuro de las RR.PP./Comunicación y su impacto social | Halkla İlişkiler/iletişim'in Geleceği ve Sosyal Etki

The Future of PR/Comms and their Social Impact

Results of an International Delphi-Method Study

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In a nutshell

4 ROUNDS OF GLOBAL DELPHI METHOD

23 COUNTRIES
3 LANGUAGES

613 PARTICIPANTS
313 COMPLETES

3 MAJOR THEMES EXPLORED:

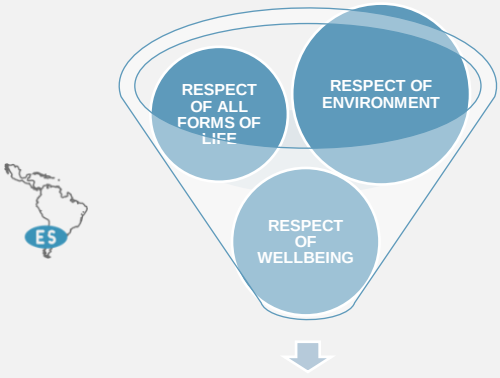
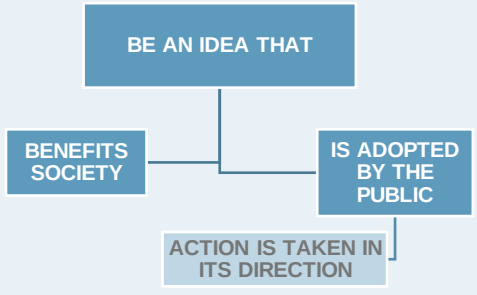
DEALING WITH CONFLICTING STAKEHOLDERS AND DEMANDS

	PRESENT	FUTURE
EN	FOCUS: PRESERVING THE ORGANIZATION'S IMAGE + REPUTATION.	PROCEDURES TO DELIBERATE ISSUES → MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL OUTCOMES FOR STAKEHOLDERS
ES	FOCUS: ORGANIZATIONAL OBJECTIVES.	PRIORITIES → COMMON GOOD; SUSTAINABLE LIVING
TR	ORGANIZATIONS ARE DECISIVE.	RESPECT → UNIVERSAL VALUES; HUMAN RIGHTS

PR EDUCATION AND EDUCATION MUSTS

PRESENT	FUTURE
MOSTLY LEARNED ON THE JOB.	LIFE-LONG LEARNING, MULTI-DISCIPLINARY APPROACH.
	• SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH METHODS. • CRITICAL THINKING.

	SOCIAL VALUE	(WHAT IS) SOCIAL IMPACT
PR/COMMS SOCIAL VALUE + SOCIAL IMPACT CONCEPTS	SOCIAL VALUE IS WHAT SOCIETY CONSIDERS, PERCEIVES, AND ATTRIBUTES AS VALUABLE FROM THE ACTIONS OF AN ORGANIZATION/PROFESSION.	EN: ACTIONS AND INTERVENTIONS TO CHANGE THE STATUS QUO IN A LASTING WAY. ES: EFFECTS OF THE ACTIONS OF THE PROFESSION / ORGANISATION IN SOCIETY TR: MEASURABLE RESULT OF ACTIONS TO GENERATE SOCIAL BENEFIT.

	SOCIAL VALUE OF PR (SHOULD STEM FROM/SHOULD BE:)	SOCIAL IMPACT OF PR (SHOULD)
PR/COMMS SOCIAL VALUE + SOCIAL IMPACT	EN: AWARENESS TO MATTERS THAT IMPROVE SOCIETY FOR THE BENEFIT OF ORGANIZATION AND STAKEHOLDERS.	ASSESS THE IMPLICATIONS OF PR/COMMS'S ACTIONS IN BOTH ORGANIZATIONAL AND SOCIETAL CONTEXT.
	ES: 	ENSURE COHERENCE IN THE ORGANIZATION BETWEEN WHAT IS DONE AND WHAT IS COMMUNICATED.
	TR: CAN DIRECT ORGANIZATIONS TO ACTIVITIES FOR THE BENEFIT OF SOCIETY.	

Context

At a time when truth along with the substance and meaning of facts are increasingly disputed in a post-truth environment (Fuller, 2018) and data-driven solutions to societal challenges clash with diverse political and values-led positions (Hulme, 2020), the role and function of public relations and communication (PR/Comms) as a defender of organizational interests, contributing to, as well as benefiting from, post-truth conditions (Thompson, 2020), is under increasing critical review (Curry Jansen, 2017; Demetrious, 2022).

Polarization has become a defining trait of society, a negative and undesired effect of values-driven business and communication agendas. A world in crises is a recurrent theme of many industry research reports — from the Ipsos's Global Trends Report (2023) to the latest Edelman Trust Barometer (2023), all point to the rise in frequency of crises and also to their variety. What is more, whether related to climate, health, identity, or geo-politics, none of these new crises have simple or straightforward solutions. They are interconnected, interdependent, and multidimensional, often described as volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous, or "VUCA" (Kumar & Modi, 2022). Resolving such crises requires skillful purposeful communication—from seemingly simple interpersonal forms, to the more complex and organized, between organizations and their environments, between nations and regions. Yet here, too, yesterday's straightforward solutions no longer seem to work. PR/Comms ought to be part of the solution; yet many observers see it as part of the problem (Ihlen et al., 2019).

For too long, the focus of PR/Comms has primarily been on demonstrating its worth and strategic relevance. Little or no attention has been paid to the impact such a focus has had on individual practitioners as well as on community, stakeholders, and society as a whole. While over the years PR/Comms as a practice has embraced a seemingly more righteous stance toward ethical challenges,[1] practitioners (whether in-house or at an agency) appear to continue to bow to the demands and pressures of their clients and employers, engaging in activities ultimately meant to delay, distract, or frustrate some stakeholders, while pleasing others (Demetrious, 2022).

Practices such as astroturfing (Arce Garcia et al., 2022; de Oliveira Giovanelli & Pérsigo, 2022), including ghost posting, writing fake reviews, removing or withholding information, and promoting character assassination (Samoilenko & Jasper, 2023) are all driven by a motivation to support organizational demands, and to protect and promote reputations. This routine leads to a variety of challenges and questions in practice, research, and teaching.

[1] For example, see the ousting of Bell Pottinger from the PR family following revelations about their role in South Africa Rensburg, R. (2020). State capture and the demise of Bell Pottinger. In K. Sriramesh & D. Vercic (Eds.), **The Global Public Relations Handbook: Theory, Research, and Practice (3 ed., pp. 84-98). Routledge.** , or the **CIPR's statement on Ukraine from February 2022**

These include, but are not limited to:

- the questioning of PR/Comms professionals' skills or status;
- the ethics of persuasion and the legacy of PR/Comms; as well as
- the balancing of personal values with organizational values and societal demands.

The Future of PR/Comms and Their Social Impact research addresses these questions head on. And the timing couldn't be more right. Post-pandemic, conflict-ridden, climate emergency-shaken PR/Comms practitioners are increasingly called upon for their support. They are also challenged more openly by other disciplines promising better measurement, better management frameworks, and more immediate results, such as management consultancies, leading environmental, social, and governance (ESG) and corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives (Veenstra & Ellemers, 2020). They are also faced with the increasingly difficult demands of maintaining trust in the profession, managing complex and volatile activities, and increasing transparency of both the profession and the organizations they support (Adi, 2019; Adi et al., 2023). An additional, compounding challenge is being posed by emergent technologies such as generative AI (Swiatek & Galloway, 2023). For example, ChatGPT was publicly launched on November 30, 2022, when this study was already well under way. The industry has only just begun to reflect on its implications,[2] which will need to be addressed by future research (check out the upcoming AI in PR e-book edited by Ana Adi).

[2] For example, see https://www.prsa.org/article/the-promise-and-perils-of-chatgpt and https://www.newsweek.com/how-chatgpt-transforming-pr-game-1791555.

Why PR, social impact, and social value

A limited number of studies have been exploring the evolution and future of the profession. Among these, only two apply a mix methods approach that requires researchers to examine the aspirations and opinions of their participants while also exploring whether any consensus emerges from their reflections. These studies are lengthy, laborious, and resource- and time-intensive. The Global Alliance's Global Capability Framework (Gregory & Fawkes, 2019) took two years to complete and included participants from every continent. The PR2025 study (Adi, 2019) took almost a year to complete and covers mostly European perspectives.

While the Global Capability Framework provides a "benchmark for how professionals in public relations and communication management perform at their best," PR2025 provides readers with a list of competences and solutions to address them linked to emerging business, technological, and social trends. While Global Alliance mentions building trust with internal and external stakeholders and communities, working within an ethical framework and aligning communication objectives with organizational purpose and values as key to the future success of PR/Comms, PR2025 points to the hidden challenge and paradox of pursuing values-based agendas while attempting to facilitate dialogue. Yet, an unspoken concern seems to unite all research exploring the future of PR: the mark it leaves behind. Whether referred to as purpose, impact, or legacy—or whether discussed in relation to sustainability, trust, or dialogue—PR/Comms respondents are very concerned not only with the relevance and worth of their profession, but also with its legacy.

This issue arose in the Approaching the Future 2022 report (GlobalAlliance, 2021) when trust and sustainability are mentioned as trends on which organizations are focusing. It is also seen in the 2021 Global PR & Communication model (GlobalAlliance, 2021), where organizational purpose is seen as the core and focus of successful PR, and in the Page Society report The CCO as Pacesetter, where creating social value is identified as a development pathway for Chief Communication Officers (PageSociety, 2019). The European Communication Monitor (Zerfass et al., 2022) also explores topics related to diversity and responsibility in stakeholder communication with similar themes addressed throughout its other regional surveys.

And yet, while they all explore the purpose, responsibility, and legacy of PR/Comms, most studies assume a pro-social role of the field, "meaning that the function encompasses an important social function that allows publics to know, understand, and interact effectively with organizations" (Bowen, 2010, p. 66). In a nutshell, these studies assume that PR/Comms has both positive social impact and positive social value.

> *In this sense, public relations can be defined as good because it enhances individual moral autonomy, informed rational decision-making, and the liberty of choice that is the backbone of a democratic society (Bowen, 2010, p. 67).*

This leads Bowen to conclude that when such conditions are not met, when PR/Comms are controlled, the diversity of ideas is hindered and the possibility of rational decisions are withheld from the public, the PR/Comms practice is unethical. Fawkes calls this view limiting,

the insistence on social value without the acceptance of persuasion distorting “serious debate on ethical dilemmas in public relations” (2018, p. 167).

Because language matters, we must clearly define terms and use them responsibly, conscious of their impact. Thus, while social value and social impact are similar, they are not always alike. In fact, if one considers impact and value as defined through three dimensions on a spectrum of positive vs negative, planned vs unplanned, and desired vs undesired (Stoeckle & Adi, 2023), then, depending on context, multiple combinations can emerge.

This study is, therefore, not only timely, but highly needed. PR/Comms research is filled with either judgement or wishful thinking surrounding the profession, often addressing only one aspect of the practice—the good or the bad, the simple or the complex. What is often left out is not the dilemma, but the nuance in resolving it. What is also often omitted is the reflection of the history, heritage, and assumptions that surround the practice, its teaching and research, and its impact on its evolution and future.

Research design

The number of studies focusing on PR/Comms has grown in recent years, with universities, associations, and agencies alike aiming to carry out research ultimately meant as a promotional tool to showcase thought leadership and enhance their reputation. Often based on structured questionnaires investigating certain themes, these pieces of research either focus on capturing and describing the status of the profession or current concerns. Moreover, they tend to approach rather static samples of participants differentiated either by age (young professionals vs senior professionals), industry, or country. See, for example, the Communication Monitor Series (Zerfass et al., 2022), the German Berufsfeld Study (Seidenglanz & Fechner, 2021), or CIPR's State of the Profession (CIPR, 2022). Highly valuable because of their contributions to the profession's history and development, and their enabling of country, regional, and global comparisons on annual basis, as well as over a longer period, these studies also assume that their respondents cultural, educational, and linguistic backgrounds are homogenous—or that the differences are less important than the similarities.

Therefore, *The Future of PR/Comms and Their Social Impact* took a slightly different approach to planning and design, aiming to reflect cultural diversity and differences in a multilingual and iterative reflective-qualitative approach. It approaches three themes:

- dealing with conflicting stakeholders and demands
- social value and social impact
- education

It also examined two different time perspectives:

- present situation (factual, as things are)
- future development (normative, as things should be/become)

To aid the analysis, questions about country of birth and country of residence, years of experience, and field and type of current work/employment were added.

Table 1. Research framework and questions

PERSON	CULTURE AND GEOGRAPHY	LABELING AND PR/COMMS PURPOSE	CONFLICT	SOCIAL VALUE	SOCIAL IMPACT	PR/COMMS EDUCATION
Career focus (Q4)	Country of birth (Q1)	Terms used to describe PR/Comms practice (Q9)	Current types/reasons of potential conflict (Q11)[3]	*Social value* definition (Q14)	*Social impact* definition (Q15)	How PR/Comms is currently learned (Q13)
Years of experience (Q5, Q6)	Country of residence (Q2)	Purpose for which PR/Comms is currently used (Q10)	Currently addressing conflict (Q12)	Ideal social value of PR/Comms (Q16)	Ideal social impact of PR/Comms (Q17)	Ideal level at which PR/Comms should be taught (Q21)
Primary workplace (Q7)	Additional details (Q3)		Ideal addressing conflicts (Q18)		Ideal evaluation of social impact (Q20)	Ideal content for future PR/Comms education (Q22)
	Geographic scope and focus of practice (Q8)		Ideal addressing conflicting impacts (Q19)			Ideal candidates/learners of PR/Comms (Q23)

[3] The Turkish sample was asked about reasons, the English participants were asked about types of conflict and the Spanish language participants were asked about both type and reasons.

Methodology

Methodologically, this is a Delphi-method study (Iqbal & Pipon-Young, 2009), which aims to identify whether a group of experts reach consensus over the issues discussed via a structured process of facilitation. This outcome is achieved through asking similar questions over a series of rounds, moving from open-ended questions and qualitative, rich, unstructured responses to quantitative-ranking or qualitative-Likert scale questions focusing on the most common themes. In our case, the study started with a 613 sample of educators, academics, and practitioners from 25 countries around the globe. All four rounds were completed by 313 respondents from 21 countries. To ensure clarity and incentivize responses, 3 languages were used: English, Spanish and Turkish. The questions were agreed upon by the research team in English and then translated and/or adapted in Spanish and Turkish respectively.

Table 2. Sample size and completion rates across the three languages (English, Spanish, and Turkish) and the four rounds of the study

	ROUND 1	ROUND 2	ROUND 3	ROUND 4
DATA COLLECTION PERIOD	Nov. 6–Nov. 27	Nov. 28–Jan. 6	Mar. 15– Apr. 2	Apr. 3–Apr. 23
ENGLISH TOTAL SAMPLE	442	442	211	211
Complete	43%	30%	59%	59%
Incomplete	27%	14%	7%	10%
Not started	30%	56%	34%	31%
SPANISH TOTAL SAMPLE	145	145	81	81
Complete	40%	48%	72%	56%
Incomplete	9%	9%	5%	4%
Not started	51%	43%	23%	40%
TURKISH TOTAL SAMPLE	26	26	22	22
Complete	84%	84%	86%	90%
Incomplete	0%	1%	5%	5%
Not started	16%	15%	9%	5%

Rounds 1 and 2 were open-ended and qualitative, allowing participants to respond to questions and prompts in their own words, outlining and contextualizing their perspective. In Round 2, participants were able to view the anonymized responses of others, reflect on their own responses and modify them, should they wish to.

Rounds 3 and 4 were quantitative. The questions remained largely the same, and the response items provided to participants emerged from the analysis for the data collected in Rounds 1 and 2. Only the participants who had completed either rounds 1 or 2 were invited to continue the study at this point. This ensured that only engaged participants remained in the study and only those with experience of the qualitative rounds would get involved in the consensus-seeking quantitative exercise of Rounds 3 and 4.

Consensus

Delphi-method studies are exploratory by nature, involving both relatively small samples and untested topics. To identify consensus, therefore, this study takes the following approach:

- identify the most common themes (while noting the outliers) from the qualitative data;
- summarizing the most common themes into quantitative answer options;
- for questions listing a series of options, report consensus for the items that receive 50% and more of the sample's choice;
- for questions listing agreement scales, report consensus for the items that receive 50% and above; and
- in some cases, an aggregate agreement scale is presented. This is usually referred to as *aggregate* or *composite agreement* and is the result of summing up all the first, second and third place choices, or the responses from the "agree and strongly agree" or the "disagree and strongly disagree" options.

Pre-test and set-up

The idea of the project was announced at a PRCA meeting in April 2022, with the first members of the research team expressing an interest to join and support the study coming via PRCA's University Advisory Group. The research coordination team used personal contacts and professional networks to find other PR/Comms researchers and practitioners. From there, the research collective was established.

In its early stages, the research collective included 56 members from 29 countries. These members were then invited to co-create and test the research design before the study was released to a wider public. It is at their recommendation that the study was developed in multiple languages (initially in English, Finnish, Thai, Turkish and Spanish): to facilitate response and to enable for more nuance that is linguistically conveyed. The research collective was also asked to help recruit up to 25 participants in their country of residence, or in their country of birth—depending on the strength of their PR/Comms networks.

After the pre-test, 35 members from 21 countries were left in the group. However, as the research collective networks spanned beyond their countries of residence, the current study features 23 countries (and not 21).

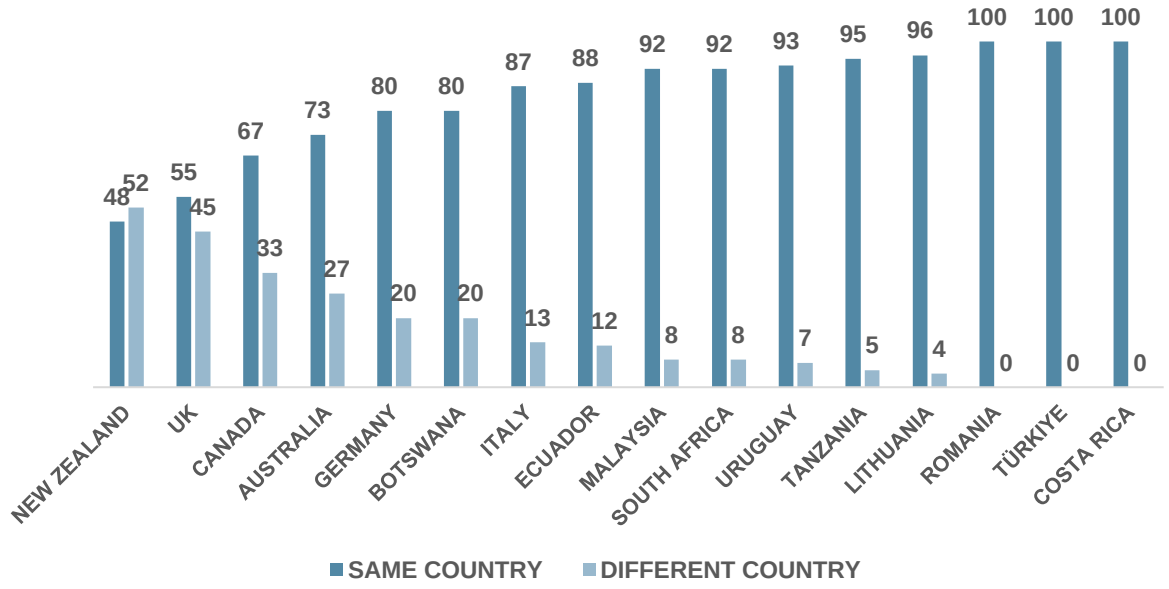
Via email exchanges, joint document editing, and video conference calls, the research coordinators agreed on project design and finetuning of questions. Once the pre-test was completed, an adjusted list of questions was shared via Microsoft Teams and email to solicit feedback and discussion. Other coordination meetings took place later in the process. Regular email updates were used throughout the data collection and data analysis phases. A dual-data backup system was also used—with Microsoft Teams and an invitation-only, encrypted Dropbox folder.

Sample and sampling method

This study uses purposeful sampling, a non-probability sampling technique in which participants are selected because they have characteristics that are needed and relevant to the study (Rubin, 2021). At the beginning of the study, members of the research collective were asked to identify and invite to the study up to 25 participants representing a mix of academics, practitioners, and educators. Due to the length of the study and engagement required, a sample of known contacts was preferred to an open call for participants.

Thus, this study took a very different approach from previous demographic reporting in PR research, aiming to uncover the patterns of diversity and heterogeneity within our sample by asking participants to disclose their country of birth and their country of residence. In doing so, we hoped to address Sison's (2009) criticism of the field of PR/Comms taking its culture for granted, as well as identify whether PR/Comms can be a truly global, borderless profession.

Figure 1. Comparison of distribution of the categories "country of residence" and "country of birth" visualizing countries with more than 10 responses based on Round 4 data, n=203
(figure excludes 110 entries that skipped the question; Q1. What is your country of residence?/¿Cuál es su país de residencia?/Hangi ülkede ikamet ediyorsunuz? and Q2. What is your country of origin/birth?/¿Cuál es su país de origen/nacimiento?/Menşe ülkeniz/doğduğunuz ülke neresidir?)



From the samples represented in the study, the countries with the highest reported differences between the country of birth and country of residence were New Zealand, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia. In other rounds Japan, South Africa and The Netherlands also had higher differences between the reported country of birth and country of residence. At the other end of the spectrum were Costa Rica, Türkiye, Romania (see Figure 1) but also Ghana, Malaysia and Tanzania. These countries have the most nationally (and, one would assume, culturally) homogenous samples. While some of these differences might be attributed to linguistic barriers, others might be attributed to the geo-social positioning for countries like Canada and New Zealand, for instance, which are known for their approach to immigration and multiethnic populations. Of course, some of these differences might also be due to how the participants were recruited—mostly a convenient, purposeful sample—but this distribution is sufficient to raise questions about how international and intercultural PR is in every country.

The classification of this study's sample is also different. For starters, many of the demographic questions were optional. While this might bring challenges to data reporting when focusing on the differences within the sample, this decision was made to facilitate (by potentially speeding up) the completion of the study. Moreover, as this is a Delphi-method study, it is the general consensus within the sample that is of utmost importance (unlike quantitative instruments whose purpose is to generalize).

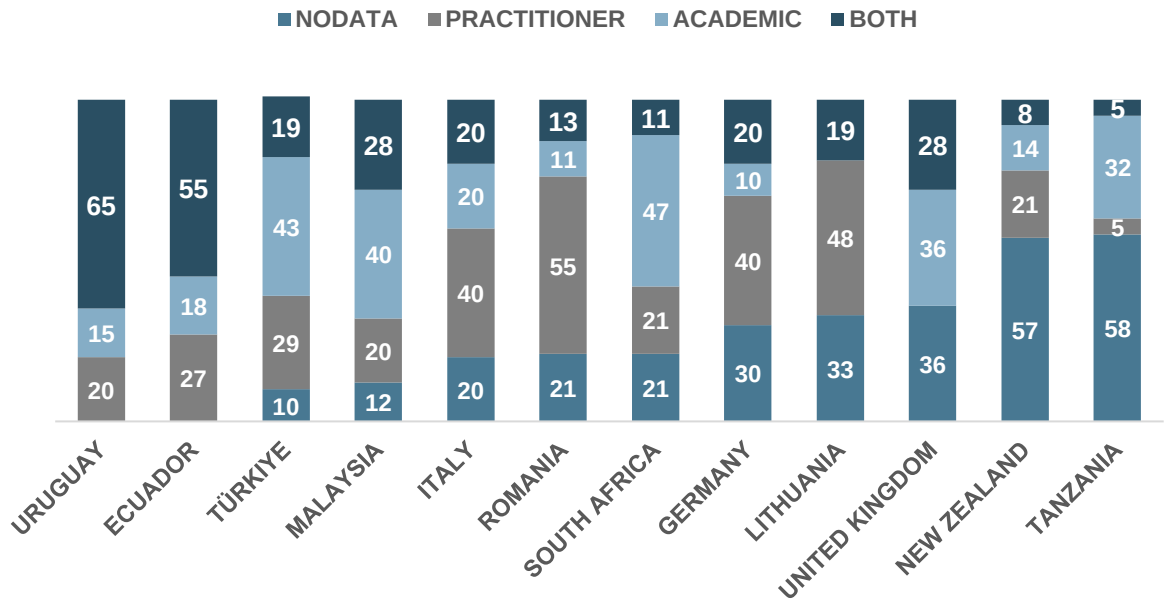
Instead of reaching out to practitioners alone or using association member lists and open calls, members of the research team identified academics, educators, or practitioners

(arguably doing research, teaching, and practicing, respectively) in their country of residence and, at times, in their country of birth. The U.S., Canadian, and Belgian samples for instance were mostly the results of personal and professional contacts within the team. When participants joined the study, they were asked to identify themselves, the options provided being academic, practitioner, or both using the following descriptions:

- **Academic**: a person who currently actively teaches and possibly carries out research at a university or other institution able to award undergraduate and graduate degrees in PR/Comms (regardless of titles) and holds an advanced degree such as a Masters or PhD.
- **Practitioner**: a person actively working in any PR/Comms related field and industry, regardless of type of organization, public or private, for profit or not-for profit and regardless of educational background.
- **Both categories** apply when you are teaching (but not necessarily in universities and/colleges), carrying out research (but not necessarily publish academically) and are practicing PR/Comms (irrespective of your job title).

In this report, **educators** are associated with the category attributed to those reporting to have both academic and practical experience.

Figure 2. Sample distribution by self-description (Round 4, final figures). Q4 (optional): From the categories below please indicate which describes you best: academic, practitioner, both where "both" was reformulated as educator (n=275, figure based on reported data). The "no data" category represents the percentage of participants who skipped the question.



Moreover, in order to move away from the traditional and unreflected categories of gender (Talbot, 2003; Westbrook & Saperstein, 2015) and age (Curtin et al., 2011; Wills, 2020), we

asked participants to indicate the years of experience as an academic, practitioner, or both instead.

In the English sample, at the end of round 1, most participants have over 20 years of experience (30%, n=442, whether in academia, as practitioners or educators), with the sample being practitioner-led, followed by academics and educators in similar numbers. This distribution was retained through the end of round 4 (33% with more than 20 years of experience, n=211). The other experience groups were distributed rather equally, except for the 0 to 5 years of experience, where the number of participants was the smallest. Despite the loss of respondents, the sample remained practitioner-led and retained a similar distribution of academics and educators throughout the rounds. The declared geographical scope of their work also remained similar throughout the rounds. For instance, round 1 participants had a slightly more national focus (27% responses compared to 22% global responses, n=442). At the end of round 4, global and national focus are almost equally represented (24% global vs 23% national responses, n=211).

In the Spanish sample, the practitioner and academic participant numbers were quite similar, with the educators' sample being much smaller. At the end of round 4, however, the distribution changed, with the sample being made mostly of educators (33%, n=81), followed by much smaller groups of practitioners (14%, n=81) and academics (7%, n=81). While the practitioner samples reported more than 20 years of experience, the academic respondents listed 11–15 years. The reported geographical scope of the sample was slightly different, with the national focus being the most common (24%, n=134) in round 1 followed by regional, which was Latin America, in this case. However, in round 4, the national and regional focus responses were almost equal (27% national, 23% regional, n=81). The local and global geographical scopes were a minority in this case (see Q8).

The Turkish replies, on the other hand, had a much higher representation of highly experienced participants: 78% (n=26) indicated that they have been in the PR/Comms field as either practitioner, academic, or professional for more than 21 years. This balance changed to an overwhelming majority of 95% (n=22) at the end of round 4. As for the geographic scope and the focus of their current practice, half the respondents (52%, n=26) stated a national focus, followed by 33% (n=26) with a global scope. At the end of round 4, the difference between the declared national (42%, n=22) and global (38%, n=22) focus was reduced.

The study also included another optional, open-ended field where participants could add whatever details they felt were relevant and wanted to share publicly. In this way, elements related to identity could be explored without any of the pressures of mandatory and prescriptive categories. The information received here spanned from people reporting on their age, gender, sexual orientation, marital and family status, professional affiliations, hobbies, and passions. Interestingly, there were some noticeable differences in the type of details shared. In the English sample, participants focused more on professional details. In the Turkish sample respondents noted their education and professional details. In the Spanish sample, while professional details were included, they referred mostly to professional journeys, expertise, and interests.

Ethics and data protection

Names, email addresses, countries of residence, and professional categorizations were shared with the coordinators of the study who were the only ones with full access to the participant lists. Country representatives maintained contact with their own participants. In doing so, the study coordinators shared in the research group the timing and content of the updates and individually with each member any background information regarding their own sample such as completion rates and individual links to access the questions to be distributed per email in case the platform emails were marked as spam. Participants were informed on several occasions about these procedures: when they were invited to join the study and during the data collection process via a consent form embedded into Welphi, the data collection platform.

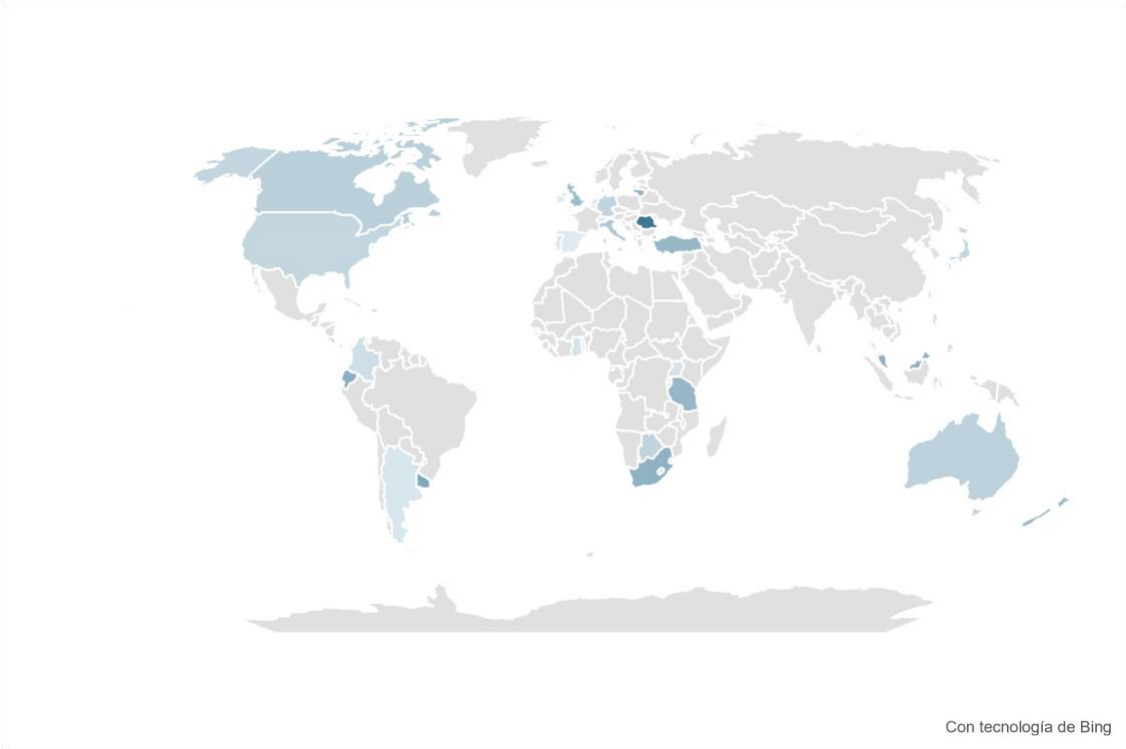
The study also sought and obtained ethical clearances. This was dealt with on a case-by-case basis, complying with each institution's rules.

Data collection

The study took place between November 2022 and April 2023 using Welphi, a Delphi-dedicated data collection platform.[4] More than 600 participants from 25 countries were invited to join the study, with 313 participants from 21 countries completing at least one qualitative and one quantitative round, thus completing the study. See Table 2 for further details on the responses for every round and Figure 3 for the geographic distribution.

[4] A 12-month discounted Welphi license was paid from the research budget of Dr. Ana Adi from Quadriga University of Applied Sciences.

Figure 3. Participant worldwide distribution at the end of Round 4.



In search of a definition

Much of Public Relations research, even a good 100 years after Edward Bernays's 'official' naming of the profession (Bernays, 1965, p. 290), points to the continued struggle of defining the practice (Fawkes, 2018; Hutton, 2001; Meyer, 2017; Verčič et al., 2001), with different definitions putting emphasis on different aspects: relationships, stakeholders, management, organization. Moreover, both the pre-test and our own research indicates that, in practice, the lines between academically distinct disciplines are blurred, depending on a variety of factors including the size of the organization, the management's perspectives, and understanding of PR/Comms. This lack of consensus on what PR/Comms is - and is for - is telling of regional and cultural diversity and differences, public vs private sector environments, and agency vs in-house practice.

To avoid promoting any given definition, this study asked participants to match a series of characteristics with a label/practice noun. This tactic enabled comparison of both assumptions and focus areas in different groups (whether practice based, national, or regional).

The characteristics agreed on were **intentional, persuasive, stakeholder-oriented, strategic, organized, and planned with measurable outcomes**.

While some participants sought to identify a single discipline for the characteristics suggested, others proceeded to select and mix the characteristics presented and, only then, attribute them to a particular discipline or area of practice[5].

> *All communications in my country are intentional and attempting to be persuasive and stakeholder oriented, I believe. Communications in the private sector are more strategic, organized, and planned with measurable outcomes, but it is far less rigorous in the academia when it comes to scrutinization of budget execution, ROIs, measuring successes and failures, and running a PDCA cycle. – **Japan, Practitioner**[6]*

> *Deliberate communication with targeted outcomes are commonly used for advertising purposes and also propaganda, especially during election campaigns in this country. – **Malaysia, Educator***

> *These characteristics are common in the private sector. Not necessarily spread in the public sector, specially so far concerned stakeholder oriented. – **Italy, Educator***

> *It 'should be' stakeholder oriented but it is in most cases a strategic, organized, persuasive practice. We are still trying to have an intentional influence by convincing audiences instead of a two-way discourse with the various stakeholders. I still see a lot of organizations, especially governments, but also companies to a large extent, communicating as though they are still just advertising. – **The Netherlands, Educator***

> *Public relations, perhaps this term is oriented to the external public: clients, image that is built of the company, brand management, relationship with the media. It is also called Organizational Communication, but this term is focused on creating or improving an organizational culture.* [7] *– **Ecuador, Practitioner***

[5] Text from study participants is copied verbatim—it is intentionally being left in its original form, without edits.

[6] Where no other information is given, the participant is both born and resides in the country listed.

[7] Original text: “Relaciones públicas, quizás este término está orientado al público externo: clientes, imagen que se construye de la empresa, manejo de marca, relación con los medios de comunicación. También se denomina Comunicación organizacional, pero este término está enfocado crear o mejorar una cultura organizacional.”

> *I don't know if there is a single term at the country level, common to all areas and encompassing all approaches, but I believe that the term "Strategic Communication" fits the premises, it is not so broad or so restrictive either.* [8] *–* ***Uruguay, Practitioner***

Those who associated the intentional, persuasive, stakeholder-oriented, strategic, organized, and planned with measurable outcomes practice with Public Relations or Communications often pointed out the discrepancy between the strength of strategic and persuasive characteristics and the weakness of planning and measurement.

> *In my country, these characteristics would be an apt description of the Public Relations industry as well as a good description of the way it is viewed by the public, with exception to the "measured outcomes" characteristic. One of the stereotypical (and negative) perceptions of the industry, is that the work done by PR people does not produce tangible outcomes and/or cannot be measured or is not measured; something I personally disagree with very much. –* ***New Zealand-based, South Africa-born, Practitioner***

> *Within the Non-profit sector communication practice is very vast. Every category or non-profit has its own set of objectives when it comes to communication, but I have found that it has mainly been to reach a strategic objective. Unfortunately, it is very often not well planned, as most NGOs don't have the resources or support they require to plan properly and to execute their communication in a well-organized manner. I have found that most NGOs make use of either family or friends, or volunteers to execute their communication objectives. –* ***South Africa, Educator***

When presented with a list of names to match with the same characteristics (Q9), the confusion was reduced. While some indicated similarities with “marketing” in Rounds 1 and 2 or were debating the differences between “propaganda” and “organized persuasion,” all these nuances became invisible in Rounds 3 and 4. Here, in the English sample, “Public Relations” (30%, n=211) emerged as the first choice from the list proposed; however, one cannot claim that consensus was achieved. “Strategic communication” (20%) and “Corporate communication” (15%) received a similar number of votes, although they were marked as first and second choice, respectively. In the Spanish sample, it was “Organizational communication” that took the first place (37%, n=81), followed by “Public Relations” (18%, n=81) and “Strategic communication” (18%).

In the Turkish sample, while “Public Relations” was selected as a first choice by 45% (n=22) of the respondents, it was “Corporate communications” that overall received 90% of the

[8] Original text: “Desconozco si hay un único término a nivel país, común para todos los ámbitos y que englobe todos los enfoques, pero creo que el término ‘Comunicación estratégica’ se ajusta a las premisas planteadas, no es tan amplio ni tan restrictivo tampoco.”

participants' choice (55% as a second choice) and "strategic communication management" (55% as third option, and 80% aggregate score).

What is interesting to note here is the heavy organizational focus perceived in Latin America. Unlike in the English and Turkish samples where "Public Relations" was a strong favorite, it was with "Organizational communication" that Latin American respondents associated the intentional, persuasive, stakeholder-oriented, strategic, organized, and planned with measurable outcomes practice.

Of course, the choice of "Public Relations" as a label could also be due to a potential induced bias in all samples—after several rounds and seeing the study's title and headings, participants were aware of the study's definitional proposals and views. This matter also could be dependent on how PR is taught and experienced in each region.

'Mouthpiece' of the organization

To continue exploring the status and practices of PR, we asked respondents to indicate the purpose for which organizations of any kind use the communication practice with the characteristics we provided. Current research investigating Public Relations practices, such as the Communication Monitor Series (Zerfass et al., 2022), DACH's Berufsfeld Study (Seidenglanz & Fechner, 2021), and the CIPR State of the PR study (CIPR, 2022) focusses on trends affecting the profession—whether practicing or recruiting into it—and spanning from technology, including digitalization and the rise of artificial intelligence, to the COVID-19 pandemic, and diversity and inclusion.

Yet, as with the lack of clarity on what PR really means, there is also lack of clarity surrounding what PR does and for whom. This is partly influenced by paradigmatic preferences, schools of thought informing one's view and understanding of the world and everything in it (Edwards, 2012), and how their built-in boundaries and focus trickle into both scholarship and practice. This could also be due to how practitioners and non-practitioners come into contact with PR's myths and stories, PR's rules and boundaries, and PR's perceptions and understandings. Such discrepancies of perception and portrayals have been pointed out by Adi (2018), Kinsky (2011), Yoon and Black (2011), Saltzman (2012), and Spicer (1993) among others, with practitioners focusing on information dissemination, relationship building and facilitation, and other groups such as journalists, politicians or pop culture representations considering persuasion and manipulation as central to the practice.

The functionalist views (that understand PR/Comms as a practice through tasks they carry out) that Edwards (2012) and Thomson (2020) allude to are heavily present in the qualitative rounds, where many answers resumed themselves to listing the areas of practice. These included, but were not limited to media relations, crisis communication, internal communication, and business transformation (digital, operational, cultural).

> *To build and maintain reputation, manage the media, create coherent messaging both within and outside the organisation or brand and work with senior management to anticipate and manage crises.* – ***U.K., Academic***

Other answers highlighted and criticized the areas of practice that, in their view, need further development:

> *Most companies still predominantly use their comms functions mainly to cascade information from corporate leadership to employees and to persuade journalists to pick up messages designed to support corporate positioning or drive sales. Their readiness to manage the expectations of specific stakeholders based on listening, dialog and changing corporate practice is insufficiently developed. Most still lack the ability and/or willingness to deduct communication objectives from corporate goals/needs and agree these objectives, the activities to achieve them, and metrics for progress and success in advance with senior management.* – ***Germany, Educator***

> *In my experience, businesses and other organisations seek out communications help when they have a problem. Often that problem is that people don't know about the organization and they want to raise awareness. Sometimes it is to help protect reputation if an issue is eminent or a crisis has broken. During the past few years, we've seen huge growth in our business and more businesses seeking strategic communications help rather than going to marketing. Organisations are beginning to finally see the value in using communications channels and techniques/tactics to have a much bigger impact and much more lasting effect when it comes to building brand awareness, loyalty, etc. Many of our clients are using PR content rather than a traditional 'buy now' sort of advert in their campaigns. I believe the rise of social media has shown brands that relational communication is incredibly important and eventually, when you do it well and often, intentional comms will help you sell, build market share, rise above the competition.* – ***New Zealand-based, U.S.-born, Practitioner***

The aspects that received most critique were the lack of strategic positioning and PR's lack of a proactive approach, which was seen both in how it addresses issues and in how it goes about measurement and evaluation.

> *I understand that often strategic positioning is not given to communication, but rather reactively. Fortunately, in our country this perspective is changing and communication is understood as part of the success or failure of organizations. Currently it is understood as a tool or need transversal to the entire organization.*[9] ***– Uruguay, Practitioner***

> *Based on my work and research experience, I believe that communication is strategically planned by organizations to achieve a specific communication objective and to persuade, in a way that can be customized for various stakeholders and in accordance with measurement criteria. Unfortunately, however, organizations may not prioritize the priorities of all stakeholders or measurement and evaluation criteria.* [10] ***– Türkiye, Academic***

[9] Original text: "Entiendo que muchas veces no se le da el posicionamiento estratégico a la comunicación, sino que se da de forma reactiva. Afortunadamente en nuestro país esta perspectiva está cambiando y se entiende a la comunicación como parte del éxito o fracaso de las organizaciones. Actualmente se la entiende como una herramienta o necesidad transversal a toda la organización."

[10] Original text: "Benim çalışma ve araştırma deneyimlerime dayanan düşüncem kurumların belli bir iletişim hedefini gerçekleştirmek ve ikna etme amacıyla, çeşitli paydaşlara göre özelleştirilebilen, stratejik ve ölçme kriterlerine niyetiyle planlanmaktadır. Ancak maalesef kurumlar tüm paydaşların önceliklerini ve veya ölçme değerlendirme kriterlerini öncelik olarak görmeyebilmektedir."

> *Successful companies use corporate communications to track, analyse and improve their communications with stakeholders by learning how to develop as organisations through engagement with those audiences. Poor organisations use these techniques to hide poor practice and support sales of poorly targeted products or services. They are literally opposite ends of the spectrum. –* ***Scotland-based [U.K.], New Zealand-born, Academic***

As with the definitions of PR, respondents also pointed out the differences of application, depending on the sector and size of the relevant organization.

> *According to my observations, this depends on the type of organization. Private sector organizations and civil society organizations generally prioritize the intentional and persuasive part of their activities. I think that the strategic dimension is quite neglected in Türkiye, although I know through my academic work that exceptional organizations such as Greenpeace carry out several activities planned for strategic and measurable results.* [11] ***– Türkiye, Academic***

[11] Original text: "Benim gözlemlerime göre bu kurumun türüne göre değişir. Özel sektör kuruluşları ve sivil toplum kuruluşlarının genellikle amaca yönelik ve ikna edici kısmını ön planda tutarak hayata geçirmektedirler. Türkiye'de stratejik boyutun oldukça ihmal edildiğini düşünüyorum, bununla birlikte Greenpeace gibi istisnai kurumların stratejik ve ölçülebilir sonuçlara yönelik planlanmış birtakım faaliyetler yürüttüklerini de yaptığım akademik çalışmalar vesilesiyle biliyorum."

> *The purpose of organizations in the field of Communication depends on the business model, the type of public to which it is directed and the size of the organization. In a retail company, its approach is intentional, persuasive, strategic, organized, planned with a focus on results. In a public and social service organization, its purpose is oriented towards stakeholders, in a persuasive way.*[12] ***– Ecuador, Educator***

The quantitative rounds reveal a strong preference for organization-centric approaches. In the English dataset (Q10), the three main purposes of PR were to "build, maintain, and protect the reputation of an organization" (43%, n=211); "achieve organizational goals" (23%); and "build trust and credibility to proceed with the business plans" (12%). In the Spanish dataset, they were to "achieve organizational goals" (38%, n=81); "position the brand, the organization, and image management" (23%); and "generate trust, credibility, and improve reputation" (12%).

While "building, maintaining, and protecting the reputation of an organization" was the aggregate choice in the English sample (84% distributed between first, second, and third choice, n=211), the Spanish dataset leading choice was "achieving organizational goals" (58% distributed between first, second, and third choice, n=81).

In Türkiye too, the primary purpose to use PR/Comms was "achieving corporate goals, including supporting reputation management, increasing recognition, gaining power, expanding operations and successes, increasing the sphere of influence and leadership" followed by "achieving communication objectives such as informing, reminding, and taking action." "Persuading the target audience on a specific issue" was also mentioned. Despite the recurring responses mentioning the importance of serving the society and looking after the interests of the stakeholders, in the previous rounds, the respondents did not give priority to these categories in the third round.

Perhaps the most notable absence here was that of management, one of the core characteristics of modernist definitions of PR. This omission was potentially due to the question itself and the focus on PR's purpose rather than PR's way of working. However, the organizational-centric responses confirm PR's continued preference for modernistic approaches (Curry Jansen, 2017; Demetrious, 2022).

[12] Original text: El propósito de las organizaciones en el campo de la Comunicación, depende del modelo de negocio, tipo de público al que está dirigido y tamaño de la organización. En una empresa retail su enfoque es intencional, persuasiva, estratégica, organizada, planificado con enfoque a los resultados. En una organización de servicio público y social su propósito está orientado hacia los stakeholders, de forma persuasiva."

Conflict, PR solutions, and future impact

Traditional PR adopts an organization-centric—if not servile—position, focused on meeting the organization's objectives and on pushing out information rather than listening (Macnamara, 2022). Current PR trends, however, indicate that this view is increasingly contested. Understanding success only in commercial terms—operational, transactional, delivery-focused, and outcomes-focused—is no longer sufficient in a world of increasing, and increasingly diverse, stakeholder interests and demands.

Whether influenced by postmodernist research and its concern with power and voice, the result of the realization that in a multi-stakeholder environment, win-win solutions and dialogue are not options valid for all, or the outcome of personal and professional reflection around the servant culture and its long-term results on society, it is apparent that there is a preference to reorientate PR/Comms as a profession towards a consultancy and facilitator role (Adi, 2019; Adi & Stoeckle, 2021, 2023; Moloney & McGrath, 2021). This also leads to a realization of and reflection on the fundamental importance of persuasion in PR work and its strong link with interests and values-driven choices (Thompson, 2020).

PR/Comms practitioners in this new role have a particularly challenging mission to fulfil—one of navigating between their own values and those of the organization while addressing, balancing, and/or responding to multiple stakeholders' demands and needs. In multi-stakeholder environments, where every stakeholder has stakeholders of its own, conflict cannot be avoided—be it conflicting demands or conflicting outcomes (Bakir et al., 2019). It is this point that this study also aimed to explore. Thus, participants were asked to reflect on their previous answer regarding the purpose for which PR is used in organizations and consider whether the approach identified could lead to any potential conflicts (Q11), and if so, what solutions to addressing such conflicts, interests, and impacts they observed (Q12). The participants were also asked to reflect on how PR/Comms should address these potentially conflicting interests and groups (Q18) and potentially conflicting impacts in the future (Q19).

In the qualitative rounds, the responses received either defined and questioned the nature of conflict, discussed types of conflict (mismatch of objectives, resources, understandings), or elaborated on their causes (misinformation, mixed loyalties, VUCA, to name a few). This happened in all language samples.

> *This of course leads to conflicts. Instead of a one-way route, there is now a two-way route and that requires active listening; not easy, but a necessity to be successful. Furthermore, comms needs now to proof that a seat at the table in the C-suite can be validated; I am not sure, or this is everywhere the case because it requires more and different attitudes from communication professionals. –* ***UAE-based, The Netherlands-born, Practitioner***

> *If by conflict you mean the promotion of something not good for individuals or society then yes, the industry can be the mouthpiece of*

organisations/categories/political forces that want to promote their cause to launch it/grow it/sustain it. Indeed, this is often the most lucrative part of the industry. But as social attitudes change fewer practitioners are prepared to support those entities and increasing numbers of practitioners work to support opposition to them. I think it is also worth saying that most communications don't have the effect they are claimed to have so the 'dark arts' of persuasion are often overstated. ***– U.K., Practitioner***

PRs effort to manage the 30organization reputation involves ethical challenges. According to the PR codes of ethics practitioners are expected to be loyal to clients/employers and keep information they have access to discreet, however, they are also expected to be committed to honesty and transparency. The ethical expectations conflict. ***– New Zealand-based, Israel-born, Practitioner***

I'm increasingly noticing that the uncertainty caused by the various crises and their risk scenarios are increasingly affecting corporate communication in the direction of this approach. Fear, insecurity and driving on sight again lead to more thinking and acting from here on now, because something new and unforeseen happens every day, situations change quickly and more and more corporate communicators are therefore spontaneously reactive than after the approach. ***– Germany, Educator***

As long as practitioners do not define their own code of ethics, declare it and stand behind it, they can be intermediaries in issues that lead to social and environmental negativity due to continuity concerns or priorities. Unfortunately, since profit maximization is the priority of corporations, they expect such support from the consultancies they receive. Communication practitioners can be reminders of the need to prioritize social and environmental impacts against these demands; they have the power to do so, as long as they make it their priority.[13] ***– Türkiye, Educator***

[13] Original text: "Uygulamacılar; kendi etik kurallarını tanımlayıp bunu ilan etmediği ve de arkasında durmadığı sürece, "kâr ve süreklilik" endişeleri veya öncelikleri, toplumsal ve çevresel olumsuzluklara yol açan konularda aracı olabiliyorlar. Kurumların maalesef öncelikleri kar maksimizasyonu olduğu için aldıkları danışmanlıklardan da bu tür destekler bekliyorlar. Bu isteklere karşı toplumsal ve çevresel etkilerin öncelikle dirilmesi gereğinin hatırlatıcısı iletişim uygulamacıları olabilirler, ellerinde bu güç mevcut, yeter ki bu konuyu kendi öncelikleri içine alsınlar."

A small number of participants indicated that they perceived no conflicts to be associated with PR work. Interestingly, however, this lack of conflict was either conditioned or made relative to a specific context or relationship.

> *No conflict, because the objectives and contexts differ in many cases. I see more relationships than conflicts. –* ***Tanzania, Academic***

> *There are no conflicts as long as this is done in a planned, measurable and sustainable manner. –* ***Malaysia, Practitioner***

> *If Strategic Communication is approached and developed with ethics, professionalism and is led by a true expert, it does not have to generate conflicts, on the contrary, its successful management can help to avoid them, by focusing on risk and crisis communication, as well as by focusing on its raison d'être in internal communication, and image and reputation management. Now, if communication work is carried out where strategic is only a reference, problems could be generated when high expectations are not answered through the planning or execution that the communication areas have set. To a large extent it depends on the DIRCOM that directs the area, being truly a strategist with extensive experience and knowledge to practice as such and not only believing themselves to be a DIRCOM just because of the name that his position has, that happens a lot in public entities, where on many occasions this area is handled by journalists who are not prepared for a strategic communication responsibility.*[14] *–* ***Colombia, Educator***

To some, devolving PR practice from the organizational interest is flat-out naïve.

> *According to the observations, when it comes to conflicts of interest, communication practitioners are always looking out for the profitability/interests of the organizations they work with. I do not see this as a paradox. It does not seem possible, at least in our geography, for a communication professional who receives a salary from an institution or a public relations agency working for a*

[14] Original text: "Si la Comunicación Estratégica se aborda y desarrolla con ética, profesionalismo y es liderada por un verdadero experto no tiene por qué generar conflictos, por el contrario su gestión exitosa puede ayudar en evitarlos, ya que desde sus enfoques se puede trabajar la comunicación de riesgos y comunicación en crisis, así como su razón de ser desde la comunicación interna y gestión de imagen y reputación. Ahora, si se ejerce una labor de comunicación donde sólo tenga de estratégico el nombre, sí se podrían generar problemas porque se pueden generar altas expectativas que no serán respondidas por la planificación, ni la ejecución que las áreas de comunicación tengan planteadas. En buena parte depende del DIRCOM que dirija el área, siendo verdaderamente un estratega con una amplia experiencia y conocimientos para ejercer como tal y no sólo creerse un DIRCOM sólo por el nombre que tiene su cargo, eso pasa mucho en las entidades públicas, donde en muchas ocasiones esta área es manejada por periodistas que no están preparados para una responsabilidad de comunicación estratégica."

> *company to behave otherwise. I believe that theoretical discussions such as public relations working as an activist within an organization are quite naïve. I am sure that a company would immediately part ways with a public relations professional who does not look out for its own financial interests.*[15] ***– Türkiye, Academic***

For the English sample, consensus was achieved in Round 4 on two items (Q12): "focus on/meet clients/organizational objectives" (52% agree, n=211) and "engage stakeholders" (57% agree), yet the item with the most aggregate responses (agree and strongly agree) was "focus on preserving the client's/organizational image and reputation" (with 49% and 45%, respectively).

For the Spanish sample, more than 55% (n=81) of the respondents agreed that the way to currently address and prioritize conflicts in organizations is by "focusing on the organizational objectives," though as an aggregate function more than 90% (agree and strongly agree computed together) indicated that "preserving the organizational image and reputation" is what leads decision-making in such situations.

In the Turkish dataset, respondents did not focus on the ways to address and prioritize conflicts in the qualitative rounds. Thus, in the quantitative rounds it was the possible reasons leading to conflicts that were explored, such as the prioritization of corporate interests (see next section and questions in the appendix).

Here, the priorities of the organization were decisive when addressing conflicts (55% agree, 40% strongly agree, n=22). While the data might indicate that Turkish respondents would put their organizational objectives first, their responses indicated a preference for due diligence in addressing conflicts. Generally speaking, Turkish respondents identified that corporate interests and objectives are prioritized in conflicting issues, while stakeholders' interests and environmental and social needs are ignored. This approach can lead to conflicts. To address this issue, the respondents recommended that conflict resolution should not be solely driven by organizational interests and objectives, but should also consider ethics, professional values, and universal laws. It is important to conduct activities within the framework of these principles.

By focusing on the most common and frequent answers, and thus not including the options that denied PR/Comms's work as prone to conflict, these results help confirm that PR/Comms continue to be seen, understood, and practiced as organization-centric.

This fits with what Demetrious (2022) described as a neoliberal environment where PR/Comms's protective role towards organizations and their goals ends up adopting and propagating practices stifling opinion and dissent. If this is the case, the dilemmas and

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[15] Original text: "Gözlemlerinize göre iletişim uygulamacıları çıkar çatışmaları söz konusu olduğunda amasız fakatsız birlikte çalıştıkları kurumların karlılıkların/çıkarlarını gözetiyorlar. Bunu da paradoks olarak görmüyorum. Bir kurumdan maaş alan bir iletişim profesyonelinin ya da bir şirket için çalışan bir halkla ilişkiler ajansının aksi bir davranış göstermesi en azından bizim coğrafyamızda mümkün görünmüyor. Halkla ilişkilerin kurum içinde "aktivist" olarak çalışması gibi kuramsal tartışmaların oldukça naif olduğuna inanıyorum. Bir şirket eminim ki kendi maddi çıkarlarını gözetmeyen bir halkla ilişkiler uzmanı ile yollarını hemen ayıracaktır."

challenges referred to during the qualitative rounds related to balance between one's own values, organization, and society, or related to one's demonstrating their impact and worth, are neither surprising nor new.

Conflicts and solutions

Considering the wide range of responses received when asked about the potentially conflictual nature of PR work (Q11), it was no surprise that a question about the solutions observed would lead to equally diverse answers. For instance, in the English sample several themes, not all of them in agreement or alignment, emerged:

- management/company guidelines and interest trump anything else
- personal limits, personal values, and personal characteristics as choice and decision-making determinants
- power and its role in PR work
- ethical guidelines as a benchmark
- PR/Comms's role is not to solve problems.

Starting with the latter point on the list, the resistance to PR's role in solving problems was notable.

> *In practice many PR professionals are in a weak position and too infrequently don't feel able to challenge management. They may feel precarious and overworked and while they should be leading the way in more sustainable practice, they may put all their energy into handling everyday challenges, pleasing their clients and demonstrating their value to the 'bottom line.' –* ***U.K.-based, European Union-born, Practitioner***

> *I can't see a general pattern beyond the following observations: Few communicators have sufficient understanding of the socioeconomic factors driving the stakeholder economy. Their perimeter is restricted to communicating any positive news relating to their company and to avoid or reduce media coverage and social media debates on any critical issue. Until today, there is hardly any communicator equaling reputation management with shaping stakeholder perceptions in order to safeguard sustainable access to resources their company needs to run its business model at costs the corporate strategy allows for. Those who do, advise senior management on changes in what and how of their company's business that are necessary to win and stabilize the willingness of stakeholders to cooperate. Apart from Scandinavia, where corporate communication often comprises the role of a stakeholder ombudsman, communicators still focus on trying to make the company look better than it actually is. –* ***Germany, Educator***

The emergent themes also pointed to the prevalence of particular paradigms in different countries and regions. While this study cannot claim statistical relevance nor test correlations, it is interesting that African countries (with the exception of South Africa), post-communist countries (Romania and Lithuania, for instance), and Malaysia refer more often to modernistic principles (like business centricity and organizational focus), while

postmodern principles (such as power, voice, and the balance between personal value and organizational demands) are more prevalent in the other featured countries.

An interesting remark about PR's losing ownership and ground when it comes to its expertise in communication was made by an Italian academic. Their observation echoes the assumption that "communicating is easy" and thus that anyone can do it. This notion taps into further conversations about PR as a specialism and even more so into PR's professional status, or more likely, its representation as an occupation—something that can be done without specific training and degree. Moreover, concerns about PR's devaluation were shared by many of the academics.

> *The biggest problem I think is still related to the devaluation of communicator skills, both in terms of "what he knows and can do," and in terms of "easy replacement" of his skills. In a world that promotes interdisciplinarity it is increasingly difficult to attribute specific and isolated skills to a single professional figure, but my activity as a tutor for student interns in the company is increasingly emerging that communicator skills are often replaced by other professionals in such a vast way that it almost seems that anyone can do it. This was true when I was a communication student (not many years ago, but still in years in which digital communication was not very developed) but it is even more true today, when I notice that companies confuse the communicator with the "social media hacker." –* ***Italy, Academic***

> *This is a tricky one. We are frequently told that our role as PR's nowadays is to be Guardians of Truth and to speak Truth to Power at board level. But very few of us ever get to board level, so we don't get much opportunity to be heard. Because we are primarily used, even these days, at a tactical rather than strategic level, we are frequently asked to cover up for practices we could have stopped happening had we been involved in strategic decision making in the first place. And this creates problems and ethical dilemmas for practitioners, often leaving to employee attrition. –* ***Scotland-based [U.K.], New Zealand-born, Academic***

In this context, participants' observations around personal characteristics (values and context) were indicative of a new trend, with postmodern reverberations: making practice dependent on one's personal (and potentially) cultural background.

> *This depends entirely on the experience and the character of the person involved. You also need to be fact based where you can and look for the support of others, inside and outside of the company. You need to have relationships with the most important people within the organizations, even with the ones that are not interested in your plans or ideas. You need to develop yourself more as a homo universalis and learn from the arts, literature, religion, philosophy, psychology, to be more effective, and if possible have more of a business*

> *education where possible (MBA) to be able to speak the language of the management that you will encounter. – **The Netherlands, Educator***

> *Clearly, reactions to potential conflicting interests vary a lot according to the industry in which the corporation is operating. But I would not consider it a communicator's responsibility: solutions on how to deal with negative impacts or conflicting interests derive from the overall strategy (and culture, I would say) of the organization. According to my experience, there's always - in almost every organization - a strong tendency to minimize (hide?) some of the worst impacts of the company's actions in order to benefit the business (and the shareholders' value). This leads me to think that actually a "meta" - conflict of interests resides in the overall economic system which currently governs our world (growth, consuming more and more goods VS sustainability). – **Germany-based, Italy-born, Educator***

> *Professionals address, prioritize or solve interests in different ways and this is conflicting because there are many times there is no common ethical framework or because each person has an idea of how things should be. Different issues are also prioritized, according to the interests and needs of each person when it should be part of a policy or a shared axis throughout the organization. I have noticed weight dilemmas when issues of rights, social communication are not prioritized or when certain problems are excluded because they do not look important.[16] – **Costa Rica, Educator***

This fine balance between societal value, sometimes understood as sustainability, and business objectives, was also pointed out by participants from Lithuania, Romania, Tanzania, and Türkiye who discussed the implications of making such choices from the business case. PR departments and agencies need to meet and comply to organizational/client demands if they want to continue to practice and function. In this sense, the description of the process their team follows to address such conflicts provided by a Botswanan practitioner was inspiring.

> *We discuss this quite often in our team. We have had instances for example of things we outright do not tolerate and choose to walk away from (discussed as leadership and as a team because it did not align to our values) of racism, sexism, and abuse of our staff. In each instance, these were addressed with the*

[16] Original text: “Las y los profesionales abordan, priorizan o resuelven los intereses de diferentes maneras y esto es conflictivo porque muchas veces no existe un marco común ético o bien porque cada persona tiene una idea de cómo deberían ser las cosas. También se priorizan temas distintos, según los intereses y necesidades de cada persona cuando debería ser parte de una política o de un eje compartido por toda la organización. He notado dilemas de peso cuando no se priorizan temas de derechos, comunicación social o cuando se excluyen ciertas problemáticas porque no se ven importantes.”

> *client or organization to resolve openly and honestly, and we only walked away when a solution was not possible. We have since started having much more regular and open discussions as a team about the kind of business and team we want to be, the kind of culture we want and help shape, and what does or does not fit into that. It has helped shape our team culture better and visibly made a difference to their professionalism and happiness at work, as well as respect for the standard of work we strive to do. This is supported by teach mindfulness, understanding, cultural intelligence and conflict resolution in the team, and trying to extend those positive habits to all we engage with. Our policy remains that we do not work with or try to avoid working with individuals or organizations that are unethical, immoral, or mis-aligned to the values we stand for – or who ask or assume we would work or act in a way contract to these. We also stand by the global CIPR code of conduct to hold that mirror up to ourselves daily. –* ***Botswana, Practitioner***

Addressing the dissonance between personal values and organizational reputation was also addressed by Uruguayan and Costa Rican participants.

> *I believe that a dilemma that occurs in the profession occurs when the focus of the business, or of a practice, of the company can generate a conflict with the ideology or way of seeing the things that the person has. In my case, I worked in a company of an item I saw as "unscrupulous." Being one of my first experiences in the field I decided to accept the work and eventually I understood what the organization's business was, which although I did it with consciousness and thinking about the client, I did not finish closing at all. In short, I would never use the service provided by the company. When working in the area of internal communication and labor wellbeing, this was not a problem for me since my goals were others. But, having to work in external communication, it would have been a big conflict.*[17] ***– Uruguay, Educator***

> *I consider that employees of private companies' communication areas are good rationalizing that what they do is only a piece of a great gear, which does not make themselves "conflicting" themselves, but to companies. It is difficult to get*

[17] Original text: "Creo que un dilema que se presenta en la profesión se da cuando el foco del negocio, o de una práctica, de la empresa puede generar un conflicto con la ideología o forma de ver las cosas que tiene la persona. En mi caso, trabajé en una empresa de un rubro al que veía como 'inescrupuloso'. Al ser una de mis primeras experiencias en el rubro decidí aceptar el trabajo y con el tiempo entendí cuál era el negocio de la organización, que si bien lo hacía con consciencia y pensando en el cliente, no me terminaba de cerrar del todo. En definitiva, nunca utilizaría el servicio que brindaba la empresa. Al trabajar en el área de comunicación interna y bienestar laboral, esto no fue un problema para mí ya que mis objetivos eran otros. Pero, de haber tenido que trabajar en comunicación externa, hubiera sido un conflicto grande."

> *good positions in the profession, so it is taken as a "sacrifice", an opportunity that cannot be missing.*[18] *–* ***Spain-based, Costa Rica-born, Practitioner***

In reflecting on how practitioners prioritize and identify solutions when faced with either conflicting groups or impacts, respondents revisited and reflected over PR/Comms's perceived role in managing conflict, issues, and crises. This too is reminiscent of Demetrious's (2022) points about PR as a neoliberal practice aimed more at frustrating and obfuscating deliberative practices rather than supporting them. This point also supports Kent and Taylor's (2002) argument that true dialogue[19] in Public Relations is impossible as it is, as a form of communication, always intentional and always seeking a particular outcome.

> *If we consider the conflict in the context of communication parties, strategic communication aims to eliminate possible conflict dynamics since it is a planned and designed (proactive) communication.*[20] *–* ***Türkiye, Educator***

[18] Original text: "Considero que los empleados de áreas de comunicación de empresas privadas son buenos racionalizando que lo que hacen es solo una pieza de un gran engranaje, lo cual no les hace 'conflictivos' a sí mismos, sino a las empresas. Es difícil conseguir buenos puestos en la profesión, así que se toma como un 'sacrificio', una oportunidad que no puede desaprovecharse."

[19] In Kent and Taylor's rhetorical perspective, true dialogue has no planned outcome and is not necessarily intentional. Moreover, true dialogue requires the recognition and embracing of vulnerability and risk.

[20] Original text: "Çatışmayı iletişim tarafları bağlamında değerlendirecek olursak, stratejik iletişim planlanmış ve tasarlanmış (proaktif) bir iletişim olmasından dolayı olası çatışma dinamiklerini ortadan kaldırmayı hedefler."

Type of and reasons for conflicts

To better understand the nuances of the qualitative answers, in rounds 3 and 4, participants were provided with a list of types of conflicts observed in practice (Q11). To ensure logical consistency of the answers, the option of “No conflict” indicated by some participants in rounds 1 and 2 was excluded. For the Spanish language sample, participants were offered two questions – one investigating the types of conflict and another the reasons for conflicts – maintaining thus the flow of the arguments and answers seen in the qualitative rounds. For the Turkish sample however, the quantitative question in Rounds 3 and 4 focused only on reasons for conflicts following the findings from the qualitative rounds where no responses referred to types of conflict.

The most common conflict type identified in the English sample was “organizational financial/commercial objectives vs communication focus on societal responsibilities” (25%, n=211) followed by “organizational objectives vs communication objectives” (20%). The difference between the aggregate scores of the two was negligeable, making these two the leading conflict types in the English sample.

For the Spanish participants, both sources and types of conflict were explored. Speaking of conflict types, more than half of the respondents (n=81) chose “organizational financial/commercial objectives vs social responsibility, well-being of internal/external audiences" followed by “interest/needs of the organization vs. stakeholders/publics” (27% as second choice) and “organizational/some areas' priorities vs. communication priorities” (35% as third choice). Considering what leads to such conflict, participants in the Spanish-language group put “inconsistency between words and deeds” (27%) as the main cause followed by “ambiguous /misleading information” as the main cause (20%) and “lack of integration of diverse internal and external needs” (20%) as the third choice.

When considering conflicts, the Turkish-speaking participants were asked to select the three most likely reasons that communication practices could lead to potential conflicts. “Prioritization of corporate interests” was stated as the primary reason by 29% (n=22) of the respondents. It makes sense when we read this finding with the previous data that mentioned “achieving corporate goals” as the major purpose of the organizations in Türkiye when using PR/Comms practices. “Neglecting social and environmental impacts” was the second favorite answer to this question, with a similar percentage as of the first reason mentioned (29%). And the third reason for this conflict was that “communication is not managed with an integrated understanding, that will take care of all stakeholders,” meaning that the priorities of some stakeholders, such as employees, are not sufficiently considered (24%).

Desired outlook: procedures, alignment, co-creation

While the current focus on organizational demands is undeniable, so is the future and desired direction to addressing conflicts. In the case of projecting and portraying the desired future scenarios, participants were asked to consider conflicting interests and groups (Q18) separately from conflicting impacts (Q19). More specifically, when adopting a stakeholder-centric perspective (as suggested by many), one cannot expect or assume that a win-win outcome would be possible with all stakeholders at all times: thus, the differentiated questions about conflicting interests and groups (same issue, different perspectives, different expectations). Equally, from the same perspective of the multi-stakeholder environment, impact needs to be considered in a wider context—that of the activity undertaken, the time, and the stakeholders affected. Thus, one might be faced with multiple and potentially conflicting impacts: short-term positive, and medium- or long-term negative (Stoeckle & Adi, 2023). Hence, conflicting impacts.

Interestingly, there is great variety within the datasets. While this can be attributed in part to the geographical and cultural diversity of the sample, this study cannot explain the stark differences between the emerging consensual choices within each sample.

For instance, when considering addressing potentially conflicting interests, the Latin American participants agree on six solutions:

- with good strategies, planning and evaluation (82% strongly agree, 11% agree, n=81)
- respecting diversity and seeking inclusion (71% strongly agree, 24% agree)
- empathetic (67% strongly agree, 29% agree)
- with attentive, constant listening and sincere dialogue with stakeholders/publics (67% strongly agree, 27% agree)
- accompanying deep organizational changes to strengthen people and communities (60% strongly agree, 33% agree)
- with in-depth analysis of the needs and interests of social groups, in the current situation and context (53% strongly agree, 40% agree).

The English sample also agrees upon and reaches consensus on six choices. Unlike the Spanish speaking sample where consensus emerges out of strong agreement, in the English sample not only are the choices different but the consensus emerges from a more ‘moderate’ line of agreement:

- formulate procedures and processes to deliberate issues and come to non-contentious and mutually beneficial outcomes for stakeholders (65% agree, 20% strongly agree, n=211)
- prioritize based on alignment with the organization’s mission (62% agree, 15% strongly agree)
- use key PR principles and ethics to guide decision-making (60% agree, 32% strongly agree)

- acknowledge the difficulty of the situation/issue to all stakeholders and co-create a solution (60% agree, strongly agree 28%)
- prioritize by value and potential impact to the organization and its stakeholders (56% agree, 23% strongly agree)
- respond ethically, with compassion and understanding and in line with organizational values (55% agree, 36% strongly agree)

In the Turkish dataset, the most prominent responses were:

- respecting universal values, especially human rights (68% strongly agree, 32% agree, n=22)
- revising our policy when necessary for an ethical and fair perspective (58% strongly agree, 42% agree)
- through honest, transparent, and sincere negotiation (32% strongly agree, 58% agree)

Respondents from Türkiye generally advocated that in the case of conflicting demands and interests, the conflict should be addressed on objective grounds that are universal, widely shared, and accepted.

What is valuable to note here is the desire for clear procedural approaches, stronger ethical guidelines but, more importantly, a stronger emphasis on relationship and relational aspects of the PR work (see references to empathy, diversity and inclusion, human rights, and dialogue).

Similar patterns of response were observed when asked to consider addressing conflicting impacts (Q19).

The Latin American group reached an equal and very high consensus on three solutions: "with transparency", "solid and at the same time flexible strategy that adapts to the changing reality", "planning, risk analysis and crisis strategy", all three with results of 71% strongly agree and 27% agree (n=81). Other consensuses in the Spanish sample were:

- with rigorous research and analysis that anticipates and avoids conflicts and negative impacts (62% strongly agree)
- attending to external and also internal impacts on the organization (60% strongly agree)
- discussing and reflecting among colleagues, with trust and a learning attitude (58% strongly agree)
- with proactivity and creative solutions (58% strongly agree)
- with methodologies appropriate to different situations, without formulas/fashionable recipes (56% strongly agree)

The Turkish and English datasets on the other hand had several options.

“Transparency” and “honesty” were rated very high in the English dataset (52% strongly agree, 41% agree; and 50% strongly agree, 43% agree, respectively; n=211) followed by “evaluate and balance organizational impact with public/social impact” (60% agree, 34% strongly agree), and “create a basic matrix of assessment including impact, organizational values and prioritize based on best alignment” (54% agree, 28% strongly agree).

Among the Turkish participants, there was agreement reached almost on all items.

The ones that stood out are the following:

- in line with the basic principles of the PR profession; with an open, honest, and trust-based ethical approach (58% strongly agree, 42% agree, n=22)
- on the axis of human rights, universal values, and law (58% strongly agree, 42% agree)
- possible risks are revealed, scenarios are studied in this direction and impact simulations are made (53% strongly agree, 47% agree)
- a joint solution-oriented approach, taking into account the interests of the parties (26% strongly agree, 58% agree)

Here too, some similarities emerge across samples. Perhaps not surprisingly, transparency in communication (and action one might add) is seen as a solution to addressing conflicting impacts. Transparency as a solution for a better, more impactful future PR practice has been seen in other studies including PR2025 (Adi, 2019). However, the potential paradoxical effects of transparency (more information, more noise, less engagement) or, for that matter, the interpretation of the concept (is it radical transparency or strategic transparency) are not elaborated upon, a limitation of the method itself and an invitation to further explore understandings and applications of transparency in the future. It is the same with rigorous research with calls to equip practitioners with stronger research skills being made consistently throughout the years. This becomes ever more important as the number of algorithmic and machine learning solutions for monitoring, implementation and evaluation increases. Without the critical understanding of research and research principles that guide these applications and technical solutions, the risk that communicators remain uncritical adopters at best, if not propagators of misinformation, disinformation and fake news by accident due to their lack of knowledge and understanding is increasing by the day. Moreover, for communicators operating in areas where these technology advances are either not available or underperforming, a solid knowledge of research will ensure their success as it equips them with the ability to both collect data and make sense of it.

Social Impact and *Social Value* – Emerging definitions

Public Relations literature is filled in equal measure with calls to demonstrate value and with proposals on how to do that. Inspired by Grunig's excellence model (2006) and enforced by many measurement and evaluations vendors and promoters, these calls focus on PR's value to the organizations and clients they serve, and not necessarily to their stakeholders or society. Yet, independent of PR's service, organizations are facing increasing pressures and demands to contribute to society, long-term (through sustainability, sustainable development, responsibility, and more), and thus demonstrate both impact and value. Thus, PR/Comms are also expected to factor quantifiable SDG (Lashitew, 2021) and ESG (Veenstra & Ellemers, 2020) initiatives into their planning, execution, measurement, and evaluation of activities. Again, from an organizational perspective, this is about 'owning the discourse.' A more inclusive, stakeholder-focused, outside-in perspective would consider the fact that impact and value are dependent on context and perspective. Initiatives such as Social Value International[21] also show that social value and social impact are not the same (Stoeckle & Adi, 2023). For PR/Comms, the issue of value and impact has just become more complex as it requires practitioners (as well as academics and educators) to navigate the profession's own footprint and legacy as well as its contextual effects and worth.

To understand these nuances, the study asked participants to first consider whether they see any difference between the concepts of social value and social impact.

> *Haven't thought about this before. I suppose social impact would be more intentional about seeing a social challenge, coming up with a goal and action plan and then measuring it so the plan works. Social value to me might be more around shared community morals and ethics and programmes we all might think are 'worthy' intrinsically but perhaps harder to measure.* – ***New Zealand-based, U.S.-born, Practitioner***

> *Yes. Social value can exist as a concept or an intangible but does not necessarily mean results, outcomes or measurable (felt, seen, qualifiable, heard) progress in the way that social impact does; social value can, however, lead to or create social impact. Social value includes understanding the importance of context or changes that people experience and using those insights to make better decisions, e.g., a community collective understanding that providing sanitary pads to an impoverished community reduces how often young girls miss school and therefore fall behind. The community/society values the importance of inclusion and girls being educated. Social impact is action and interventions taken to change the status quo above - real, meaningful progress. E.g., sanitary*

21 See https://www.socialvalueint.org/

> *pads are made accessible, there is a notable decline in health issues due to lack of these feminine hygiene products, less girls are missing less school, and young girls are thriving. One can lead to the other, but it is not always a given. –* ***Botswana, Practitioner***

Once established that most participants perceived these terms as different, the study aimed to identify a definition for each.

At the end of round 4, the most voted definitions for social value (Q14) in the English dataset are as follows:

- understanding the importance of context or changes that people experience and using those insights to make better decisions (19% first choice, 69% aggregate, n=211)
- dynamic rather than fixed, constantly shifting depending on what society is valuing from one moment to the next" (18% first, 58% aggregate)
- about shared community morals, ethics, and programs we all might think are intrinsically 'worthy' (21% first, 53% aggregate)
- a systemic, network effect, rather than the isolated impact on a defined set of individuals (12% first; 52% aggregate)
- listening to stakeholders and accommodating their needs, using a participatory decision-making process, and seeking to be more accountable to stakeholders whose lives are affected by the organization's policies and behavior (23% first choice; 52% aggregate)

Similar results were obtained in the Spanish sample, the definition receiving the most votes being:

> **"Social value is what society considers, perceives, and attributes as valuable from the actions of an organization/profession."**

This definition has received by far the most votes as first choice (72% aggregate as first, second, or third choice).

While neither in the English nor the Spanish version did any item achieve consensus as a first choice, all the items in the bulleted list were selected by 50% or more of the respondents, thus qualifying for aggregate consensus.

In the Turkish dataset, there were eight definitions for social value that emerged from the qualitative rounds. However, none of the eight definitions passed the consensus threshold. Having said this, "social value is the social processes and phenomena created by the society, classifying the good and the bad, the positive and the negative" was the definition with the highest level of agreement (35%, n=22).

With regards to social impact (Q15), at the end of round 4, the three most voted definitions in the English sample were:

- actions and interventions taken to change the status quo above—real, meaningful progress (23% first choice, 74% aggregate, n=211)
- referring to the positive change an organization creates to address a pressing social issue (23% first, 48% aggregate)

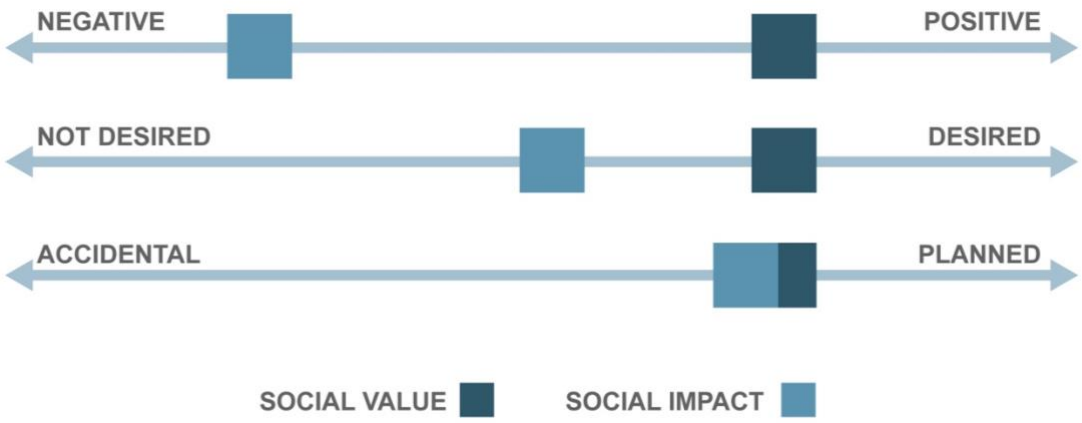
- isolating and measuring direct cause-and-effect relationships between a specific set of activities and outcomes through established research methodologies (19% first, 52% aggregate).

Unlike the English version, where a differentiation among definitions came through only at the aggregate-item level, in the Spanish sample, most of the participants saw social impact as “the effect/result of communication, of actions of the profession/organization in society” (37% first choice, 76% aggregate, n=81).

First, and considering the statements defining social impact, half of the Turkish respondents focused on the definition, “it is the measurable result of concrete, conscious, and deliberate activities to generate social benefit, which emerges as the product of socially valuable decisions of organizations.” Second, the respondents concluded that “all kinds of influences changed and determined society, the behavior patterns of the society, and social relations; these influences determined our social values”. And third, social impact was defined as “behaviors and their results measured according to social values”. Referring to these statements, an oscillation between the two ends was observed. Some of the Turkish respondents thought that social impact is the determinant of social values while others considered the opposite.

So, the differences are clear. **Social value is stakeholder-dependent (on their experience, perception, and value system) and social impact is organizationally-led and activity-dependent: an outside-in vs an inside-out perspective, potentially interdependent but not necessarily correlated.** This is also in line with what Stoeckle and Adi (2023) suggest when it comes to measurement and evaluation.

Figure 4. Three scales of social value–social impact assessment (Stoeckle & Adi, 2023)



Social value of PR now and in the future

As the concepts of social value and social impact were defined and understood, the study turned its attention towards PR as a profession (Q16 and Q17). Participants were asked to reflect on the current social impact and social value of PR/Comms.

In discussing social value, participants considered the sources of value and the resulting social contribution for PR as a profession. Through advocacy, participants argued, PR/Comms are contributing to societal orientation, managing complexity, and consequently, ensuring stability of society. They also argued that by sharing information, telling stories, creating knowledge, raising awareness, and fostering mutual beneficial relationships, PR also contributes to a democratic society.

> *We were always taught that public relations have the potential to be the conscience of an organisation; to help them benefit a wide range of stakeholders, while also delivering their business goals. In this sense, PR professionals have the potential to become the new 'fourth estate' - holding organisations to account from the inside. In practice, I don't see much of this happening but essentially that is the true value of PR. Forcing Encouraging organisations to become more aware of the environment they operate within, counselling them to make decisions for the good of everyone within that context (not least of all because there are usually clear business benefits for doing so). –* ***New Zealand, Practitioner***

> *The Social Value of PR/Comms is in contextualizing informed debate at all levels. When governments raise taxes to serve people better (oops I hope they do), businesses respond in different ways. PR/Comms sets the tone within which businesses will act and inform the stakeholders. –* ***Uganda, Practitioner***

> *PR/Comms has a social value when it can convince the organization to operate in the interest of its stakeholders. That means listening to them, consult with them, respect their views, protect their environment, etc. When this happens, PR/Comms enhances society and makes it a better place for the society members. –* ***South Africa, Educator***

> *We have responsibility for thinking inclusive, sustainable, and long-term strategies. Also, those of us who exercise communication, must leave the status*

> *quo that many times reinforces ideas that have a negative impact on society and reverse the way we strategically address stakeholders.*[22] *–* ***Uruguay, Practitioner***

As pointed out earlier, this prosocial view of PR is not new (Bowen, 2010) and is indicative of both PR's theoretical heritage and its positioning as an aspiring profession through its claim to social benefit through ethical practice. This was also seen in reference to concepts like trust, dialogue, mutuality and mutually beneficial relationships, and change.

> *The PR/Comms is the [link] between people, the only way to keep world's order and prosperity. –* ***Romania, Practitioner***

> *The traditional view is that as an advocacy profession PR enables pluralism of voice. It also has an ethical requirement to contribute positively to the public sphere, or domain although this may be theoretical rather than practical. Many in PR are motivated to make positive social contributions but may feel constrained by the culture of the organisations, brands and clients that they serve. There is a reservoir of goodwill in the profession that could be tapped into to generate stronger ethical codes and a broader responsibility to increase the representation of diverse voices that are currently under-represented. –* ***U.K., Academic***

> *The social value of public relations concentrates on creating or maintaining a positive or solidarity perception between organizations and their audiences.*[23] *–* ***Ecuador, Practitioner***

> *Public Relations can create important values for society: honesty, democracy, respect, plurality, diversity.*[24] *–* ***Türkiye, Academic***

Yet, this is also the main weakness of PR/Comms: its inability to address misuse and malpractice in a straightforward manner—and with it, its inability to address the issue of use of persuasive communication in non-democratic, non-pluralistic systems.

A limited number of participants disagreed with the idea of social value for PR itself.

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[22] Original text: "Tenemos responsabilidad en pensar estrategias inclusivas, sostenibles y a largo plazo. También, quienes ejercemos la comunicación, debemos salir del status quo que muchas veces refuerza ideas que tienen impacto negativo en la sociedad y revertir la forma en la que nos dirigimos estratégicamente a los stakeholders."

[23] Original text: "El valor social de las Relaciones Públicas se concentran en crear o mantener una percepción positiva o de solidaridad entre las organizaciones y sus públicos."

[24] Original text: "Halkla ilişkiler toplum için önemli değerler yaratabilir: Dürüstlük, demokrasi, saygı, çok seslilik, çeşitlilik gibi."

> *PR does not always need to have a social value. It is acceptable for it to contribute towards an organisation's successful achievement of its objectives. The question is are those objectives purely commercial or do they incorporate social responsibilities.* – ***U.K., Educator***

> *In my opinion, there no intrinsic social value of PR/Comms for society specifically. The practice does not benefit society as a whole. The value of PR/Comms for society lies in the intent.* – ***Canada-based, U.S.-born, Practitioner***

> *Based on my understanding of the difference between the two, PR/Comms has high social impact, but low social value, that is to say it is not valued highly by communities it impacts.* – ***South Africa, Practitioner***

> *I don't think there is an intrinsic value. Discipline is a tool and can provide value according to the use that is given. In the end, who decides whether or not a value is contributed to society is the organization in which communication activities are carried out.*[25] – ***Spain-based, Costa Rica-born, Practitioner***

The challenge that results from having no social value, then, is that PR/Comms does not meet the requirements of a profession. According to Pieczka and L'Etang (2006), a profession—beyond assuming a dominant position in the division of labor—should require specialized knowledge, expertise, formal qualifications, autonomy, ethical standards, professional association, and social benefit (or value). This latter aspect implies that professionals have a broader responsibility to society beyond working for their personal gain.

While some participants reflected on the status of the profession (in their own working conditions and current experience), a tendency to collate present and future and reflect on the ideal PR practice was noticed in the qualitative rounds. This progression led to rephrasing and refocusing the questions in the quantitative rounds on the ideal social value and social impact of PR: the *should* in the English and Spanish datasets.

According to the respondents in the English dataset, the social value PR should deliver to society can be described as:

- awareness to matters that improve society for the benefit of organization and stakeholders (50% strongly agree, 41% agree, n=211)

[25] Original text: "No creo que haya un valor intrínseco. La disciplina es una herramienta y puede aportar valor según el uso que se le dé. Al final, quien decide si se aporta o no un valor a la sociedad es la organización en la que se desarrollan actividades de comunicación."

Beyond this point, there were four other statements that reached consensus levels within the English sample:

- act as an enabler for engagement between organization and stakeholders (56% agree, 39% strongly agree, n=211)
- connect stakeholders and communities (56% agree; 37% strongly agree)
- contribute to the well-being and social good of all stakeholders (55% agree, 34% strongly agree)
- foster dialogue between sections of the community (54% agree, 29% strongly agree)

In the Spanish dataset, three statements stood out:

- contribute to the common good, including the environment, to dignity in all forms of life, to human well-being inside and outside organizations (53% strongly agree, 42% agree, n=81)
- generate communication spaces and processes that make citizen organizations responsible and aware (53% strongly agree, 42% agree)
- create community, through dialogue and participation (51% strongly agree, 39% agree)

Based on these choices, the orientation of PR/comms would require updating (from organization-centric to a focus on organization *and* stakeholders) as would its role (from serving the organization to acting as a facilitator). The latter is also in line with Adi's (2019) findings.

However, for the quantitative rounds of the Turkish dataset, the questions were formulated to help identify how social value could be delivered: What social value *can* PR/Comms provide to society? The answer here, receiving 100% agreement and thus reaching full consensus was:

> *"It can direct organizations to activities for the benefit of society."*

In the Turkish respondents' view, PR/Comms can also deliver social value by establishing sustainable mechanisms to solve problems, easing dialogue, and ensuring that organizations:

> "*Act honestly, transparently, accountably, and following ethical values*."

Social impact of PR now and in the future

As with social value, the conversations around the social impact of PR reverted to known themes: by contributing to democracy through advocacy supported by ethics, shaping perceptions, molding opinions.

> *Informing and persuading action can create social impact - when the overarching approach is authenticity, truth (and not "green washing" for example). Encouraging and helping an organization move forward in its cultural competencies can help deliver many things including genuine workforce diversity and impactful corporate social responsibility programs. –* ***Canada, Practitioner***

> *As influencers and storytellers, PR practitioners have the opportunity to change society for the better, helping to create a fairer world and improve people's outcomes (e.g., financial and health). Our choices of who we work with, why and the narratives we craft can have wide-ranging (and often unintended) consequences, which means the social impact of what we do can be good and bad. Do we discuss this enough? Not by any means. I think generally only those in the public sector such as the NHS and emerging ESG areas such as green technologies would seriously consider and build in the social impact of their work from the get-go. –* ***U.K.-based, England-born, Practitioner***

> *Advocacy. Changing of mindsets: Hostility>Sympathy, Apathy>Interest, Prejudice>Acceptance, Ignorance>Knowledge. –* ***Malaysia, Educator***

What was also mentioned as a social impact is PR's own ability to create jobs in the industry, thus supporting families:

> *As industry – creates jobs, serves their employees/ their families, could help some groups with pro bono communication. –* ***Lithuania, Educator***

Also, the issue of measurement and evaluation, as a means through which PR/Comms can demonstrate impact, was often mentioned.

> *The social value is measured in the same way you would for other organisations to measure social capital. Impact on human capital and social capital. I would argue that all 6 capitals should be measured. This should be in relation to the organisation itself (employment and community impact) but also to the work delivered directly and/or on behalf of clients. How this is done should be verifiable, with accountability and transparency. –* ***U.K., Educator***

> *Social impact of PR Communication refers to the implications that PR has on the society within which an organization operates. To a very large extent, I do not think PR communication has paid attention to the effects of its activities on society as opposed to defending organizations and making them look good. But PR can be a point of negotiation for the general good of society which serves organizations as well. –* ***Ghana, Educator***

> *The way I'm interpreting value vs impact… I would say PR/Comms' impact on society comes when you can measure awareness, understanding, changed behaviours, etc. And our overall impact on society comes when you amalgamate all the programmes, campaigns, etc together. That would be difficult to measure at a macro level, I imagine. Sometimes our impact is major such as*

> *communicating safety information and actually contributing to saving lives (i.e., covid vax campaigns) whereas sometimes our impact on society is that more people are purchasing a helpful product (i.e., changing plastic purchasing behaviour).* – ***New Zealand-based, U.S.-born, Practitioner***

What is interesting to note is the acceptance—but not challenge—of the various impacts of Public Relations. In a sense, while practitioners acknowledged that PR may have negative impacts, they did not delve any deeper. Needless to say, the prosocial and positive assumptions related to PR practice remain visibility strong.

> *In general, public relations impact positively, since they are based on the construction of mutually beneficial relations, considering all the audiences involved and from a broad perspective.*[26] – ***Costa Rica, Academic***

> *The impact can be positive or negative. Hence the importance of good communication management. Communicating with transparency and in a timely manner is vital.*[27] – ***Ecuador, Educator***

> *Communication can positively or negatively affect the behaviour patterns of society. What is important is that efforts are made to ensure that this impact is positive. For example, through communication, awareness can be raised and mobilized on issues such as women's empowerment, environmental awareness, and support for disadvantaged groups in society. Communication is also decisive on the tendencies of individuals and societies. Therefore, it is critical that communication is done in a conscious and responsible manner.*[28] – ***Türkiye, Practitioner***

When asked in the quantitative datasets what should be the social impact of PR, the respondents in the English dataset agreed on several points:

- assess the implications of PR/Comms's own activities in the organizational and societal context within which it operates (64% agree, 24% strongly agree, n=211)

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[26] Original text: "En general, las relaciones públicas impactan de manera positiva, ya que se basan en la construcción de relaciones mutuamente beneficiosas, considerando a todos los públicos involucrados y desde una perspectiva amplia."

[27] Original text: "El impacto puede ser positivo o negativo. De allí la importancia del buen manejo de la comunicación. Comunicar con transparencia y de forma oportuna es vital."

[28] Original text: "İletişim toplumun davranış biçimlerini olumlu ya da olumsuz etkileyebilir. Önemli olan bu etkinin olumlu olması yolunda çaba gösterilmesidir. Örneğin iletişim yoluyla kadının güçlenmesi, çevre bilinci, toplumdaki dezavantajlı grupların desteklenmesi gibi konularda farkındalığın artırılması ve harekete geçirilmesi sağlanabilir. İletişim kişilerin, toplumların eğilimleri üzerinde de belirleyicidir. Bu nedenle iletişimin bilinçli ve sorumlu bir biçimde yapılması kritiktir."

- be seen in a measurable contribution that an organization makes to a societal concern (e.g., climate change, social justice or similar) (56% agree, 33% strongly agree)
- create positive change to help solve social challenges (52% agree, 30% strongly agree)
- emerge from the combination of the results of all programs and campaigns undertaken by PR/Comms on behalf of an organization (50% agree, 21% strongly agree)

In the Spanish dataset, the participants agreed upon: “Ensure coherence in the organization between what is done and what is communicated” (68% strongly agree, 27% agree, n=81).

In the Turkish dataset, all participants concurred that PR/Comms’s social impact is in ensuring “that an idea that benefits the society is adopted by the public and action is taken in this direction through information sharing and relationship building.”

In the Turkish data, it is essential to highlight the participants' comments around the importance of being cautious and acting responsibly in the field. Notably, 95% of the respondents agree or strongly agree with the statement: "When communication and Public Relations are conducted without consciousness, irresponsibility, and without ethical considerations, it can have adverse effects on social behavior."

Evaluating PR's social impact

The discussion about social impact is not complete without identifying ways in which the impact can be measured and evaluated. And, since participants indicated that there's a need for better measurement in PR/Comms, this question provided them with an opportunity to consider and offer solutions.

> *Measuring success is a relevant decision-making factor.*
> *Possibilities are:*
> *● Differentiated measurement along the stakeholder groups for perception.*
> *● Stakeholder dialogues on perception.*
> *● Depth psychological measurement methods.*
> *● Social media analytics with psychological AI profiling.*
>
> ***– Germany, Educator***

> *Through measurement of the real outcome of their actions on society and external auditing. –* ***Italy, Educator***

> *Evaluation of social impact should be woven into the operational structure for PR/Comms practitioners. I have a general assessment tool which looks at the organisation/client, their values, alignment with ours, communities affected or involved, whether the ongoing programme/campaign will have negative or positive impact for one or more communities of interest. It is part of our daily operations and we use the relationship scale to determine where impact sits. –* ***New Zealand-based, U.K.-born, Educator***

In both the Turkish and Spanish samples, references were often made to traditional research methods. These were referred to either as consumer research or surveys.

> *It can measure the social impact of projects through social impact analyses conducted by impartial institutions and consumer research conducted with the right sample. Positive and widespread media coverage and corporate reputation scores can also be indicators.*[29] ***– Türkiye, Practitioner***

[29] Original text: "Projelerle ilgili tarafsız kurumlara yaptırdığı sosyal etki analizlerinin yanı sıra, doğru örneklem ile yapılan tüketici araştırmalarıyla ölçebilir. Ayrıca medyada olumlu ve geniş yansıma elde etmesi ve kurumsal itibar skorları da gösterge olabilir."

> *The evaluation of a Public Relations Plan ranges from management indicators that are always important (web traffic, sales, media impressions, free press, Sov, KPI, SEO improved, participation in networks) but there are 3 indicators that I think Very important to see the result that has to do with the improvement of the brand's knowledge, its engagement (feeling or love towards the brand), the visibility of the brand (scope of the brand) and the action that starts from the involving The consumer in the strategy to their participation, to have some trigger for action which evidences the social impact because it makes the consumer do something in the face of a certain situation that the brand evidences. These actions can go from asking to share a message, actively participate in generating content or mobilizing to do something. All these 3 indicators lead to the best indicator that is corporate reputation.*[30] *– **Ecuador, Educator***

Interestingly, collaboration was also mentioned as a solution for better measurement and assessment of PR's own social impact.

> *It can be measured by evaluations to be made with the cooperation of a respected academic institution instead of the awards given according to the professional and sponsorship value and the perception research to be done every two years.*[31] *– **Türkiye, Educator***

In the quantitative rounds, the questions focused on how PR/Comms should measure its own impact.

In the English dataset, the participants have agreed upon the following (Q20):

- measurable communications objectives and centralizing the evaluation efforts based on the objectives (57% agree, 34% strongly agree, n=211)
- stakeholder goals in alignment with organizational and communication goals and assessing their fulfillment comparatively (55% agree; 30% strongly agree)
- social media analytics (51% agree; 20% strongly agree)

In the Spanish dataset, two options stood out:

[30] Original text: "la evaluación de un plan de relaciones públicas va desde plantear indicadores de gestión que siempre son importantes (tráfico web, ventas , impresiones en medios, free press , SOV, KPI, SEO mejorado, participación en las redes) Pero hay 3 indicadores que creo que muy importantes para ver el resultado que tiene que ver con la mejorar del conocimiento de la marca , su engagement (sentimiento o amor hacia la marca) , la visibilidad de la marca (alcance de la marca) y la acción que parte del involucrar al consumidor en la estrategia a su participación , a tener algún detonante para la acción lo que evidencia el impacto social porque hace que el CONSUMDOR HAGA ALGO frente a una determinada situación que la marca evidencia. estas acciones pueden ir desde pedir que compartan un mensaje, participen activamente en generar contenido o movilizarse a hacer algo. Todos estos 3 indicadores llevan al mejor indicador que es la REPUTACION CORPORATIVA."

[31] Original text: "Mesleki ve sponsorluk değerine göre verilen ödüller yerine saygın bir akademik kurum işbirliğiyle yapılacak değerlendirmeler ve iki yılda bir yapılacak algı araştırmaları ile ölçülebilir."

- with quantitative/qualitative indicators, prepared by consensus of professionals, validated with interest groups, and guided by a profession model with positive social impact (52% agree, 36% strongly agree, n=81)
- with internal and external communication indicators and objectives, clear and measurable (50% agree, 45% strongly agree)

Although not meeting the consensus threshold per category, there were two more options in the Spanish dataset that presented an aggregated agreement:

- with internal/external indicators to the organization, on the perception of interest groups/public (47% agree, 43% strongly agree)
- apply some validated framework (in the SDGs) with a global approach, which transcends the organization (47% agree, 38% strongly agree)

In the Turkish sample, the most widely accepted approach was "objective social impact analyses conducted by independent professional organizations, based on the scientific measurement and evaluation techniques" (47% strongly agree, 47% agree, 5% undecided, n=22). This was supported by previous responses regarding addressing conflicts where the participants put strong emphasis on the ethical approach, respect of the law, and universal values: "in line with the basic principles of the PR profession; with an ethical approach based on openness, honesty and trust" and "in line with human rights, universal values and law" were equally positively evaluated" (58% strongly agree, 42% agree).

PR education: present and future

Delphi studies are valuable in exploring trends within expert groups, working interactively toward consensus. As with many items in this study, PR education too is assumed to be largely uniform around the world, based on a canon of established knowledge and contributing to a global PR workforce working on the basis of shared principles, regarding ethics, relationships and mutual interests, for example.

Historically, this appears to be an accurate description of an American-led field of PR/Comms education, with leading textbooks representing “a singular view of PR as an ever-evolving and positive social force” (Duffy, 2000, p. 294), painting a picture of “PR that serves the public interest and contributes to a harmonious society by constantly adapting to expectations of powerful publics” (Hoffmann, 2019, p. 289).

However, the world is changing, and so is PR/Comm’s role in it. Instead of taking the described orthodox positions for granted, this study sought to understand how PR education is delivered around the world and what it is desired to provide in the future (considering the impact and value respondents identified desirable).

The recurrent themes in academic and professional discourse are also reflected in this study: the different types of education packages (the materials provided to teachers and educators), the career switches, and the discrepancies between teaching and practicing.

> *There is a discrepancy between what is taught and what you learn on the job. Teachings are typically based on ideal scenarios whereas practice involves a lot of effort to gather accurate and timely information, negotiate approaches, multiple iterations to get approval, etc. The deadlines are also quite tight and often unrealistic, which is not something you are taught. –* ***Canada-based, Germany-born Academic***

> *The theory and principles are taught, but what I believe is missing is how to manage stakeholders, managers and clients well enough to achieve communications objectives. Being able to influence the expectations and direction of the leaders is essential for productive and value driven comms. –* ***U.K.-based, Canada-born, Educator***

> *Very poor academic programs, most of us learn by doing. The specialized university are quite behind in terms of curriculum and exposing students to modern practices and real-life case studies and learning opportunities. Most of us start learning by joining agencies or comms. departments of certain companies. If you're lucky, you meet a good professional mentor to teach you the profession. I observe a "deprofessionalization" of the industry in the past few years. –* ***Romania, Practitioner***

> *Over the years, there have been attempts to re-engineer the courses and reflect current development of the communication practice. However, majority of the teaching staff are pure academicians and they are not able to impart practical know how of the profession. Deliveries are overly theory in nature and highly dependent on textbooks.* – ***Malaysia, Practitioner***

These observations were shared by the Latin American and Turkish participants as well.

> *While academic plans are gradually evolving, to access this type of knowledge, the clearest and most fast experience is the professional experience, which brings you closer to reality and the changing conditions of the environment (especially in Argentina) but also in the region. I think that learning conflicts are seen in practice.*[32] – ***Argentina, Practitioner***

> *Many times, in the academic field you do not work on real examples. It is raised from the ideal theory and reality often clashes with the paradigms.*[33] – ***Uruguay, Educator***

> *Too theoretical and little connected to the reality of work.* [34] – ***Argentina, Practitioner***

> *There is a valuable phase that is not always implemented effectively: listening. Do we really listen to our stakeholders? What do they talk about? What are you interested in knowing? Starting from there, the incoherence between what is done and what is said to be done would be avoided.*[35] – ***Ecuador, Practitioner***

[32] Original text: "Si bien los planes académicos van evolucionando de a poco, para acceder en este tipo de conocimiento lo más claro y rápido es la experiencia profesional, la que te acerca a la realidad y a las condiciones cambiantes del entorno (sobre todo en Argentina) pero también en la región. Creo que el aprendizaje de los conflictos de intereses se ven en la práctica."

[33] Original text: "Muchas veces en el ámbito académico no se trabaja sobre ejemplos reales. Se plantea desde la teoría ideal y la realidad muchas veces choca con los paradigmas."

[34] Original text: "Demasiado teóricamente y poco conectada con la realidad del trabajo."

[35] Original text: "Hay una fase valiosa que no siempre se implementa efectivamente: escuchar. ¿Realmente escuchamos a nuestros stakeholders?, ¿de qué quieren ellos que hablemos?, ¿qué les interesa conocer? Partiendo desde ahí se evitarían las incoherencias entre lo que se hace y lo que se dice que se hace."

> *…public relations are predominantly described as a "management function", which prioritizes the interests of more powerful organizational structures.*[36] – ***Türkiye, Academic***

> *Learning and implementing accurate and applicable communication methods may require difficult processes. The point of view of the corporate management's business and communication objectives, priority ranking may not be the ideal method that a communicator has learned and implemented.*[37] – ***Türkiye, Practitioner***

While the career switches and later-career entries may contribute to both the diversity and equity in PR, the perceived discrepancy between teaching and practicing, and the low esteem of PR education is more worrisome. While this discrepancy between what the industry says it wants and what the practitioners (including new entrants) find valuable is not new (Brunner et al., 2018; Fawkes & Tench, 2004), the longevity and resilience of the topic is of concern. Vujnovic and Kruckeberg (2021) discuss the challenges of practice-oriented and practice-serving PR education and the dangers to long-term democratic and deliberative processes.

Asked in rounds 3 and 4 (Q13) to identify the most common ways in which PR is learned, the English participants selected the “on the job” category in overwhelming numbers (79% aggregate responses, n=211) followed by “via specific training” (55%) and only then by “undergraduate degrees” (45%). Certifications and diplomas are hardly present.

For the Spanish sample, the question focused on the method of delivery. Here too, the criticism pointed out earlier remains with more than half the respondents argued that currently PR education is too theoretical.

In the Turkish sample, respondents focused on the delivery mechanism, where 85% (n=22) highlighted a “four-year undergraduate education in PR.”

When discussing how PR/Comms should be taught and learned—not least from the perspective of generating positive social impact and social value—the answers continued the diverse reflections, with sometimes wider, and sometimes narrower, perspectives. This is, in part, determined by the role, experience, and seniority of the individual, as well as their organizational, cultural, and societal context.

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[36] Original text: “Ayrıca, halkla ilişkiler ağırlıkla bir ‘yönetim fonksiyonu’ olarak tarif edilmekte, bu da daha güçlü kurumsal yapıların çıkarlarının öncelemesi ile sonuçlanmaktadır.”

[37] Original text: “Doğru ve uygulanabilir iletişim yöntemlerinin öğrenilmesi ve hayata geçirilmesi zorlu süreçler gerektirebilir. Kurum yönetiminin iş ve iletişim hedeflerine bakış açısı, öncelik sıralaması bir iletişimcinin öğrendiği ve uygulamak istediği ideal yöntem olmayabilir.”

I don't think it's desirable for all PRs to have studied PR or strategic communications at BA level because the profession benefits from people with a wide range of interests including the arts, social sciences and sciences. It should become obligatory to study for a diploma or certificate in PR in order to explicitly address the dilemmas, consider theory and role play responses. Peer groups and mentors can then be set up to see people through the early stages of the profession. – ***U.K., Academic***

PR practitioners are given many different measurement frameworks by which we can measure comms plans against outcomes. Perhaps building social impact into these frameworks would be one way to do this? And maybe then these could be adopted by global and national industry bodies as a new/updated way of measuring PR. Universities and Polytechs could be asked to include this in their classes on PR measurement. – ***New Zealand, Practitioner***

Create time and space for practitioners to think and work together on challenges. From different perspectives, like challenges of other organizations than the ones they are working in themselves. Have a Socratic dialogue about: what do we see, who are important, what could be done, how could we create common ground amongst ourselves for specific options, with others, outside and inside the organization. – ***The Netherlands, Educator***

Simulation games. It is difficult to teach students this from a textbook or by learning a series of items that can be listed in a manual. Students can memorize items but what is the point? If they begin study in 2022, they will enter the workforce in 2025 (if they are lucky) and the first few years will have no roles of responsibility and management. When the question of the social impact of the organizations that manage those items learned in the books will have to be posed, they will be changed. – ***Italy, Academic***

The multidisciplinary approach was also mentioned in both the Spanish and Turkish language samples.

> *They should be taught from multidisciplinary approaches, from sociology, social anthropology, public relations, advertising, artificial intelligence, etc.*[38] *–* ***Ecuador, Academic***

> *Practical, realistic cases. With guests from the business and state world who account for their experience in the workplace. Always trying to encourage students to reflect and be critical in a VUCA world.*[39] *–* ***Uruguay, Educator***

> *You cannot see communication as a tool, but as an integral process. In order for this process to be integral, knowledge about society and the environment must be acquired, and as communication influences them.*[40] *–* ***Costa Rica, Practitioner***

> *First of all, sociology, social anthropology and ethics should be included in the education system. However, these trainings should be given not only on the theoretical basis, but in a discussion and interactive environment through practices and cases. The whole of education should be removed from the theoretical basis and handled with real case examinations through practices and results. I believe that educators do not only consist of academicians and the need to include practitioners in education.*[41] *–* ***Türkiye, Educator***

[38] Original text: “Se deben enseñar desde enfoques multidisciplinares, desde la sociología, antropología social, relaciones públicas, publicidad, inteligencia artificial, etc.”

[39] Original text: “Casos prácticos, realistas. Con invitados del mundo empresarial y estatal que den cuenta de su experiencia en el ámbito laboral. Intentando siempre alentar a los estudiantes a reflexionar y ser críticos en un mundo VUCA.”

[40] Original text “No se puede ver la comunicación como una herramienta, sino como un proceso integral. Para que este proceso pueda ser integral se deben adquirir conocimientos sobre la sociedad y el medio ambiente, y como la comunicación influye en estos.”

[41] Original text: “Öncelikle eğitim sistemi içine sosyoloji, sosyal antropoloji ve etik yoğun şekilde yer almalıdır. Ancak sadece teorik bazda değil uygulamalar, vakalar üzerinden tartışmalı ve etkileşimli bir ortamda bu eğitimler verilmeli. Eğitimin bütünü teorik bazdan çıkartılıp uygulamalar ve sonuçlar üzerinden, gerçek vaka incelemeleri ile ele alınmalı. Eğitimcilerin de sadece akademisyenlerden oluşmamasına, uygulamacıların eğitime dahil edilmesi gereğine inanmaktayım.”

> *Professional purpose, awareness, job definition, stakeholder relations and so on. It should be taught with a holistic perspective.* [42] ***– Türkiye, Academic***

The most prominent response to question 21 in the English sample, "At what level should PR/Comms ideally be taught and learned so that it addresses and achieves the desired social impact and value," was "Courses should be diversified at all levels, from undergraduate to PhD, and the latest trends should be followed" (21% agree, 79% strongly agree, n=211). In the responses, the need to structure education in a future-oriented manner and to update curricula in collaboration with the sector (74% agree) were the most widely accepted approaches.

Findings were narrowed down in the quantitative rounds among English-speaking participants to the following high-consensus results:

- BA-level university PR/Comms degree (45% agree, 43% strongly agree, n=211)
- academic degree in PR as a starting point, then ongoing education and training (41% agree, 43% strongly agree)
- mentoring (57% agree, 28% strongly agree)

Less so for the following:

- do not change how PR/Comms is taught, change what organizations prioritize and value instead (19% agree; 9% strongly agree)
- among Spanish-speaking participants, this was narrowed down in the quantitative rounds to the following high-consensus results:
- diversity of approaches from different organizations (private, public, non-profit) (72% aggregate consensus, n=81)
- experience in collaborative practices, projects linked to real organizations (66% aggregate consensus)

The (comparatively smaller) Turkish sample showed very high levels of consensus across all suggested answers.

Question 22 addressed specific future focal points in the teaching of PR and Comms. The ability to adapt to (almost) constant change was prominent in all data samples.

> *Corporate communication has to change: In a new orientation, it is above all about establishing qualitative relationships with stakeholders and entering into a new quality of dialogue with them.* ***– Germany, Educator***

> *I think exposing students to different complex PR cases, that addresses the issues of value, ethics and social benefit, could help in teaching them these*

[42] Original text: “Mesleki amaç, farkındalık, iş tanımı, paydaş ilişkileri vb. bütüncül bir bakış açısı ile öğretilmelidir.”

aspects. The real-life experience of facing these challenges in practice under the guidance of a mentor, like in a placement, is extremely valuable. – ***U.K., Educator***

PR/Comms that apply manipulative practices create damage for society. Maybe learning focus could be on how to achieve consent, how to co-operate and meet interests of different groups in society. – ***Lithuania, Educator***

Constant update in strategic communication issues, business management, social responsibility, sustainability, etc. Exchange of experiences with associations of professionals with real cases in which students are directly involved.[43] – ***Ecuador, Educator***

Learning must be open to integrate what has accumulated in the profession and to contribute the social (technological, cultural, etc.) novelties of each new generation. Self -knowledge, reflexive practice and communication with tutors and peers must be present to learn.[44] – ***Uruguay, Educator***

The use of gamified strategies and disruptive teaching methodologies. [45] – ***Ecuador, Educator***

The ways of providing social impact, value and benefit require an endless update due to the constantly changing sociological parameters of the target audience. For this reason, a public relations professional has to follow global and local sociological changes throughout his professional life.[46] – ***Türkiye, Practitioner***

[43] Original text: "Actualización constante en temas de comunicación estratégica, gestión empresarial, responsabilidad social, sostenibilidad, etc. Intercambio de experiencias con asociaciones de profesionales. Prácticas con casos reales en que los estudiantes se involucren de forma directa."

[44] Original text: "El aprendizaje debe estar abierto a integrar lo que se ha acumulado en la profesión y a aportar las novedades sociales (tecnológicas, culturales, etc.) de cada nueva generación. El autoconocimiento, la práctica reflexiva y la comunicación con tutores y pares debe estar presente para aprender."

[45] Original text: "Imperaría el uso de estrategias gamificadas y metodologías de enseñanza disruptiva como el uso del modelo pedagógico Reggio Emilia."

[46] Original text: "Sosyal etki, değer ve fayda sağlamanın yolları hedef kitlenin sürekli değişen sosyolojik parametreleri nedeniyle bitmeyen bir güncellemeye ihtiyaç duymaktadır. Bu nedenle bir halkla ilişkiler profesyoneli meslek hayatı boyunca küresel ve lokal sosyolojik değişimleri takip etmek zorundadır."

> *It is important to apply the information taught in schools in the field, to measure and evaluate the impact on society and transfer it to communicators.*[47] ***– Türkiye, Practitioner***

In response to question 22, "Please rank the top 5 specific content elements that you believe PR/Comms teaching should include in the future with the most important first?," 42% of the participants (n=211) ranked the “scientific research methods course” (including data collection, measurement-evaluation, and reporting) first. The following courses were listed in order: social and historical context-oriented courses, ethics, case studies and analysis, field practice, and internship.

When presented with ranking options in the quantitative rounds, participants in the English-speaking sample agreed on "Critical thinking, to include reflective practice; research; theories from different paradigms and disciplines; reasoning and argumentation” as a main priority (55% of participants selected this item as their first option).

“Measurement and evaluation, including data analytics” and “Business management, to include: project management; leadership; strategic thinking; debate techniques; negotiation technique” met the criteria of aggregate consensus with 90% and 87% of the votes, respectively.

The Spanish sample, when presented with set choices in the quantitative rounds, only aggregate consensus was achieved for the following statements:

- rigor in research, planning, measurement, and evaluation (92% aggregate consensus, n=81)
- strategic thinking (92% aggregate consensus)
- critical thinking and analysis, argumentation, and debate (79% aggregate consensus)

The categories with the highest level of consensus in the Turkish-speaking dataset were:

- scientific research methods (including data collection, measurement-evaluation and reporting) (69% aggregate consensus, n=22)
- courses focused on social and historical context (such as sociology, social anthropology) (63% aggregate consensus)
- ethics (63% aggregate consensus)

The primary teaching audience for a somewhat idealized education practice was also explored (Q23). The data reveals an intriguing spread of perspectives from targeted training for expert practitioners, to broad (media and civic) literacy training for the whole of society. Again, responses are context-dependent and conditional from the English-, Spanish-, and Turkish-speaking groups, respectively.

[47] Original text: “Okullarda öğretilen bilgilerin sahada uygulanması, toplum içerisindeki etkinin ölçümlenmesi, değerlendirilmesi ve iletişimcilere aktarılması önemli.”

I would advise all people that study Social Sciences, and all decision makers to become familiar with the basic principles of communication as an embedded social practice, and as a resource for the social life. – ***Romania, Academic***

All of society: PR filters through all strata of society. Used in so many practice areas. Grassroot - media – producers, consumers, corporates, activists, and government policy makers-think tanks. This is also to mitigate the negative perception of PR as propaganda and elevate it as management discipline for societal good. – ***Malaysia-based, Singapore-born, Practitioner***

It should be taught to all undergraduate students, studying things like Public Relations, Corporate Communication, and Marketing. It should also be taught to professionals at all stages of their careers, through industry associations, networking groups/events, conferences and continuing education mechanisms. – ***U.S., Academic***

PR/Comms is a basic skill for everyone. Each human being (no matter how intelligent) is judged by their ability to effectively communicate. Thus, it proves it to be a skill required by all men. In the professional workplace, it should be a basic skill possessed at all levels by all individuals. – ***South Africa, Practitioner***

I think the answer to this question depends a lot on the type of organization. However, people who develop or perform these functions will consolidate many learnings to the extent that they have had a university training or in the organization that facilitates continuous learning. It is important to consider the role of continuous learning throughout people's lives and not only university students.[48] ***– Uruguay, Academic***

The future professional of this career must be oriented towards the versatility of knowledge in communication and the areas that define it: psychology, sociology,

[48] Original text: "Creo que la respuesta en esta pregunta depende mucho del tipo de organización. Sin embargo, las personas que desarrollan o vayan a desempeñar estas funciones consolidarán muchos aprendizajes en la medida que hayan tenido una formación universitaria o en la organización que facilite el aprendizaje continuo. Es importante considerar el papel del aprendizaje continuo a lo largo de la vida de las personas y no solo a los estudiantes universitarios."

anthropology, journalism (hard sciences); Advertising, public relations, marketing, digital communication (soft science).[49] **– *Ecuador, Academic***

First to the students of the Public Relations career and also the entrepreneurs or directors of organizations must know basic aspects of the importance and impact of communication.[50] **– *Costa Rica, Educator***

Not only communication professionals must learn. I think that the management levels of organizations must also be strongly involved in these issues.[51] **– *Uruguay, Practitioner***

The trainings in the field of communication need to deepen more in terms of theoretical background. I think that people who have a good foundation in terms of social science can use the skills and knowledge in the field of public relations more effectively.[52] **– *Türkiye, Academic***

I believe that "miscommunication" is at the root of the chaos in the world today. Societies with individuals who do not understand, listen to and respect each other cannot get out of conflict. Communication should be taught to those who are open to solving this chaos, who take it as their duty and want to take part in creating and protecting the reputation of institutions and societies.[53] **– *Türkiye, Practitioner***

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[49] Original text: “Los futuros profesional de esta carrera deben estar orientados hacia la polivalencia de conocimientos en comunicación y las áreas que la definen: psicología, sociología, antropología, periodismo (ciencias duras); publicidad, relaciones públicas, marketing, comunicación digital (ciencias blandas).”

[50] Original text: “Primeramente a las personas estudiantes de la carrera de Relaciones Públicas y también los empresarios o directores de organizaciones deben conocer aspectos básicos de la importancia e impacto de la comunicación.”

[51] Original text: “No solo los profesionales de la comunicación deben aprender. Opino que los niveles gerenciales de las organizaciones también deben involucrarse fuertemente en estos temas.”

[52] Original text: “İletişim alanındaki eğitimlerin kuramsal arka plan anlamında daha fazla derinleşmesi gereklidir. Toplum bilim anlamında iyi temele sahip kişilerin halkla ilişkiler alanındaki beceri ve bilgileri daha etkili kullanabileceğini düşünüyorum.”

[53] Original text: “Bugün dünyadaki kaosun temelinde "iletişimsizlik" olduğuna inanıyorum. Birbirini anlamayan, dinlemeyen, saygı duymayan bireylerin olduğu toplumlar çatışmadan çıkamazlar. İşte bu kaosu çözmeye açık

In the last question that asked participants to indicate to whom PR/Comms should be taught, "senior managers" and "civil society organizations" were the options that received the highest levels of strongly agree (68%) in the English sample.

The quantitative rounds in the English-speaking sample saw high levels of consensus for the following statements:

- current and future practitioners (38% agree, 60% strongly agree, n=211)
- university students aiming to enter the field (40% agree, 58% strongly agree)
- people engaged in PR/Comms training (30% agree, 60% strongly agree)

Less consensus was found here:

- society in general about persuasive communication (37% agree, 11% strongly agree, n=211)
- high school pupils (36% agree, 12% strongly agree)

In the Spanish-speaking dataset, current and future practitioners are seen as the first group who should benefit from being taught a new form of PR, where 79% of the participants selected it as their first choice (97% as aggregate consensus, n=81).

Two more categories of interest emerged based on the aggregate scores:

- employers, managers, and leaders of organizations (79% aggregate consensus, n=81)
- professionals from areas related to PR/Communication, e.g., marketing/human resources (64% aggregate consensus)

Particularly high consensus rate in the Turkish-speaking sample is found with the following:

- practitioners working in the field (agency or corporate) who have not received PR training (100%, n=22)
- students studying in fields such as business, marketing, public administration, engineering (100%)
- to non-governmental organizations (100%)

Noteworthy, and perhaps due to the nature of the sample, was the focus on current and future practitioners and students. While there is value in educating practitioners as a means to ensure and maintain professionalism, this view is very much in line with the pro-training and professional development arguments promoted by professional associations and educational institutions alike (Global Alliance being one such example). However, this approach, to further teach communicators how to communicate, does not seem to address the wider misconceptions and misunderstandings of PR/Comms both as a profession and as a function. On the contrary, offering communicators communications training is shown to frustrate practitioners and hinder both their work and their perceptions of their worth especially when they indicate other areas of development to be desirable and necessary

olan, bunu kendine görev edinen, kurumların ve toplumların itibarının oluşturulmasında ve korunmasında görev almak isteyenlere iletişim öğretilmelidir."

(such as business and financial knowledge, digital literacies). It is only the Latin American participants that seem to see through this point and identify employers and managers of organizations among those who should be taught and possess PR/Comms literacies and knowledge.

Conclusions, recommendations, and outlook

The Future of PR/Comms and Their Social Impact is one of the biggest—and potentially most complex—studies of its kind, engaging a diverse group of academics, practitioners, and educators from around the world. The participants were challenged to reflect on the current and future state of PR/Comms and education. In including information about the country of birth and country of residence, in opting out from the traditional gender reporting questions, in refusing to adopt one definition in particular for PR/Comms, but rather by inviting participants to label the practice themselves based on a series of characteristics and by embracing other language versions, this study is a direct response to more recent calls for research that is both reflected and culturally mindful. This future PR/Comms practice and research speaks to accountability and the willingness to take responsibility for the work completed. It speaks to encouraging future endeavors that address the social identity of PR/Comms to be more than a function trying to establish itself as a strategic partner at the top table of any organization, but rather as an empowering vehicle that has the ability to embrace change and become the driving force of ethical debate involving both organizations, and their stakeholders.

Some commonalities do emerge. In many places around the world, PR/Comms are seen as tributary and bound to organizational objectives, which speaks to a narrow-minded approach to view PR/Comms only as a function aimed at assisting the organization in securing its own benefits and serving its own purpose. This leads to a variety of conflicts both at organizational and personal levels. Faced with the dilemma of balancing stakeholder (potentially conflicting) demands with the potential of conflicting outcomes, respondents often prioritized solutions based on their organizational goals, seeking the win-win or 'best for all' options. In the PR/Comms environment there is seldom a best for all option or even a win-win solution. Instead, practitioners are often left with a situation where they become the foundation for change and sustainability, and at times that might include situations where the organization might not seek a win, but rather seek to be in a space where it is bold enough to address its own shortcomings. The qualitative data provides multiple examples of rationalizing choice including denying completely PR/Comms's ability to influence organizations (because, spoiler, they serve them, not question them) or link their choice to unspoken ethical boundaries. And, while this is how things currently and generally work, there is a lingering desire for something different, and better: for a profession that is recognized and appreciated and has not only impact, but also has a positive legacy manifested in perceived social value. In this case, PR/Comms history and writings portraying it as a prosocial legitimate profession have strong reverberations. In the future, the PR/Comms profession should aspire to activate its own value and impact by leading the way to transparency, sustainability, responsibility, ethics, and development.

While respondents can clearly see a difference between social value and social impact (one is stakeholder dependent and perception based, the other is organizationally led and can be measured), respondents are not always so clear about the social impact let alone the social value of PR/Comms as a practice and profession. And here too, the prosocial approaches are strong. There is often talk about contributing to deliberative processes, to maintaining a

pluralistic society, to contributing to democracy and freedom, yet the tough questions of partisanship and potential conflicts are avoided. In a similar vein, negative impact is mentioned only in passing as a possible outcome. Avoiding the hard questions is something that PR/Comms have been trained to do and so they do it well even when it comes to their own profession. PR2025 (Adi, 2019) showed that PR/comms should in fact be the framework that welcomes the difficult questions as that leads the organization to reflective conversations, which supports the rebuilding of the profession itself, reimagines the role of the practitioners and provides new avenues for academic research.

The recommendations made—embracing transparency and honesty, enhancing processes to empower rather than control and stifle, becoming an advisor and facilitator rather than a servant, focusing on the long-term and utilizing short term outcomes as the stepping stones of PR/Comms practice, listening more, and focusing less on activities and looking busy—they are all known, all not new …yet the key questions here remain: how do we break resistance, how do we turn these projections and desires into reality?

The responses to the desired educational path and the ideal students and apprentices were meant to provide solutions and inspiration for action. Here too, the mantra of specialization and professionalization is narrowing the options presented. In the PR2025 study respondents pointed out the need for learning opportunities outside PR/Comms, while showing the paradox of professional development thinking of offering further communications training to communications people. Yet in this study, the respondents returned to that option. Considering that this study presented PR/Comms practice as *intentional, persuasive, stakeholder-oriented, strategic, organized, and planned with measurable outcomes,* it is understandable that respondents feel that practitioners themselves (current and future) should learn these new ropes. After all, as this study has shown, there is plenty still that communicators can and want to do and that includes improving measurement and evaluation practices and linking them more firmly with research and insight.

While communicators, including those who took part in this study see themselves as supporters of change, PR/Comms as a profession, like many others, has been slow in changing itself. How else would we justify the results of previous studies showing the reluctant uptake of better, more accountable, less vanity-focused measurement practices and insignificant increase in perceived importance of communication departments (see Communication Monitor series)? And how would we justify the continuous reluctance towards PR degrees?

To move forward, this study provides some valuable directions for future practice and research:

- collaboration and long-term, breaking silos (whether industries, countries, languages)
- questioning (goes hand in hand with critical reflection and examination of assumptions and experiences; also pairs with curiosity and research)
- reflective practice (which is linked with questioning and research, and also meant to provide the mental space needed to consider actions, reactions, assumptions, and expectations)
- life-long learning

For the profession, the “wish-list” is also clear and so are its implications. PR/Comms should be:

- stakeholder oriented
- insight-, research-, measurement- and evaluation-based
- long-term focused
- acknowledging persuasion
- action-focused
- responsible
- accountable
- transparent

And if PR/Comms are to be so, the metamodern approach might be the best suited for the time to come, acknowledging complexity but not clinging to control, accepting uncertainty, and still considering all options.

This study is a result of a big collaborative and co-creative effort. The spark came from the PRCA with its seeking, encouraging, and embracing a collaboration between academics and its members. And for those who joined this project, it came with the realization that we were all united both in our praise and in our criticism of PR/Comms.

Disclaimers

This research has been carried out as an international, collaborative initiative, those involved joining it on a volunteer basis. Researchers involved in this study have used their own time and knowledge to contribute to the study, its development and findings. Quadriga University of Applied Sciences has paid for the license of the data gathering platform, Welphi. The PRCA has supported the creation of this current report. No other funds have been received, paid, or exchanged as part of this project.

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Appendix: List of questions in English, Spanish, and Turkish

Q9. From the list below, please select and rank the 3 options that best describe the communication practice in your country of residence with the following characteristics: intentional, persuasive, stakeholder oriented, strategic, organized, and planned with measurable outcomes, commencing with the most appropriate choice first.

Spanish: P9. Ordene las 3 DENOMINACIONES que en su país mejor describen la práctica de comunicación que tiene las siguientes características: intencional, persuasiva, orientada a los stakeholders y públicos, organizada, y planificada con resultados medibles.

Turkish: S9. Amaca yönelik, ikna edici, paydaş odaklı, stratejik, örgütlü, ölçülebilir sonuçlara göre planlanmış iletişim uygulaması ülkenizde genel olarak nasıl adlandırılmaktadır? YALNIZCA ÜÇ SEÇENEĞİ önem sırasına göre sürükleyip bırakarak sıralayınız.

Q10. Based on your experience and observations, for what PURPOSE do organizations CURRENTLY use communication in your country of residence? Please RANK the following choices based on how COMMONLY they reflect the purpose of communication in your country of residence, starting with the most common purpose at the top.

Spanish: P10. Ordene los 3 PROPÓSITOS más frecuentes por los cuáles las organizaciones, de cualquier tipo, en su país utilizan actualmente la práctica de comunicación antes referida (intencional, persuasiva, orientada a los stakeholders y públicos, organizada, y planificada con resultados medibles).

Turkish: S10. Amaca yönelik, ikna edici, paydaş odaklı, stratejik, örgütlü, ölçülebilir sonuçlara göre planlanmış özellikteki iletişim uygulaması, ülkenizdeki kurumlar tarafından hangi niyetlerle kullanılmaktadır? Deneyimlerinize ve gözlemlerinize dayanarak, YALNIZCA ÜÇ SEÇENEĞİ önem sırasına göre sürükleyip bırakarak sıralayınız.

Q11. Communication can be characterized by conflict. Please select 3 most COMMON conflict TYPES that communication practices (intentional, persuasive, stakeholder oriented, strategic, organized, and planned with measurable outcomes) could lead to.

Spanish: P11a. Ordene los 3 TIPOS DE CONFLICTOS a los que podría llevar la práctica de comunicación con esas características (intencional, persuasiva, orientada a los stakeholders y públicos, organizada, y planificada con resultados medibles).

P11b. Ordene las 3 CAUSAS DE POTENCIALES CONFLICTOS más frecuentes en la práctica de comunicación con esas características.

Turkish: S11. Lütfen iletişim uygulamalarının (amaca yönelik, ikna edici, paydaş odaklı, stratejik, örgütlü ve ölçülebilir sonuçlara göre planlanmış) çatışmalı durumlara neden olmasının en yaygın ÜÇ sebebini sıralayınız.

Q12 How do communication practitioners in your country of residence currently address, prioritise and/or deal with multiple and potentially conflicting interests and impacts (e.g., commercial sustainability of a business vs environmental sustainability?)

Spanish: P12. ¿Cómo los profesionales en su país abordan actualmente los intereses e impactos múltiples, potencialmente en conflicto entre si (por ej., sustentabilidad del negocio vs sustentabilidad ambiental)? Indique su nivel de acuerdo o desacuerdo con las siguientes afirmaciones.

Turkish: S12. Ülkenizdeki iletişim uygulayıcıları çoklu ve olası çatışan çıkarları ve bunların etkilerini (örneğin, bir işletmenin ticari sürdürülebilirliği karşısında çevresel sürdürülebilirlik) nasıl önceliklendiriyor ve/veya ele alıyor? Aşağıdaki ifadelere ne ölçüde katıldığınızı belirtiniz.

Q13. Select the 3 most common ways in which communication practice with the characteristics and aspects discussed earlier is currently learned in your country of residence. (The characteristics were: intentional, persuasive, stakeholder oriented, strategic, organized and planned with measurable outcomes; The aspects were: potentially conflicting stakeholder interests vs organizational interests, professional dilemmas and paradoxes).

Spanish: P13. Ordene las 3 modalidades actualmente más frecuentes en su país de enseñar/aprender la práctica de comunicación con esas características (intencional, persuasiva, orientada a los stakeholders y públicos, organizada, y planificada con resultados medibles) y con esos aspectos (intereses potencialmente en conflicto, dilemas profesionales)?

Turkish: S13. Ülkenizde daha önce belirtilen özelliklere ve boyutlara sahip iletişim uygulamaları hangi yolla öğrenilmektedir? Yaygınlığına göre YALNIZCA ÜÇ SEÇENEĞİ sıralayınız.

Q14. From the list below, please select the TOP 3 statements, which in your opinion provide the MOST APPROPRIATE DEFINITION of SOCIAL VALUE. Social value is:

Spanish: P14. Ordene las 3 afirmaciones que considera más adecuadas para definir el CONCEPTO DE VALOR SOCIAL.

Turkish: S14. Aşağıdaki listeden, kişisel görüşünüze göre sosyal değeri tanımlayan ÜÇ İFADEYİ en uygunu başta olacak şekilde sürükleyip bırakarak sıralayınız.

Q15. Please select the TOP 3 statements (drag and drop), which in your opinion provide THE MOST APPROPRIATE DEFINITION of social impact. Please put the one you find most appropriate first. Social impact is:

Spanish: P15. Ordene las 3 afirmaciones que considera más adecuadas para definir el CONCEPTO DE IMPACTO SOCIAL.

Turkish: S15. Aşağıdaki listeden, kişisel görüşünüze göre sosyal etkiyi tanımlayan ÜÇ İFADEYİ en uygunu başta olacak şekilde sürükleyip bırakarak sıralayınız.

Social Value of PR now and in the future (Q16)

Q16 What social value SHOULD PR /Comms provide to society?

Spanish: P16. ¿Cuál debería ser el valor social que las RRPP/Comunicación aporten a futuro la sociedad? Indique su nivel de acuerdo o desacuerdo con las siguientes afirmaciones

Turkish: S16. Halkla İlişkiler/İletişim topluma hangi sosyal değerleri sağlayabilir? Lütfen aşağıdaki ifadelere katılma veya katılmama düzeyinizi belirtiniz.

Social Impact of PR now and in the future (Q17)

Q17 What social impact SHOULD PR/Comms provide to society?

Spanish: P17. ¿Cómo pueden aportar impacto social las RRPP/Comunicación en la sociedad? Indique su nivel de acuerdo o desacuerdo con las siguientes afirmaciones

Turkish: S17. Halkla İlişkiler/İletişim topluma hangi sosyal etkileri sağlayabilir? Lütfen aşağıdaki ifadelere katılma veya katılmama düzeyinizi belirtiniz.

Q18 How should PR/Comms address multiple demands and potentially conflicting INTERESTS and groups?

Spanish: P18. ¿Cómo deberán las RRPP/Comunicación abordar a futuro los múltiples intereses y grupos, potencialmente en conflicto entre sí? Indique su nivel de acuerdo o desacuerdo con las siguientes afirmaciones.

Turkish: S18. Halkla İlişkiler/İletişim, çoklu talepleri ve potansiyel olarak çatışan ÇIKARLARI ve grupları nasıl ele almalıdır? Lütfen aşağıdaki ifadelere katılma düzeyinizi belirtiniz.

Q19 How should PR/Comms address multiple and potentially conflicting IMPACTS (as in long-term outcomes) of their practice?

Spanish: P. 19. ¿Cómo deberán las RRPP/Comunicación abordar a futuro los impactos múltiples, potencialmente en conflicto entre sí? Indique su nivel de acuerdo o desacuerdo con las siguientes afirmaciones.

Turkish: S19. Halkla İlişkiler/İletişim, uygulamalarının çoklu ve potansiyel olarak çatışan ETKİLERİ (uzun vadeli sonuçlar gibi) nasıl ele almalıdır? Lütfen aşağıdaki ifadelere katılma düzeyinizi belirtiniz.

Q20 How should PR/Comms evaluate their own social impact?

Spanish: P20. ¿Cómo deberán las RRPP/Comunicación evaluar a futuro su proprio impacto social? Indique su nivel de acuerdo o desacuerdo con las siguientes afirmaciones.

Turkish: S20. Halkla İlişkiler/İletişim kendi sosyal etkilerini etkisini nasıl değerlendirmelidir? Lütfen aşağıdaki ifadelere katılma düzeyinizi belirtiniz.

Q21 At what level should PR/Comms ideally be taught and learned so that it addresses and achieves the desired social impact and value you described in your previous answers?

Spanish: P21. Ordene las 5 MODALIDADES que se deben priorizar para enseñar las RRPP/comunicación.

Turkish: S21. Halkla İlişkiler/İletişim, istenen sosyal etki, değer ve faydaya ulaşabilmesi için, ideal olarak nasıl/ne şekilde öğretilmelidir? Lütfen aşağıdaki ifadelere katılma veya katılmama düzeyinizi belirtiniz.

Q22. From the list below, please list the top 5 specific content elements that you believe PR/Comms teaching should include in the future with the most important first?

Spanish: P22. Ordene los 5 CONTENIDOS que cree se deberán priorizar en la enseñanza de las RRPP/comunicación.

Turkish: S22. Aşağıdaki listeden, Halkla İlişkiler/İletişim eğitiminin gelecekte içermesi gerektiğine inandığınız BEŞ DERS İÇERİĞİNİ, önem sırasına göre seçiniz.

Q23 From the list below, please indicate your level of agreement with who PR/Comms should be taught to in the format and ideal practice you identified earlier.

Spanish: P23. Seleccione las 3 opciones prioritarias sobre A QUIÉNES ENSEÑAR a futuro las RRPP/Comunicación con el modelo y el ideal de práctica antes discutidos?

Turkish: S23. Aşağıdaki listeden daha önce belirlediğiniz formatta ve ideal uygulamada halkla ilişkiler/iletişimin kimlere öğretilmesi gerektiğine katılma düzeyinizi belirtiniz.

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