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Bârika GÖNCÜ

Advisor: Prof. Dr. Yonca ASLANBAY

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Bârika GÖNCÜ

Tez Danışmanı: Prof. Dr. Yonca Aslanbay ....

Jüri Üyesi : Prof. Dr. Nazan Aksoy ....

Jüri Üyesi : Prof. Dr. Emine Çobanoğlu ....

Jüri Üyesi : Doç. Dr. Yeşim Ulusu ....

Jüri Üyesi : Yrd. Doç. Dr. Erkan Saka ....

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ABBREVIATIONS

ABA- American Bar Association

APR- Accredited in Public Relations

BMD- Bilişim Muhabirleri Derneği (The Association of Informatics Reporters)

CERP- Confédération Européenne de Relations Publiques

CMS- Consultancy Management Standard

EACD- European Association of Communication Directors

EGD- Ekonomi Gazetecileri Derneği (The Association of Economy Reporters)

EUPRERA- European Public Relations Education and Research Association.

ICCO- International Communications Consultancy Organization

IPRA- International Public Relations Association

İDA- İletişim Danışmanlığı Şirketleri Derneği (Communication Consultancies Association of Turkey)

İKSV- İstanbul Kültür ve Sanat Vakfı (Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts)

IPR- Institute for Puıblic Relations

NAS- National Academy of Sciences

PRCA- The Public Relations Consultants' Association

PRCI Turkey- Public Relations Consultancies Inc. of Turkey

PRSA- Public Relations Society of America

RVD- Reklamverenler Derneği (The Association of Advertisers)

TOBB-Türkiye Odalar ve Borsalar Birliği (Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey)

TÜHİD- Türkiye Halkla İlişkiler Derneği (Turkish Public Relations Association)

UAB- Universal Acreditation Board

ABSTRACT

This study is concerned with the professional expertise of public relations consultants - or the communication consultants as it is often referred to- in the public relations and/or communication consultancy agencies in Turkey. The objective of the study is to provide a detailed description of how these consultants construct and present their expertise. The research examines the activities of these consultants within the backdrop of the dramaturgical metaphor developed by Erving Goffman in *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959), through a focus on one of the core features of the communication consultancy work, namely the creation and maintenance of a series of impressions to persuade clients of the quality and value of this service.

While incorporating Goffman's dramaturgy in the detailed examination of external communication consultancy services, the study is also inspired by scholarly work on the similar nature of management consulting services, as well as international and Turkish scholarly literature on the various aspects of services provided by public relations and/or communication consultancy agencies. Furthermore, with the objective of providing a full picture, the study also refers to up-to-date international and Turkish public relations industry literature. By focusing on the public relations/communication consultancy agency as the research site; the study offers a rich description of the the construction and presentation of communication consultancy expertise in the Turkish context, through the accounts of the most prominent and credible consultants of the industry.

The study adopts qualitative methodology in exploring the research question of the study, employing the method of in-depth interviewing. 30 participants of the study are the leading Turkish communication consultants, most of whom are also the founders and the owners of the credible consultancy agencies in Turkey. Responding to the need for more research on the role and contribution of the external communication consulting, the study has revealed that although the intellectual capabilities of the Turkish communication consultants are highly developed, the industry has to enhance its professional capacity by developing diverse and specialized services, by improving its human resources management, and by claiming authority through informed translation of the external world into the realm of communications.

Keywords: public relations, PR consultancy, communication consultancy, Erving Goffman

ÖZET

Bu çalışma, Türkiye'deki halkla ilişkiler ve/ya iletişim danışmanlığı ajanslarının profesyonel uzmanlığı ile ilgilidir. Çalışmanın amacı, bu danışmanların ve danışmanlık ajanslarının, uzmanlıklarını nasıl inşa ettikleri ve nasıl sunduklarına dair detaylı bir fotoğraf sunmaktır. Çalışma iletişim danışmanlarının hizmet inşa ve sunum süreçlerini, Erving Goffman'ın *Günlük Yaşamda Benliğin Sunumu (The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life, 1959*) kitabında sunduğu dramaturji metaforu temelinde incelemekte ve iletişim danışmanlığının en temel özelliklerinden biri olan, danışmanlık hizmetlerinin kalitesinin ve değerinin iletişiminde kullanılan bir dizi izlenime odaklanmaktadır.

Çalışmanın ilham kaynakları arasında, Goffman'ın dramaturji perspektifinin yanı sıra, iletişim danışmanlığı hizmetleri ile benzerlik gösteren yönetim danışmanlığı hizmetleri hakkındaki akademik çalışmalar ve halkla ilişkiler/iletişim danışmanlığı ajansları tarafından sunulan hizmetlerin farklı yönleri ile ilgili halkla ilişkiler alanındaki akademik çalışmalar da bulunmaktadır. Çalışma aynı zamanda, daha kapsamlı bir zemin sunabilmek adına, uluslararası alandaki ve Türkiye'deki halkla ilişkiler sektörünün kaynaklarına da gönderme yapmaktadır. Araştırma alanı olarak halkla ilişkiler/iletişim danışmanlığı ajanslarının seçilmiş olması, Türkiye'de iletişim danışmanlığı hizmetlerinin nasıl inşa edildiği ve sunulduğunun, sektörün önde gelen saygın danışmanlarının deneyimleri kanalıya aktarılmasını sağlamıştır.

Bu çalışmanın araştırma sorusunun cevaplanması doğrultusunda, kalitatif bir metodoloji benimsenmiştir. Bu doğrultuda, Türkiye'nin saygın halkla ilişkiler ajanslarının kurucusu ve sahibi olan 30 iletişim danışmanı ile derinlemesine görüşmeler gerçekleştirilmiştir. Çalışma, iletişim danışmanlığının rolü ve katkısı ile ilgili akademik literatürün geliştirilmesine katkıda bulunmaktadır. Çalışma kapsamında yürütülen araştırma sonucunda, Türkiye'deki iletişim danışmanlarının entelektüel kapasitelerinin son derece gelişkin olduğu; ancak sektörün profesyonel kapasitesinin derinleştirilmesi için farklı uzmanlık hizmetlerinin sunulması, insan kaynakları yönetiminin geliştirilmesi ve dış dünyadaki gelişmelerin yorumlanması kanalıyla iletişim danışmanlığının otoritesinin yükseltilmesi gereği ortaya konulmuştur.

Anahtar kelimeler: halkla ilişkiler, PR ajansı, iletişim danışmanlığı, Erving Goffman

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This research is about the professional expertise of public relations consultants - or the communication consultants as they refer to themselves- in the public relations/communication consultancy agencies in Turkey. The objective is to provide a detailed description of how these consultants build, maintain and present their expertise vis-à-vis their clients, through the construction of consultant roles. Towards this objective, the research will explore the activities of these consultants in terms of the dramaturgical metaphor developed by Erving Goffman in *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959). It is argued that this is an appropriate metaphor for providing a better understanding and analysis of the activities of PR consultants since it will focus on one of the core features of their work- the creation and maintenance of a series of impressions which persuade their clients of the quality and value of their services.

The research also refers to literature on external consultants, concentrating on the nature of the characteristics and presentation of the service experience. In this regard, the use of role theory in marketing in combination with a drama metaphor by Grove and Fisk (1992, 1996); the intangibility, interactivity, heterogeneity and perishability of the service work as explored by various scholars (Berry 1980, 1981, 1995; Levitt 1981; Flipo 1988; Lovelock 1981; Oberoi and Hales 1990; Starbuck 1992; Alvesson 1993, 2001); the application of the theatrical analogy to organizational life (Mangham 1978, 2005) and studies on the development, role and marketing of consultancy services (Schein 1969, 1987; Clark 1995; Clark and Salaman 1996, 1998a, 1998b) are put forth.

With the objective of providing a focus on the public relations consultancy practice, the research is further inspired by scholarly work that specifically refers to various aspects of consultancy services provided by public relations agencies. The sources of this inspiration include, but are not limited to Tonge's (2011) exploration of the different types of consultancies, the work of public relations consultants and the nature of consultancy-client relationships; Wade's (2011) overview of the nature of consultancy public relations; Bourland's (1993) definition of a range of recurring issues in studies on public relations consultancy-client relationships; Lages and Simkin's (2003) examination of the most important trends in the public relations sector and how public relations consultants are dealing with key issues of competition and client relationships; Tench et al.'s (2002) study on status, skills and expertise of free-lance public relations practitioners; Schultz and Ervolder's (1998) description of public relations agencies as contrasted to management consultancies; Ewing and De Bussy's (2000) exploratory study of leading Australian public companies' perceptions of public relations agency business; White's (2002) discussion of fee setting practices in public relations consultancies in the UK, and Gabbot and Hogg's (1996) study on types of information used by corporate purchasers when buying public relations services.

While there are a variety of sites/settings in which the expertise of public relations consultants is involved, such as the corporate communications departments of the private sector organizations, public bodies and non-governmental organizations, this research focuses on the senior consultants working in the public relations/communication consultancy agencies in Turkey. The focus on the public relations/communication consultancy agency as the research site is meaningful due to several factors, including the increase in the number of private and public sector organizations that are employing public relations agencies and the growing number of investments (both local and international) in the public relations agency business in Turkey, beginning especially with the 1990s (Bıçakçı and Hürmeriç 2013).

Furthermore, in spite of the increased activity as such, there are significant problems regarding the future sustainability of the communication consultancy industry in Turkey (İlhan 2013). According to the results of the Industry Reputations research conducted by Era Research & Consultancy in 2011, the public relations industry ranks 14th among the 17 industries listed (İDA 2013). The market for public relations consultancy is highly fragmented, with lack of sound criteria to define the scope of services, further burdened with "maximum client expectancy in return for the minimum fee" (İlhan 2013). In addition for such concerns of business sustainability, problems regarding human resources, professionalism, expertise and relationships with clients prevail.

Yet another matter of importance is the lack of interest of the public relations scholars for the examination of public relations practitioners and consultants working in public relations agencies. As noted by Pieczka (2008), public relations research has mostly neglected the public relations consultant and the public relations consultancy as a distinct and meaningful focus, assuming, to a large extent that examination of the practice within the organizational site will provide explanations for the public relations agency side as well. With some exceptions (Bourland 1993; Hogg & Doolan 1999; Lages & Simkin 2003; van Ruler 2005; Bruning & Ledingham 1999, 2002; Yeomans 2012; Daymon & Hodges 2009); literature on public relations expertise and professionalism focus on the in-house consultants and their professional identity (Jeffrey and Brunton 2012), expertise (Bartlett et al 2007), practitioner culture (Hodges 2006), power (Merkelsen 2011); roles and relationships (Broom and Smith, 1979; Broom, 1982; Broom and Dozier, 1986; Dozier 1992; Dozier and Broom, 1995) with/within the organizations they work for.

Although there is a considerable international public relations literature examining the practice in several different national settings, the majority of such studies rely on USA based public relations models, roles and functions as theoretical foundations (Sriramesh and Verčič

2001) and examinations of these practices from the viewpoint of PR agency consultants or within PR agency settings is also rare.

In the Turkish context, the picture is more or less the same. The relatively low number of scholarly articles on public relations or communication consultancy practice focus on the perceptions of consultants on various issues, functions of public relations, and public relations agency human resources. This research also provides an overview of this literature, including, among others; Susar's (2003) and Uztuğ et al.'s (2005) studies on the services of Turkish public relations agencies; Tunçel's (2003) article in which the author assesses the preference of public relations agencies to call themselves as "communication consultancies"; Görpe's (2005) examination of the perceptions of public relations professionals on corporate social responsibility; Tandaçgüneş' (2005) study on how Turkish public relations agencies operate; Canpolat's (2006) article about how public relations agencies in Turkey are positioned towards crises and crisis management; Boran's (2006) inquiry about the expectations of public relations agency presidents from the graduates of communication faculties; Yılmaz and Karademirlidağ's (2007) study on the attitudes of Turkish public relations agencies about online reputation management; Aydınalp's (2012) examination of the websites of Turkish public relations agencies; and Uzunoğlu and Onat's (2012) research on how Turkish public relations firms adapted to the 2008 economic crisis.

This study also refers to the Turkish public relations industry research, in spite of the fact that it is insufficient and not up to date. The findings of the *Research on Perception of Communication Consultancy Services* (2006) sponsored jointly by TUHID and IDA; the *Research on Perception of Communication Consultancy Services* (2009), again with the joint sponsorship of TÜHİD and İDA; and the *Research on Perception of Communication Consultancy Services (2014)* with the additional sponsorship of Association of Corporate Communicators-Turkey (KİD) are detailed.

1.1. POSITIONING THE STUDY WITHIN THE PR RESEARCH AGENDA

In her exploration of the abstracts of articles published by the *Public Relations Review* between 1975 and 1984, Ferguson (1984) underlined the lack of sufficient productive theory development in public relations. According to Ferguson's content analysis of 171 abstracts, public relations research focused on three major areas: Social responsibility and ethics, social issues and issues management, and public relationships. Among these, Ferguson argued, the area of social relationships offered the best opportunity for theory development, because studying relationships between organizations and their publics would provide a better understanding about the significance of these relationships, as well as legitimizing the field (25-26). Ferguson, in the same paper she presented to the Public Relations Division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, also argued for a paradigm focus in the field.

Pasadeos and Renfro (1992) conducted a 15-year citation study (1975-1989) of all public relations journals of the period. An interesting outcome of their study was that an increasing number of public relations authors were citing each other, leading them to the conclusion that the field was developing a relevant literature of its own (167). A follow-up citation analysis by Pasadeos, Renfro, and Hanily (1999) of the journals *Public Relations Review, Public Relations Research Annual*, *Journal of Public Relations Research* and *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, between the years of 1990 and 1995, led the authors to conclude that public relations needed more topical diversity and less introspective focus (48).

McElreath et al. (1994) examined the Public Relations Society of America Body of Knowledge literature/reading lists of 1988, 1990 and 1993, along with other literature, in order to determine whether the top 18 research questions for the 1990s (formulated as a result of a series of Delphi surveys conducted by McElreath in 1980 and 1989) have been answered or not. They concluded that public relations needed more subjective theorizing rather that theorizing based on logical positivism, and underlined the need for more benchmarking between public relations professionals. They also suggested that organizations needed to make more use of systems-based contingency, situational, and symbolic interactionist theories to use their in-house communication departments and PR agencies more effectively, also emphasizing the significance of the mindset of the organizational leadership in determining the content and scope of public relations activities. Calling for expanded research focusing on relationships with stakeholders, increased dialogue between educators and practitioners, and more emphasis on the role of public relations in conflict resolution, they also advised that more research focused on ethical issues related to the practice of public relations (89-90).

Extending Ferguson's study, Sallot et al. (2003) examined 748 abstracts or articles published in *Public Relations Review, Journal of Public Relations Research* and *Public Relations Research Annual* since their foundations through the year 2000. Their study found that the percentage of published articles that contributed to theory building had increased from Ferguson's finding of 4 % to 20 % (50). Yet, the results of the study did not put forth a dominant research paradigm, although theorizing focused on organization-public relationships was comparatively higher (51).

Zoch et al. (2007) studied public relations articles published in *Public Relations Review*, *Journal of Public Relations Research*, *Journalism & Mass Communications Quarterly*, *Journal of Communicatio*n, *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, *Management Communication Quarterly* and *Journal of Communication Management,* between 2001 and 2005. The objective of their study was to determine the theories being used, and the topics of focus in public relations scholarship. The authors analyzed 325 public relations related scholarly articles ranging from case studies to literature reviews and found that 15 % of the articles were related to the practical aspects of public relations, 63 % focused on public relations as a profession and the remaining 22 % belonged to the theory-oriented category (661).

Zoch et al.'s findings revealed that while the new communication technologies was the most researched category within the practical aspects category, the profession of public relations and international public relations were the most frequent topics in the introspective category, and relationships with publics was the main focus of the theory-oriented category (663). The authors, pointing out to the number of different topics and theories used, conclude that a dominant research paradigm does not exist:

> Perhaps the greatest surprise in the categorization of the research articles analyzed in this study is the sheer number of different topics within all categories during the five-year time period. We found we have too many topics to say we have a core of knowledge and theory. In fact there were more than 80 different theories used within the three constructs of introspective, practice and theory-oriented. Although we may be starting to coalesce around relationship management as a focus, Ferguson had suggested this as a potential paradigm in 1984, and we have still not fully developed the paradigm more than 20 years later. (664)

Wehmeier (2009) conducted a Delphi study to find out what international public relations experts, scholars and practitioners thought about the relationship between theory and practice, as well as the impact of different disciplines, academic concepts, and theories on public relations. The results showed that participants wanted public relations research to be more fundamental, believed that all disciplines would gain importance for public relations research in the future – the leading discipline being communication-, thought issues management and strategic management would be very important in the future, and depicted stakeholder theory as the most relevant theory for the future of the practice (270-78).

Sisco et al. (2011) conducted a content analysis of public relations theory in communication journals from 2001 to 2005. The authors used the same classifications as Ferguson (1983) and Sallot et el. (2003), but increased the number of academic journals examined, and analyzed whole articles rather than abstracts and titles. The study found that only 22 % of the 325 articles were theory-oriented, and the most researched topics were "public relationships", "crisis response", "organizational communication", and "women's studies/gender/diversity theories". "Contingency theory", the most frequently mentioned major theory, was followed by "role theory" (147-8).

Sisco et al.'s study reveals that relatively few of the articles examined focused on building or proposing theoretical approaches, while the majority of articles focused on various aspects of the public relations profession. Commenting on the relatively low level of theory building, the authors say:

> Some scholars may argue that this is only a plateau, that the field, while still young, is poised for a growth spurt toward maturity and that it is simply suffering the growing pains typical of any emerging discipline. Others might see these results as evidence that there actually is no public relations body of knowledge as such—that public relations should be thought of as simply an overarching term that encompasses various subcategories (e.g., crisis management, media relations or numerous others) which could be theoretically based disciplines in themselves. (150)

Kim et al.'s (2014) semantic network analysis of keywords in titles of studies published in *Public Relations Review* and the *Journal of Public Relations Research* from 1975 to 2011 aimed to identify topics and trends in the development of public relations scholarship. According to the results of Kim et al.'s study, research about public relations roles was dominant in the 1970s and 80s in *Public Relations Review* and in the 90's in *Journal of Public Relations Research*. Topics on public relations education and ethics were evident in the 1990s in *Public Relations Review*, and research on crisis strategy and management was more frequent in the 1990s in Public Relations Review and 2000s in *Journal of Public Relations Research.* From 1970s through the 200s, relationship research was strong in *Public Relations Review*, becoming a focus for *Journal of Public Relations Research* in the 2000s (118).

> PR, communication, public, practitioner, and corporation were the most commonly emphasized keywords in public relations scholarship from 1975 to 2011. This suggests emphasis on corporate public relations, practitioners, and communication with publics during this time period, perhaps to the neglect of public relations in agency, nonprofit or activist settings. Linking this finding with Grunig and Hunt's (1984) definition of public relations as "management of communication between an organization and its publics" (6), it can be seen that public relations scholarship has embraced their definition, although "organization" might be skewed to a corporation. The most salient association was "PR" and "practitioners" across time periods. This suggests that PR scholars have persistently tried to link scholarship and practice. (118)

Regarding the studies on the paradigms of public relations research, the division between functionalist and non-functionalist approaches is the most common analysis. Botan and Taylor (2004) propose the two categories of functional and co-creational research traditions, relating functional research to business-oriented topics such as marketing, advertising and media relations, and contending that in this approach, public relations is positioned as an instrument to accomplish organizational objectives. In the co-creational tradition, on the other hand, the focus is on the relationships between organizations and publics, positioning public relations as an effort to advance the understanding between the two (651-52).

Toth (2013) identifies three main perspectives in public relations research: rhetorical perspectives, critical perspectives, and the systems perspective. The rhetorical perspective focuses on the symbolic strategies and their effect over the relations between organizations and publics, concentrating mostly on issues management and corporate advocacy (4-5). The critical perspective also focuses on organizational symbolic action, but the concentration is on questioning the power of the organizations. In the systems perspective, the focus is on recognition and analysis of organization's external environment in order to maintain equilibrium (7-8). In a retrospective manner, Toth (2010) states that her three-paradigm view was simplistic and contends that there are many more paradigms in the field of public relations and identifies six paradigms: crisis communication, critical theory, feminist theory, rhetorical theory, strategic management theory, and tactical management theories.

Tracing the historical roots of public relations research, Edwards and Hodges (2011) underline that research in the field has dominantly been driven by an organizational perspective, and has treated the profession of public relations as an organizational function. Emphasizing the value of such functional research in increasing the effectiveness of practice, the authors also note its shortcomings:

> Functional research is valuable in addressing how public relations practitioners can carry out their roles more effectively from the perspective of the organization. Indeed, we cannot understand public relations as a practice without knowing what that practice consists of in broad terms. However, this singular focus on public relations in organizations has tended to exclude the social world in which those organizations operate. (2)

Edwards and Hodges argue that, as a result of the increase in the number of scholarly approaches that build on cultural and sociological theories, there has been a "turn" in public relations theory that has shifted the focus from a normative understanding toward the socially constructed nature of the practice; leading to studies about the relationship between public relations and society, the potential of public relations for encouraging societal change, symbols and discourses produced by public relations, and the post-colonial nature of normative public relations practices (3-4).

In her overview of the paradigmatic assumptions of the public relations field, Edwards (2011) illustrates the several differences between functional and non-functional approaches, as well as the connections between them, suggesting an understanding of PR as a “flow in a range of different contexts simultaneously” (23): “I define PR as the flow of purposive communication produced on behalf of individuals, formally constituted groups and informally constituted groups, through their continuous trans-actions with other social entities” (21). Edwards argues that the notion of “flow” reflects the dynamic nature of public relations and that including individuals and informally constituted groups overcomes the narrow organizational context and the purposive aspect differentiates the practice from incidental communication (22).

L’Etang’s (2013) analysis of the underlying values, worldviews and assumptions of various different definitions of public relations, and the debates around them demonstrates how the once dominant paradigm of “professional management” has been and continues to be challenged. L’Etang assesses that the dominant theme in public relations education during the 1980s was the positioning of public relations as a management function, seeking mutually beneficial relations between organizations and their publics. This positioning, L’Etang argues, has produced the normative model of “two-way symmetrical communication”, and has led to the adoption of General Systems Theory as a framework for the practice of public relations as a management function, enabling the organization to receive feedback and harmonize its functions in response to that feedback (804-5):

> In other words, public relations practitioners acted as ‘boundary spanners’ on the cusp of the organization and facilitated ‘environmental scanning’ and feedback processes. This positioning wrote out the possibility of advocacy and activism, since the PR practice took a powerful position but was simultaneously responsible for mediating and balancing organizational and stakeholder interests. Ideally the organization would achieve balance, or ‘equilibrium’ through regulatory processes of ‘homeostasis’ in

relation to its environment. It was suggested that the organizations that did not do this would atrophy and die. (805)

Themes such as ‘manager versus technician role of practitioners’, ‘relations between gender and practitioner roles’, ‘strategic role of public relations’, ‘corporate social responsibility’, and ‘reputation’, that reflected this normative model, dominated the research agenda of the 1980s and the 1990s.

Dühring (2015), in her analysis of the disciplinary development of the field of public relations, draws attention to the contradiction between the growth of public relations as a research, education and professional arena and the lack of social prestige is has . Dühring relates this lack of prestige to the negative connotations that the term “public relations” has, due to its past mainly connected with propaganda and spin, and draws attention to the growing preference among practitioners for terms such as “corporate communications”, “strategic communication”, or “communication management” (10).

Dühring argues that public relations is breaking up into several sub-disciplinary fields, each with its own research focus and proposes to describe these as “schools of thought”, rather than paradigms. The three distinct schools of thought described by Dühring are, “Public Relations”, “Strategic Communication”, and “Corporate Communications”. Turning more and more toward the traditions of humanities and critical theory, the research in public relations school is predicted to focus on examining the consequences of the public relations practice within society. Strategic communications, dominantly affiliated to management studies, is to focus on how corporate communications is to be managed. The research focus of corporate communications, on the other hand, will be on the tactical and practical skills of mainly middle-management communication professionals (12-3). Dühring also argues that public relations, a relatively young academic discipline, has started fragmenting before establishing itself as a mature and independent discipline. Furthermore, the lack of an academic infrastructure and resources prevents the establishment of strong schools of thought, resulting in informal scholarly networks trying to build up publication outlets and discussion forums (16).

> Why not take the emerging, strengthening schools of thought as a chance to re-establish new, more closely defined fields of research? If nearly a century of attempts to capture the essence of PR has led to no satisfying outcomes, maybe it is time to embrace its fragmented status and invest in building up an academic infrastructure for more narrowly defined subfields. (18)

Within the development and evolution of public relations research briefly summarized above, this study responds to the call for topical diversity (Pasadeos and Renfro 1992), as well as to the need for increased use of other theories for the examination of public relations issues (McElreath et al. 1994). This study emphasizes the socially constructed nature of the practice (Edwards and Hodges 2011), offering a contribution to the understanding of professional public relations roles and professional public relations consultancy expertise, through the analysis of the experiences of the practitioners themselves (Von Platen 2016). Last but not the least, this study also responds to the need for more research on the role and the contribution of the external communication consulting, oftentimes neglected and disregarded by public relations scholarship.

1.2. AIMS OF THE RESEARCH AND THE RESEARCH QUESTION

The aim of this research is to explore the role and construction of public relations expertise, with a focus on public relations agency and public relations agency consultants. The emphasis of the research, therefore, is from the public relations agency perspective.

The major question this research aims to answer is:

How is communication consultancy expertise in Turkey constructed and presented by the consultants?

Public relations agency consultants form complex relationships with their clients. Differing from in-house consultants who have a single “client” (i.e. the organization they work for), they are involved with a number of different client types (private, public, NGO, celebrity, individual leader, etc.) across a wide spectrum of different industries and sectors. This research is interested in these complex and dynamic relationships in the local Turkish context.

1.3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Erving Goffman (1922-1982), has developed the ideas of several classical sociological theorists and has applied them to the social interaction of everyday life. In *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959), Goffman develops the drama metaphor –or the theatrical performance-, “comparing face-to-face interaction to parts played by actors in front of audiences” (Johansson 276). In this endeavor, he uses various concepts including “performance”, “performance teams”, “roles” “front stage”, “back stage”, “setting” , and “impression management” (Goffman 1959).

As suggested by Gonos (1997), attempting to deal with how actual everyday events unfold, Goffman’s intention is to uncover certain structures (or frames) that invisibly govern these events. As such, the “world” in which public relations consultants interact with their clients provides us with certain structures or “frames” through which we can build a better understanding of this interaction.

Although Goffman’s starting point is the individual (or the self), his concern is how this self is presented in the social context. In this sense, the presentation of self is a joint activity in which others engage (Waksler 1989). Throughout his work, Goffman refers to “teams, “performance teams” and “audiences”, exploring impressions consciously intended or unconsciously “given off”. Consequently, teams may become confused by the gap between the two or the audiences may question the team’s performance (Fawkes 2014).

This study argues that Goffman’s conceptualization of the social encounter as the performance of roles (1959) can lead to a better understanding of the relationships between PR consultants and their clients. In line with Goffman’s thinking, interactions between the PR consultants and their clients can be seen as a performance where the roles of individuals are guided and directed by certain cues. Among these, the behavior expected from the PR consultants, or the behavior they perceive to be expected of them is significant for the purposes of this research. As the ‘official’ text-book descriptions of the roles of public relations consultants are not always in line with their day to day experience (Fawkes 2014), the attempt of this study to understand and describe the impressions public relations consultants create, communicate and manage in the “front” and “back” regions (Goffman 1956) provides insights regarding the creation of the public relations expertise. Goffman’s (1959) observations on teamwork and how group identities are created enables further description of the conceptualization of public relations consultancy expertise in Turkey.

According to Goffman (1959), individuals performing roles have an obligation to maintain “face”. Applied to the interaction between the PR consultants and their stakeholders, due to mutuality, both the consultants and their clients define various situations during this interaction, assigning a set of expectations for each situation and making claims. If in certain cases these claims prove unsuitable for the respective situation, then there might be loss of face. This study also explores the maintenance of face by the communication consultants through specific industry scripts.

1.4. THE RESEARCH SITE

Although the roots of a more or less systematic and programmed public relations efforts in Turkey date back to 1930s, it was only in 1972 that the Turkish Public Relations Association (TÜHİD) was founded and only in 1974 that the first Turkish public relations agency (A&B) was established by Alaeddin Asna, one of the pioneers of the profession in Turkey (Bıçakçı 2013). Betûl Mardin, another pioneer, upon an invitation from the major corporate sponsor of the International Istanbul Arts Festival to promote the event, stepped into the public relations scene as a professional consultant in the same period (Bıçakçı and Hürmeriç 2012).

The neo-liberal policies and the massive privatizations of the 1990s, resulting in local companies as well as the Turkish operations of international companies to seek public relations expertise gave rise to the foundation of a number of public relations agencies operating mainly on a business model based on event management and marketing communications, generating income from "markups" rather than consultancy fees (İlhan 2013).

The industry was introduced to the concept of "strategic communication" through the joint efforts of Ali Saydam and Salim Kadıbeşegil during the second half of 1990s, laying the foundations of today's prominent second generation public relations agencies, the majority of which were also the founding members of the industry association İDA in 2004. The dominant business model which emerged was based on the conceptual framework of corporate communication and the income generation shifted to consultancy fees.

1990s also saw the first signs of the internationalization of the industry. In 1992, Global Tanıtım, owned by Ceyda Aydede, became an affiliate of Fleishman-Hillard, a leading international PR network (Özden and Saran 2004). The same year, Betûl Mardin was elected to the International Public Relations Association (IPRA) Board of Directors, becoming the first Turkish President of IPRA, followed by the presidencies of Ceyda Aydede in 2013 and

Zehra Güngör in 2014 (Bıçakçı and Hürmeriç 2012). Today, almost all international consultancy networks have Turkish affiliates and some of them have direct investments in the Turkish market.

The new business model of the late 1990s was characterized by public relations agency founders presenting themselves as “communication consultants” and acquiring clients from a wide range of sectors. Yet, due to educational and experiential limitations of the agency teams dedicated to these clients, the consultancy service dominantly became media relations centric. The economic crises of 2001, followed by a rapid economic growth that lasted until 2008 impacted the general composition and the directions of the public relations consultancy sector.

Today, the Turkish public relations consultancy sector comprises of agencies operating on the basis of roughly three major business models: marketing communication oriented agencies providing event management and below-the-line services, communication consultancy oriented agencies and agencies focusing on media relations services (İlhan 2013). Currently, the industry association İDA has 28 member agencies that employ more than 600 public relations practitioners and that provide public relations consultancy services to nearly 500 clients (www.ida.org.tr). The national public relations association TÜHİD, on the other hand, has 174 individual practitioner members evenly distributed to practitioners working in agencies and in-house corporate communication departments (www.tuhid.org). It is estimated that the Turkish public relations industry has an annual growth rate of 10 % and as of the end of 2012 the total revenue generated by the industry is roughly 150 million US dollars (www.ida.org.tr).

A major problem of the industry, as expressed by leading agency consultants is the hybrid agency business model. Although the consultancy service is presented and labeled as “communication consulting”, the actual service is dominated by media relations. Rapid entrance of freelance consultants of journalism origin into the sector and the presentation of media relations services as a core asset by public relations agencies seem to overlap with the tendency of clients towards lower fees; reducing public relations services to a “media relations commodity” (İlhan 2013), directing the agency human capital to the client in-house departments and leaving no space for thought leadership for consultants who have to struggle to keep alive.

Other problems are listed as lack of organizational depth and insufficient institutionalization of public relations agencies, the reliance on the charisma of the agency founder, drastic drop in consultancy fees, possible domination by big international communication networks, insufficiency of graduates from public relations departments and the unequal distribution of power between the clients and agencies (Şenkal 2013).

As summarized, the research site contains a series of questions. How do public relations agencies define themselves and how are they defined by their clients? Is the presentation of the agency as a “communication consultancy” a mystification? Can “communication consultancy” agencies present and market differentiated services? What could be a possible road map towards a new business model? Could specialization in niche areas provide new opportunities? This study has undertaken the effort of understanding and describing the current construction, presentation and the management of consultancy expertise by public relations consultants in Turkey, with the purpose of shedding light on such questions and offering hints to overcome the current impasse.

1.5. SIGNIFICANCE AND CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

The exploration of the means through which professional consultant identity in public relations agencies in Turkey is produced is significant in the sense that it is the first systematic study in Turkey to provide a new understanding of the public relations agency consultants and their practice from a dramaturgical perspective.

The sociological research in public relations literature, both at the international and local level, is quite thin and the existing body of knowledge is dominated by an organizational perspective, focusing on the public relations practices within the organizational domain. The examination of the "Annotated Bibliography of Recent and Significant Sociological Research of Import to Public Relations Practitioners" (IPR 2003) reveals that the articles published between the beginning of the 1990s till the compilation of the bibliography focus on public relations as a function of community relations; explore how corporate public relations affects and is affected by a number of areas, to include ethics, the environment, and social responsibility; examine crisis and risk communication in general and within specific risk areas; explore environmental public relations and "green public relations"; cover health communication topics; examine international public relations and the practice of public relations in various countries and emphasize marketing and consumer communications.

Although there are recent developments towards the use of social theory and sociological perspectives in international public relations literature, a particular focus on the consultants in public relations agencies still remains lacking. *Public Relations and Social Theory*, edited by Øyvind Ihlen et al. (2009) is a comprehensive example of such developments. The book includes social theorists such as Ulrich Beck, Peter L. Berger, Michel Foucault and Erving Goffman among others and presents the key concepts of the theorists, along with a discussion of how the insights of these concepts can be applied to public relations theory. The theoretical directions presented by the authors of different chapters offer alternative approaches to public relations history, description of society, models of public relations within the organizational context and power relations between the organization and its publics.

In the Turkish context, public relations consultants in public relations agencies have come into the scholarship radar in a very limited scale and studies have either focused on the perceptions of consultants on various issues and functions of public relations or public relations agency human resources. Şenkal's (2013) exploration of how public relations in Turkey was impacted by its roots in the public sector including related perspectives of two senior practitioners; Boran's (2006) inquiry about the expectations of public relations agency presidents from the graduates of communication faculties; Canpolat's (2006) study of the public relations agency web sites to understand their attitudes on professional ethics and Görpe's (2005) examination of the perceptions of public relations practitioners on corporate social responsibility are some examples.

This study offers a rich and detailed picture of the construction of external communication consultancy expertise in Turkey through the accounts of the most prominent and credible consultants of the industry. The reflections of these consultants has the potential to offer insight and perspective for improved and more fruitful interaction between the external consultants and the businesses they serve. Furthermore, this study has detailed and documented the reflections of the leading external communication consultants in Turkey, therefore offering inspiration for further studies on the phenomenon of public relations consultancy services in a local context. Last, but not the least, the study is a first in Turkey in offering a comprehensive source for further studies focusing on the public relations consultancy practice.

1.6. THE STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

Within this conceptual framework summarized above, the study is structured as follows:

Chapter 2:

This chapter explores the concept of expertise. In order to contextualize the concept, a brief summary of literature on professions, professionalism and professionalization is presented; and it is demonstrated that this context provides various different interpretations of expertise. Within this context; the concept of expertise is explored, with reference to major scholarly approaches and discussions, including the different conceptions of the nature of expert knowledge. The discussion on the different types of expert knowledge is examined to enhance the understanding of the type of knowledge claimed by public relations experts or of the kind of knowledge that describes public relations professional expertise. The challenges directed to the legitimacy of public relations expertise are also included, with reference to the overall discussion on the legitimacy and trustworthiness of experts.

The discussion is then once more connected to professional work, through the examination of different research streams following the emergence of new expert occupations as a result of developments in knowledge and technology, positioning public relations as one of these occupations. The chapter concludes with a detailed review of the evolution of scholarly work on management consulting, with an emphasis on major theoretical approaches and main frameworks of analysis, with the objective of providing a basis for the discussion of external public relations consultancy.

Chapter 3:

This chapter is dedicated to the profession of public relations and the nature of public relations expertise. To start with, the continuing major debate in public relations scholarship, education and practice, namely the debate whether public relations is an established profession or an occupation striving for legitimacy through a professionalization project, is discussed. All through this discussion, different scholarly approaches are presented in connection with the contextual framework provided in Chapter 2. Later on in the chapter, different approaches regarding the identity of public relations practitioners are exhibited, with a special focus on roles research in public relations literature. Following this background, the chapter then examines the professionalization of public relations in Turkey, referring to local scholarly literature and to industry initiatives.

The chapter goes on with a detailed examination of the global and the local (Turkish) scholarly literature on the nature of public relations consultancy services, and the public relations practitioners as external consultants. In the concluding section of this chapter, the challenges confronting the public relations practice are outlined, with reference to up-to-date scholarly and industry research.

Chapter 4:

Chapter 4 is the methodology. chapter. The first part of the chapter describes the dramaturgical perspective, which is the theoretical approach; including a detailed discussion and exposition of the life and works of Erving Goffman, and his dramaturgy, as this constitutes the theoretical backbone of the analysis. Critics of Goffman's dramaturgical perspective and the scholarly applications of this perspective are also included. The second part of the chapter details the empirical approach in the backdrop of qualitative methodology, providing a detailed description of how this methodology was applied for the exploration of the research question.

This chapter also explains the subjective position of the researcher. Due to the long time solid experience of the researcher in the public relations consultancy sector and the public relations agency setting in Turkey, the insights and the point of view of the researcher are naturally embedded in the research site. In this sense, the subjectivity of the researcher enhances the credibility of the study. In this regard, the chapter details the background, and the experience of the researcher.

Chapter 5:

In this chapter, empirical findings of the study are detailed with reference to Goffman's dramaturgical perspective. The chapter starts with factual information regarding the actors of the analysis, namely the external public relations consultants in Turkey. As the chapter progresses, the various roles attributed to communication consultants, and the roles they attribute to themselves are discussed at length, demonstrating how these consultants describe the components of their expertise in their expert advisor roles. Further on, the backstage setting of external communication consultancy performance in Turkey is examined, this backstage being conceptualized as the activities of the communication consultants in the absence of their clients, where secrets, routines and rituals are shared.

The chapter goes on to examine the front stage of external public relations consulting in Turkey. In this section, the scripts used by external communication consultants in identifying and describing themselves as well as their industry; and the actual presentation of external communication consultancy work is analyzed. The performance of the external communication consultancy industry as a team is also evaluated through analysis of participant accounts. The chapter concludes with the major findings that emerge out of this detailed analysis.

Chapter 6:

The concluding chapter of the study puts forth how the participants defined their consultancy expertise, and argues that this definition is situated within the functionalist managerial paradigm. The chapter also discusses the major components of communication consultancy expertise in Turkey in accordance with participant accounts, along with the related specific challenges of communication consulting in the Turkish context, further providing arguments for overcoming these challenges. Finally, the chapter discusses the limitations of this study and the potentials for future research.

CHAPTER 2

EXPERTISE

2.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter undertakes a literature review of the concepts of professionalization and of expertise, as the the discussions about the scope and the nature of expertise have evolved from the work on the study of professions. The chapter is also a discussion on how to identify experts and expert knowledge through the presentation of several questions raised within the context of legitimacy of expertise and of the enactment of professional expertise.

This chapter also discusses the main theoretical applications, various levels of analysis, and prevailing contentions in the field of management consultancy, with the intention of providing a theoretical background for the examination of external communication consultancy expertise. The reasons for the focus on management consultancy are its similarities with communication consulting, and the insufficient public relations scholarly literature on the contribution of communication consultants to communication management in organizations (Von Platen 2013).

2.2. THE CONTEXT: PROFESSIONS AND PROFESSIONALISM

The development and the nature of expertise in a specific field can be better understood within the backdrop of the sociological study of professions, since it is from this field of work that several related concepts including “occupation”, “profession”, “semi-profession”, “professional”, “professionalization”, “expert” and “expertise” have emerged. The sociology of professions, in spite of the fact that it has faced and continues to face several challenges, has also served as a theoretical backbone for scholarly work on areas such as newly emerging occupations, transnational markets for professional services, gendered constructions of professions, discourse of professionalism and the changing role of expert knowledge.

Since the sociology of professions is not the main focus of this thesis, a brief summary of major approaches on professions and professionalism will be provided. Literature on the sociology of professions showcases a number of different perspectives and different schools of thought, each offering different contributions and suggesting different concepts for emphasis, each at the same time, pointing at different developmental phases or socio-historical contexts.

The transformation from traditional occupations to modern professions is part of a set of complex and intertwined historical, economic and social developments, which are beyond the scope of this thesis. Nevertheless, as noted by L'Etang and Pieczka (2006) the concept of profession is rooted in the social division of labor, rational thought and the socio-economic structures through which they are articulated (266). Therefore, the concept is closely linked with the rise of capitalism.

Defining and understanding professions and professionalism has been one of the major efforts of sociological research. In this effort, the focus of some studies has been to pinpoint certain traits that differentiate "professions" from other "occupations", and others have elaborated on the processes through which this differentiation takes place. While the trait oriented approaches underline the distinctive nature of professional knowledge, status and prestige, the process oriented approaches have focused on how occupations have "professionalized".

Much of the earlier attempts to clarify what a profession means and what are the functions of a profession can be connected to a search for the stability of social systems. Tawney's (1921) perception of professionalism as a force to combat individualism in favor of communal good; Carr-Saunders and Wilson's (1933) professionalism as a safeguard against bureaucracy; Émile Durkheim's (1946) conceptualization of professionals as members of a moral occupational community, all impose normative values upon the concept.

The traits approach used by Carr-Saunders and Wilson (1933) attempted to define a "profession" in a systematic manner, by distilling common stages occupations had to pass to become professions through the historical documentation of 22 professions in the United Kingdom. Caplow (1954) further developed this attempt and suggested five developmental stages for transformation from an occupation to a profession: the establishment of a professional association, a change in the name of the occupation, the production of a code of ethics, prolonged agitation to obtain support from public authority and development of training facilities (139-140). In the traits approach, also developed by other scholars such as Goode (1966) and Greenwood (1962), the ideal profession with a priori attributes is used as a benchmark against which specific professions are measured. Attributes include abstract specialized knowledge, licensure, a systematic research program, authority over clients, autonomy, a professional code of ethics and a culture of values, norms and symbols.

From 1960s onwards, the trait approach continued to evolve, and adherence to a list of traits as well as to a cluster of specific skills and formal knowledge was seen as a way to claim and retain a privileged professional status (Bartlett & Hill 4). Through this claim, professions could seek status, autonomy and power in society.

Talcott Parsons' (1951) attempt to define the special features of professionalism and the normative values attributed to it through the demonstration of how the economic order and modern professions were connected and how these two served to create a balance for the sustainability of the social order is also noteworthy. According to Parsons, the professions and the bureaucratic structures both operated with similar principles such as the restriction of the domain of power, impersonal standards and the application of universal maxims. Yet, as Parsons claimed, through their occupational organizations and shared occupational identity, the professions presented an alternative to the hierarchy of bureaucratic organizations. Parsons supported this claim through certain criteria he formulated as characterizing professions: emotional neutrality, symmetrical relationship towards clients, loyalty to peers, specialization on certain issues and status due to performance. The work of Parsons was later on interpreted as leading to the trait approach (Johnson 1972) and it was criticized due to its links with functionalism (Evetts 401).

Everett Hughes (1958) thought of professions and professionalism in connection with the importance of trust in economic relations and the social order. According to Hughes, professions and occupations were not different in kind but in degree and both claimed authority on what is good and right for the society. Furthermore, professions and occupations also determined the ways of thinking about problems and issues within their domain (Dingwall & Lewis 5).

Another approach to the study of professions, also emerging in the 1960's, the professionalization perspective, marked the ultimate desire of many occupations to gain professional status and focused on the phases that an occupation had to go through, or complete, in order to be granted this status. This approach gave rise to various studies on how professions develop, categorized by Abbott (1988) as formal and substantive theories, the latter in turn being divided in four basic categories: functional, structural, monopolist and cultural. In the functional approach, profession was a means of control for the professional in dealing with the clients. The structural approach interpreted the diversity of professions as a sign of many occupations not having finished their process of professionalization. The monopoly approach focused on the control and authority of professions in the marketplace. The emphasis of the cultural approach was on professionals as claiming expertise and on the cultural authority of the professions. Abbott argued that although there were diverse perspectives, they could be synthesized into a general concept of professionalization, which he defined as follows:

> Expert, white-collar occupations evolve towards a particular structural and cultural form of occupational control. The structural form is called profession and consists of a eries of organizations for association, for control, and for work. (In its strong form, the professionalization concept argues that these organizations develop in a certain order.) Culturally, professions legitimate their control by attaching their expertise to values with general cultural legitimacy, increasingly the values of rationality, efficiency and science. (16)

Harold Wilensky (1964), examining the history of 18 US occupations, attempted to identify the typical process for an occupation to become an "established profession". Wilensky's typical sequence was as follows: becoming full-time, establishing academic training and research programs, founding a professional association, maintaining legal support for licensed practice and creating a formal code of ethics to eliminate the unqualified (142-6).

In the *Division of Labour in Society*, Durkheim (1964) linked the emergence of specialized occupations to the modernization of the society, claiming that occupations served as special platforms for morality that connected the individual and the larger society. According to Durkheim, through their formal training resulting in expertise, professionals served for the better functioning in society, further demonstrated by their codes of ethics upheld by professional organizations.

The introduction of the concept of "semi-professions" in the 1960's was predominantly based on the nature of the knowledge base upon which professions were built. The argument of Simpson & Simpson (1969) that the knowledge of semi-professions was mostly developed from other disciplines whereas professions had an autonomous and rational knowledge base is noteworthy in the sense that it projects an ideal of an autonomous expertise.

The “power relations” perspective in the study of professions focuses on how specific occupational groups obtain and maintain power in their relations with authorities, clients and other occupations (Hall 1994 43-44). Earlier, Johnson (1972) had argued that professionalism is a means which producers use to control consumer-producer relationships, through the definitions of consumers’ needs and Freidson (1973) demonstrated how professionalization was a strategy for workplace control by the employees. Friedson, inspired by Durkheim and Weber, also claimed that professionalism could balance the logic of the market and institutions. According to Friedson, if things were left to the logic and the dynamics of the market alone, the quality of customer service and the efficiency of professionals could be endangered, and through market closure, professions could guarantee the education, training, knowledge and expertise of practitioners through licensing and accreditation.

The concept of “professional project”, developed by Larson (1977) conceptualizes profession as a continuous social achievement and assumes that occupational groups compete for economic, social and political status. In *The Rise of Professionalism*, Larson discusses various positions of contemporary sociology on professionalism and tries to relate the problem of professions to the structure of society. In doing so, she emphasizes the market conditions under which professionals operate as being structurally different from those of less qualified workers, attributing an elite or a privileged status to the professional.

Another significance of Larson’s study is that it locates professionalism within the modernization process and the professions as being typical products of the modern industrial society. Differentiating “occupation” and “profession” through “the socially recognized expertise” (xvii) of the latter, Larson then traces the emergence of professionalization as such and its consequences, with specific emphasis on the historical developments in the medical profession. Larson also elaborates on the formation of "professional monopolies" through education, licensing and certification, therefore directing attention to the study of strategies used by different occupational groups to become professions, in order to achieve social status and prestige. The outcome of the successful professional project, according to Larson, is "a monopoly of competence legitimized by officially sanctioned 'expertise', and a monopoly of credibility with the public" (38).

Abbott's (1998) contribution to the study of professionalization focuses on how professions interact with each other and evolve, and how they claim jurisdiction over a set of tasks. He contends that professions have an abstract knowledge system through which they continuously redefine their problems and tasks, and ensure closure. Furthermore, as professions operate within "a system of professions", changes in one profession affects changes in other professions and they are differentiated from each other through status, clients, and career patterns.

Studies on the emergence of professions have also focused on the proposition that professions operate as shared meanings of communities of practice. The perspective of communities of practice has been developed by Lave and Wenger (1991) to identify groups of people who are informally bound together by shared expertise and interests and are involved in the same field of practice. Further, communities of practice may be thought of as a means improving the individual practitioner's competencies by being orientated to the needs of its members where the goal is to learn and develop common skills through the construction and exchange of common resources.

The domination of professional work by large and usually international companies as clients, the related increasing globalization of professional services and professional labor markets, the expansion of higher education, the loosening of restrictions imposed by professional occupations and their associations and the emergence of new occupations based on expert knowledge but without the autonomy, service orientation or the prestige of the traditional professions during especially the 1980’s (Gorman and Sandefur 2011) challenged the traditional understanding of professions, professionalization and various related issues. Continuing research on professional work then extended to more specific processes affecting professions and professionals in organizational contexts, structures and employment practices of professional firms, and the responses of different groups of professionals to changes in the social organization of various businesses and sectors.

Focusing on the expansion of occupations based on knowledge, Evetts (2003) points out to the attractiveness of the idea of profession and the concept of professionalism despite significant changes in several contexts in which professional occupations and knowledge workers work (396). According to Evetts, professionalism as a concept is appealing because it includes a claim of exclusive ownership over a particular area of expertise. This claim also encompasses the power to define the problems and formulate the solutions in this particular area. Furthermore, the concept implies mutual support and solidarity among individuals working in that area, autonomy in decision-making, and a focus on public good. Yet, economic crises and the resulting measures have led governments to redefine professionalism, especially in areas like medicine and other professional public services, more in line with a budget-focused, managerial and a commercially-oriented understanding (407-8).

Burns (2007) identifies the second half of the twentieth century as the period of “post-professionalism”, within the framework of the theories on professions and professionalism. He argues that the first concern of this era is the power relations between clients and professionals, then extending to issues such as professional performance and/or measurement/evaluation of this performance (Burns 2014). Another feature of the post-professionalism period, according to Burns (2007) is the increasing integration of professions into the corporate sphere. Burns argues that this period and all other such periods designated for understanding and exploring professions and professionalization demonstrate a variety of organizational principles and power relations; and also emphasizes the national and the cultural context:

> A number of themes seen in historical rear-view are actively at play: professional regulation—China and New Zealand are one-state systems compared to Australia and New Zealand; establishing and maintaining professional quality through audit procedures and ongoing professional training; the application of big data to matching, measuring and moving skill performance and professional service delivery; creating legal mechanisms of redress for poor professional service delivery via trade and consumer protection. Evidence of the apparent universal truths of science and professionalism are highly contextualized nationally and culturally in just how professional services are created, paid for, distributed and delivered. (10)

2.3. PROFESSIONAL WORK AND EXPERTISE

As this brief summary demonstrates, the context of professional work has provided various different interpretations of expertise. In the earliest interpretations of professional groups, the focal concept of “professionalism” represented a normative value, which in turn functioned for the stability of the society (Evetts et al. 2006 107). This interpretation can be traced, among others, in Tawney’s (1921) interpretation of professionalism as a force to divert individualism towards the needs of the society; Durkheim’s (1964) conceptualization of the professional group as a form of moral community; and Carr-Saunders & Wilson’s (1993) positioning of professionalism as a force for stability and freedom against the threat of bureaucracy. The balancing role of professions is also emphasized in Parsons’ (1951) demonstration of how the capitalist economic system, the social order based on rationality, and the modern professions were all intertwined in maintaining the stability of a normative order.

The focus of research on professions during the 1950s and 1960s was on the specific characteristics of professional work (Greenwood 1957, Wilensky 1964), where the professions were analyzed as occupations that were based on knowledge and expertise. During the 1970s and the 1980s, the focus shifted to the attempts of distinct occupational groups seeking legitimacy, control and status over specific areas of knowledge through their acclaimed expertise, examined in detail by Abbott (1988), and also by Larson (1977) through the concept of the "professional project".

1990s witnessed the emphasis on the significance of professionalism, along with discussions on both the positive and negative effects on the social system and its actors The arguments developed to reconcile professional self-interests with public interest emphasized the professional and ethical codes of conduct, along with the need for professional control (market closure) in order to improve and standardize the quality of service to consumers, and to guarantee the expertise of practitioners (Freidson 1994, Saks 1995, Dingwall 1996).

Perhaps the most attractive component of this discourse on professionalism is the suggestion that professionals in a specific occupation have the exclusive ownership of an area of expertise, which includes power in both defining and solving the problems in that area. Yet, whether professionals or professional associations have the autonomy to claim ownership of the expert body of knowledge is open to debate. Furthermore, the discourse on professionalism is also loaded with normative criteria of performance and behavior, usually dominated either by the organization or the state. As regards expertise, the general consensus seems to be that it should be measured, assessed, regulated and audited. Considering all these arguments, professionalism today is quite different from the idealized image of the independent expert practitioner of the past:

> The appeal to professionalism most often includes the substitution of organizational for professional values; bureaucratic, hierarchical, and managerial controls rather than

> collegial relations; budgetary restrictions and rationalizations; and performance targets, accountability, and increased political control. In this sense, then, it can be argued that the appeal to professionalism is in effect a mechanism of social control at micro, meso, and macro levels. (Evetts et al. 112)

2.4. WHAT IS EXPERTISE? EXPLORING THE CONCEPT

As noted by Stehr (1992 119), the terms counsellor, advisor, consultant and expert have been attributed several varying meanings, making it difficult to arrive at consistent and meaningful distinctions among these terms. In line with this perspective, these terms can be used interchangeably through this discussion. Nevertheless, the focus will be on understanding the concept of expertise. When we speak about expertise and when individuals or groups are presented to the public as experts, the usual connotations are a unique set of skills, technical competency, in-depth knowledge, authority in a specific field, and possession of specific qualifications.

The extension of expertise into numerous fields, the significant increase in the number of "experts", and the controversy about the necessity of a formal education in order to gain expertise have given rise to the problem of the credibility of experts. Therefore, it is not surprising that the concept of expertise has been the subject of various scholarly works, resulting in a rich literature. Although there are scholarly approaches that offer normative definitions of expertise, a literature review reveals that a significant number of approaches agree that the expert and expertise can be conceptualized in different forms and that it cannot be exclusively understood as a particular skill or an individual.

No matter from which angle they approach the issues, various theories of expertise have aimed to formulate frameworks to draw generalizations on the attributions necessary to grant expertise to individuals performing certain tasks related to specific occupations. Some of these scholarly approaches are normative in the sense that they attempt to provide guidelines on how expertise is developed and practiced, in other words, they propose a process and a performance. Some, on the other hand propose a critical look both at the concept itself and its several implications in the social context. For example, expertise can be understood as an in-depth academic knowledge of a specific domain. It can also be understood as having mastery of practical knowledge in a specific occupation. In the first approach, the emphasis is on intellectual activity, and the second approach emphasizes practice. As Winch (2010 2) says, both approaches are related and are mutually interdependent.

The model proposed by Dreyfus and Dreyfus provides a systematic approach for understanding the nature of professional expertise, especially in the handling of various situations and issues that arise out of these situations. On the other hand, the focus of the model on expert action rather than the outcomes of this action has been subject to criticism, mainly due to the taken-for-grantedness of excellent results of action carried out with expertise.

Dreyfus and Dreyfus' (1996) five-stage model, is based on the acquisition of certain skills on the road to becoming an expert and classifies five different professional types, representing stages in a professional's maturing towards expertise: "Novice" is a professional who is inexperienced and who plays by the rules, "advanced beginner" can understand some aspects of situations but cannot yet prioritize issues pertaining to them, "competent practitioner" has a long-term vision regarding the treatment of issues and situations, "proficient practitioner" is a rapid decision-maker with a comprehensive grasp of the situation and the "expert" is no longer bound by rules and has an analytical capacity for problem solving.

Schön's theory (1983, 1987) is mainly built upon the concept of the "reflective practitioner". Schön contends that a professional who is proficient is reflexive, both during the course of an action and after an action has been completed. According to Schön, an expert is someone who uses his/her previous and current experience to reflect on actions that are carried out in a professional context. Schön's account, in an attempt to avoid pure "technical rationality" in the conceptualization of expertise, detaches him from the theoretical body of knowledge which he sees is necessary for the inexperienced professional rather than the expert. In this sense, Schön is close to Dreyfus and Dreyfus who claim that once a level of expertise is reached, it is less and less necessary to refer to the theory or the professional body of knowledge.

Schön's approach also emphasizes the necessity of creativity for professionals, especially when they face difficult situations and complex problems. When faced with situations of this nature, professionals refer to their practical experience intuitively and at the same time they reflect on what they are doing. Schön defines this as "reflection-in-action", underlining the importance of the assessment of both the present situation and the past experience in similar situations, as well as the ability to be critical of the past mindset so that new ways of understanding or strategizing are made possible. (Schön 1987 28-9)

Bereiter and Scardamalia's (1993) approach to expertise encompasses both excellent action in a specific area of activity and the features of an individual who has reached the level of expertise. They propose that experience is not enough for excellent expert action and that the status of expert practitioner can be reached through constant self-questioning. The expert portrayed by Bereiter and Scardamalia is in a continuous reflection about both his past experience and the body of knowledge that this experience has been derived from. In this sense, they claim that expertise should not be defined as an attribute but as a process, suggesting if individuals acquire “expertise in learning”, they can eventually become experts of specific fields.

Norman Birnbaum’s (1971) claim that the university of the modern society has abandoned its task of mediating a high culture in “favour of the preparation of educated manpower for the administrative and productive apparatus of a technically complex society” (620) is relevant in the context of the discussion about experts and their role within the social system. Birnbaum positions the university as a production site of a group of elite knowledge holders integrated with the power structures of the society at large. Elaborating on the modern situation of knowledge, Birnbaum contends that those in possession of knowledge organize under professional groupings in order to sell expert services to clients at a price:

> The state and the private sector require expertise: this may be acquired in two ways- either by purchasing on limited time contracts the services of professionals, or by the direct employment of knowers (in whatever fields) in the framework of daily bureaucratic operations. (629)

Daniel Bell (1979), referring to what he called the post-industrial features emerging in the Western countries in the second half of the 20th century, points at the technological and scientific changes in the organization of the economy, resulting in transformation of the occupational structure of society, thus contributing to a strategic centrality of information and knowledge. One of the indicators of this transformation is the formation of a “white collar and professional-technological occupational force” (17). Bell proposes that the main motivation of this “new scientific elite” (Ross 336) will not be profit but professionalism, and the mobilization of the members of this group into key positions of social power will be one of the significant features of the post-industrial society.

Bauman (1992) claims that for Luhman’s “displaced individual”, that is, the individual of the functionally differentiated and stratified modern society who is constantly preoccupied with self-definition and self-assertion, the expert offers "socially approved solutions to individual discomforts and anxieties, having first articulated them as problems requiring solutions" (88). Bauman's expert, therefore, is the result of the elevation of a superstructure of expert decision-making above the level of the actual task performance, taking away the skill-demanding decisions away from the individual:

> The expert is a person capable, simultaneously, of interrogating the fund of trustworthy and supra-personal knowledge and of understanding the innermost thoughts and cravings of single person. As an interpreter and mediator, the expert spans the otherwise distant worlds of the objective and the subjective. He bridges the gap between guarantees of being in the right (which can be only social) and making the choices that one wants (which can be only personal)" (82).

In Bauman's conceptualization, while expert skills are substituted for personal skills, new problems that necessitate expertise are created. The modern society contains a network of areas of expertise supplying each other with new tasks, and as specific fields become more focused and specialized, new skills are invented (91-2). Both the advice of the experts and the objects designed by experts serve the need of the individual for rationality, as lay members of the society need to be guided by the experts towards rational choices.

Focusing on the theoretical significance and the increasing number of experts, advisors and consultants, Stehr (1992) sees this growth as part the transformation from a modern to a knowledge-based society, with knowledge as a significant and leading factor of the productive process. According to Stehr, the immense growth in knowledge corresponds to the rise of knowledge-based work and related occupations, represented by an increasingly influential group of various types of experts (108). Through the discussion of the status of knowledge-based occupations with respect to knowledge; the relations of these occupations with clients, institutions and sectors, and the very nature of the advisory process, Stehr defines experts as transmitters and appliers of knowledge. This transmission and application is an active process including the acquisition, manipulation, organization and the communication of knowledge (130).

Alvesson (1995) underlines the increasing significance of high-quality knowledge for organizations, due to their dependency on cognitive competences. This means that, both knowledge and the individuals possessing that knowledge are highly valuable assets for organizations, and specific competences (expertise domains) provide competitive advantage. As a result, we can speak of “knowledge-intensive” organizations. According to Alvesson, these knowledge-intensive organizations have a creative organizational climate with creative employees; they rely on their human resources, networks, and customer relationships more than on their capital; they provide their employees with autonomy; and most of their employees are well educated and highly professional (5).

As Alvesson relates organizational expertise to the expertise of its individual members, the organizational decision making is dependent on individual members with high quality education and a high level of professionalism. These expert individuals use high-quality forms of specific knowledge to address and solve specific issues and problems.

Yet Alvesson (2001) argues, in cases where the knowledge-intensive organizations seek the support of expert consultants, there is usually an ambiguity surrounding the claimed product (or service) of experts, their contribution, and the results of their work (869). Focusing on this ambiguity, Alvesson contends that rhetoric, image management and ongoing negotiations are necessary for grounding expert work:

> As clients and customers often have problems estimating the value of the product/service offered, establishing close social links between the knowledge-intensive company and the customer/client becomes vital. Interactions must be carefully orchestrated and efforts to strengthen ties given priority. Rhetoric, image production and the fine-tuning of social bonds rely upon supportive work identities.

> Successful talk, appearance and interaction call for the right kind of subjectivity. There is a close and complex relationship between these qualities; identity constructions are being backed up by rhetoric and images, at the same time as the fluid and fluctuating nature of persuasive talk, appearance and adapting to the whims and wants of clients undermine the prospect of, as well as the usefulness of, fixed identity constructions. (883)

Collins and Evans (2002) also emphasize the contested nature of scientists' and technologists' exclusive access to truth and question the value of their advice. They suggest that the notion of expertise has to be examined thoroughly, especially in the light of arguments for the extension of decision making base in scientific and technical issues, and they attempt to formulate a normative theory of expertise (236-7). The authors start by suggesting the term "experience-based experts" instead of the term "lay experts" (which they designate as an oxymoron), referring to individuals who have special technical expertise mainly through experience that is not recognized by academic degrees or other certificates (238).

According to the authors, "The First Wave of Science Studies" during the 1950s and the 1960s, was characterized by the reinforcement of scientific knowledge and scientific decision from the top down. Then, a person with a good scientific training had the authority in his/her specific field, accompanied usually by authority in other fields as well. From the 1970s onwards, "The Second Wave of Science Studies" brought about the reconceptualization of science as a social activity, demonstrating that the scientific methods were not enough to bring disclosure to technical and scientific arguments. In other words, science was now socially constructed, resulting in discussions about the socially constructed nature of expertise as well (239).

According to Collins and Evans, a “Third Wave of Science Studies” has to focus on the reconstruction of knowledge, explore who should and who should not contribute to decision-making, and differentiate between scientific and political input to decision-making:

> This is not an attempt to go back to Wave One, because Wave Three takes into account all that has been learned during Wave Two and, as we stress, Wave Two runs on as strongly as before; we are trying, under Wave Three, to reconstruct knowledge, not rediscover it. Thus, under Wave One, political rights made almost no contribution to technical decision-making, being almost entirely overwhelmed by topdown expertise; under Wave Three, expert and political rights can be seen to be much more balanced because of the new understanding of contested science that emerged from Wave Two. (249)

Within the framework of their attempt to formulate a normative theory of expertise in connection with production of knowledge, Collins and Evans propose a classification of expertise, noting that this classification is for analytical purposes, and the levels of expertise are ideal categories, inevitably leading to problems of boundaries. The first level is “No Expertise”, where the degree of expertise is not sufficient to carry out an analysis. At the second level, the “Interactional Expertise”, there is enough expertise to interact and carry out an analysis. At the third level, which is the “Contributory Expertise”, there is enough expertise to contribute to a specific field of analysis (254). Carolan (2006) suggests a fourth type of expertise to this classification, namely the “public expertise”, and argues that public expertise is especially significant, especially when environmental threats and risks are concerned (665).

The transformation to a knowledge-based economy also constitutes the base for Evers and Menkhoff’s (2004) discussion on the nature of experts and consultants, on their social and economic strategic importance, and on how expert knowledge is presented by the consultants. Underlining the growing number of knowledge workers, the emergence of products with integrated artificial intelligence, the changing nature of service-based industries, the transformation toward intelligent organizations, the increased organized knowledge in the form of digital expertise, the distinct culture of knowledge production and knowledge utilization, and the growing importance of intermediary organizations (123-24), the authors focus on describing the experts and consultants as a significant group of knowledge workers.

According to Evers and Menkhoff, experts and consultants have a strategic importance in the new knowledge economy, first and foremost, due to the "growth of ignorance" (124). Basing their argument within the framework of reflexive modernisation, they argue that while there is a fast increase in knowledge, the knowledge about what is not known is increasing even faster, resulting in uncertainty. Therefore, due to their ability to reduce this uncertainty through the provision of authorised opinions, experts and consultants serve as legitimizing figures for political or economic decisions (125).

Evers and Menkhoff also suggest a differentiation between experts and consultants. Accordingly, while an expert is positioned as a "professional knowledge broker" (126), a consultant "is an expert, who acquires packages and sells specific and confidential knowledge for a fee with the expectation that his knowledge is applied and his advice is acted upon" (126). The trends of the knowledge economy and their consequences on consultants (management consultants in the specific context of Evers and Menkhoff's study), apply to public relations experts to a large extent: the need for specific knowledge to combine various sets of data, the necessity of producing and presenting structures and processes that are better than the already existing ones, the necessity (on the part of the consultants) to better safeguard the secrets of their trade, and the need for consultants to engage in knowledge production through their own research and development (132). This differentiation is also underlined by Creplet et al. (2001), who contend that the consultants and experts produce and use different and specific forms of knowledge through various learning processes in their respective practices.

> We also addressed the question of determinants of the recognition of these two actors. It appears that the recognition, or legitimisation, of the expert is far different from the one of the consultant in some respects. Whereas the former must display ingenuity, must be acknowledged through academic modes and through successful complex experiences, the mode of recognition of the consultant is different since his/her recognition relies on the reputation of the firm employing him/her and on a number of standard parameters (e.g. diplomas). Lastly, we underlined the importance of the personality of the expert as key element in his/her legitimisation. (1532)

Chi (2006) lists the major ways in which experts excel, as well as the major ways in which they fall short. Experts excel at “generating the best solutions”, “detection and recognition”, “qualitative analyses”, “monitoring”, “choosing the best strategies”, “making use of opportunities”, and “cognitive power”. On the other hand, they fall short in extending skills beyond their fields of expertise; their over-confidence may lead to missing out of details; they might not make accurate decisions without contextual enabling information; they sometimes have trouble in adapting to changes; they might be inaccurate in predicting novice performance; they could be biased; and they can exhibit fixedness due to a mental set created by extensive domain knowledge (23-7).

Shortcomings of experts have also been identified, among others, by Holyoak (1991) and Lewandowsky et al. (2007). To the original 8 item list by Holyoak (1991 89), Lewandowsky et al. (2007 86-88) have added 3 more items. Accordingly, the shortcomings identified are inflexibility, expediency, mediocrity, inefficiency, poorer memory for cases outside domain, poorer perception of patterns unrelated to expert performance, asymptotic performance, domain specificity, subjectivity, lack of knowledge integration, and knowledge inaccessibility.

Analysing the “expert in context”, Mieg (2006) explores the social and sociological factors in the development of expertise, positioning the expert as a connection between a *person* and a *function*. Function indicates the social context of expert performance and it is defined by what an audience would pay for (743). In Mieg’s analysis, therefore, experts and expertise are relational notions. Mieg contends that in order for an individual to be an expert, he/she has to be regarded as such by a particular audience. In this sense, Mieg’s approach is different from the conceptualization of “the expert as an outstanding individual” or “the individual with a superior performance”.

Mieg also discusses the treatment of expertise as a form of human capital, created by investments such as education and training. Since expertise is domain-specific, it requires massive training and experience with a focus on a particular domain. In turn, it can be invested in various industries as a means to increase productivity. Embodied in persons, expertise as human capital is priced, in other words; its value is expressed by prices paid in labor markets. The price, according to Mieg, is paid for “the time-efficient” use of knowledge and the relatively fast utilization of the compressed experience expertise reveals the core social role of the expert (748-9).

Mieg’s assessment that the main version of the institutionalization of expertise is professionalization is demonstrated in Abbott’s (1988) analysis of the sequence of professional work starting with diagnosis, continuing with inference, and being finalized by treatment (40-4). Referring to this analysis, Mieg (2006) suggests four expert roles: relative experts, researchers (or analysts), formal experts (or decision experts), and professionals. *Relative experts* are those who deliver specific and valid information in particular circumstances, even though they may not have a formal training or a professional role, and their function is to provide a preliminary diagnosis. *Researchers*, on the other hand, provide a more comprehensive diagnosis through both information about and an understanding of the problems, being accountable only for the correctness of their analysis. *Formal experts* focus on inference and provide formal knowledge that supports decision making. Finally, *professionals* are those experts who have professionalized themselves usually as consultants specialized in particular domains, and they provide diagnosis, analysis and treatment (752-3).

2.4.1. Expert Knowledge

If formal education is considered as essential in acquiring expertise, so is practical knowledge, often expressed as significant experience in a specific field. Since such experience is achieved by the repetition of certain tasks, and naturally involves trial and error, what is accumulated as a result can possibly be considered as a type of knowledge. Even if an individual is not formally educated in a specific field, the practical experience accumulated by her/him can be recognized by others. In this framework, it is possible to speak of intellectual knowledge acquired as a result of formal education, and practical knowledge acquired as a result of experience. Research on expertise and the nature of expert knowledge has demonstrated that expertise and the knowledge, skills, and abilities associated with it can be defined quite differently, depending on the environment in which individuals develop and present their expertise (Cianciolo et al. 2006 614).

Amin and Cohendet's (2004) exploration towards enhancing the understanding of the formation, accumulation and circulation of knowledge in the organizational context provides a useful guide to different approaches to knowledge. The first main type of knowledge is *explicit knowledge*, which can be formalized, and the second type is *tacit knowledge*, which can be associated with skills and know-how. While several approaches contend that knowledge is held by individuals and essentially explicit; in especially the literature on innovation, knowledge is considered to have a collective nature, having a tacit character (2). Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) further suggest that there are four basic types of knowledge to be considered, and that each type is equally significant: codified/individual, codified/collective, tacit/individual, and tacit/collective.

Adapting Spender's (1997) knowledge matrix, Amin and Cohendet (2004) also suggest four different typologies of knowledge, namely the *conscious knowledge*, *objectified knowledge*, *automatic knowledge*, and *collective knowledge* (34-35), positioning them as follows:

	Individual	**Social (or) Collective**
Explicit (or) Codified	Conscious (Spender, 1997) Embrained (Blackler, 1995) Know-what (Lundvall & Johnson,1994)	Objectified (Spender, 1997) Encoded (Blackler, 1995) Know-why (Lundvall & Johnson,1994)
Tacit	Automatic (Spender, 1997)) Embodied (Blackler, 1995) Know-how (Lundvall & Johnson, 1994)	Collective (Spender, 1997) Embedded/encultured (Blackler, 1995) Know-who (Lundvall & Johnson, 1994)

A typology of knowledge (adapted from Spender, 1997 by Amin and Cohendet 2004 34)

Consicous knowledge is rooted in formal knowledge, and according to Amin and Cohendet (2004), is owned by professionals who are certified to use formal methods of performance. Blackler (1995) also refers to this type of knowledge as "embrained knowledge", and associates it with conceptual skills and cognitive abilities. According to Lundvall and Johnson (1994), this type of knowledge is about facts.

Objectified knowledge refers to the knowledge regarding mainly the principles and laws of positive sciences. Blackler (1995) names this type of knowledge as "encoded knowledge". Lundvall and Johnson (1994), on the other hand, contend that this type of knowledge corresponds to "knowing-why". *Automatic knowledge* is tacit and acquired by individuals almost in a non-conscious manner, allowing them to understand and develop explicit knowledge. This type of knowledge corresponds to Polanyi's (1958, 1957) tacit knowledge. [1]

While Blackler (1995) calls this type of knowledge as "embodied knowledge", Lundvall and Johnson (1994) assess that it is about "knowing-how". Accumulated through collective use, *collective knowledge* is tacitly shared. Blackler (1995) examines this type of knowledge at two levels, namely as "embedded knowledge" and "encultured knowledge". According to Blackler, embedded knowledge is about systemic routines, and encultured knowledge is acquired through shared understanding. While Lundvall and Johson's (1994) typology offers no distinct match for this type of knowledge, Amin and Cohendet (2004) suggest that it can be evaluated as a subcategory of "knowing-how".

Creplet et al's. (2001) distinction between "the consultant" and "the expert", is based on the types of knowledge used by them. When the problems are well defined by the organization (client), consultants are able to choose a particular tool box for a particular context out of their previous experience. Experts, on the other hand, are called in when clients face situations/problems which are unknown to them, and are able to conceptualize the specific pattern of the problem, offering new solutions:

> The main difference between experts and other consultants lies in the distinction between two kinds of cognitive capacities. While, consultants' know-how is their ability to use a particular tool box in well-known contexts, experts propose their capacity to formalize new problems and solutions which are usually context specific and tailor made. An expert is then an intervener who is temporarily involved in a particular process of knowledge creation. (1519)

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[1] Polanyi (1958, 1966) was one of the first scholars to explore the the concept of tacit knowledge. He argued that people can know more than they can tell, and underlined the experiental nature of tacit knowledge.

These typologies and approaches could support our understanding of the type of knowledge claimed by public relations experts or of the kind of knowledge that serves public relations professional expertise best. Cornelissen's (2000) examination of the three perspectives for the application of academic theories and research in practical public relations situations provides a useful framework. The first of these, the *instrumental perspective*, makes a clear distinction between scientific and common sense knowledge, assuming that scientific knowledge provides a better insight into practical problems since it is governed by the rules of the scientific method. According to this perspective, scientific information produced as a result of academic research provides rational solutions for all practical problems in a direct and instrumental manner (317-8).

Yet, the need for specific knowledge for practical public relations problems as opposed to generalized scientific knowledge seems to prevent public relations practitioners from referring to abstract scientific knowledge. Practitioners might find the generalized scientific theories unintelligible and sometimes also irrelevant as regards the solutions for their typical daily problems. At best, as Cornelissen contends, such knowledge, rather than providing concrete solutions to public relations problems, could serve as a general vision or a framework (319).

According to the second model, the *conceptual perspective*, scientific knowledge (or academic research) offers ideas, problem definitions and interpretive frames that enable a practitioner to understand and anticipate practical phenomena. As such, scientific research does not provide direct solutions but has a long-term and indirect effect (319). Although there is a difference between these two perspectives in the way they define the impact of scientific knowledge on practice, the type of knowledge corresponding to both perspectives would be explicit or codified knowledge.

If the conceptual perspective is applied to public relations practice, we have to suppose that scientific and academic knowledge - even if in the long term- will be enlightening for public relations practitioners. Yet;

> This assumed one-way relationship is arguably particularly flawed when considered from the perspective of the more knowledgeable and reflective practitioners in the public relations profession today, who actively use, as well as contribute to, knowledge from both academic and professional sources. (320)

The third model, the *translation perspective*, considers scientific knowledge and practical knowledge as intertwined, interacting mutually to generate knowledge. In other words, knowledge of scientific nature interacts with knowledge derived intuitively and experientially:

> The “translation model” is characterized by the recognition that scientific knowledge is hardly ever used unaltered in a practical setting. In other words, a process of transformation of knowledge is constantly in place. When scientific notions are used in practice, the notions themselves and their results change in their essential character. Science use is not a matter of a passive reception of knowledge for practical purposes, but rather an active process of interpretation and reframing by practitioners within the context of professional understanding. (321)

In the translational perspective, then, the focus is on tacit knowledge.

It might well be argued that the type of knowledge put forth in the translation perspective seems more close to modern public relations practice. Rather than directly applying academic knowledge to their everyday practice, public relations practitioners seem to shape and frame this knowledge in relation to various practical situations. When these concepts are reframed, they are in turn evaluated by the academic world which alters them again (Cornelissen 2000 321).

Even though public relations academia and the professional organizations of public relations claim that public relations has come a long way in building its own scholarly (or scientific) knowledge base (Cameron et al. 1996; Cornelissen 2000; Edwards 2008), whether the practice of public relations and the work of public relations experts could be considered as purely scientific is debatable.

Grunig (1992) argues that public relations practitioners, rather than relying only on scientific knowledge, tend to develop “working theories” based on intuition and experience for specific situations (7). It is a fact that more and more public relations professionals now have a formal training in the field (L’Etang & Pieczka 2006; Edwards 2012; Gregory 2012) and that they use scientific research and evaluation techniques, yet much of their daily practice is essentially based on accumulated experience on “knowing-how” to proceed in similar situations. If the use of scientific insights becomes necessary, the practitioners then select which of them to use and in what manner.

This is supported by Germain’s (2006) argument that formal education in a specific field is not necessary for a practitioner to gain expert status, and expertise can be achieved by intense and long-term experience. In the same line, a public relations practitioner with 10+ years of experience in managing crises, but without a formal educational degree in communication or specifically in public relations, still could be considered to have expertise in crisis management and communication. The expertise of such a practitioner is expressed and judged by how well she/he has succeeded in managing previous crises. Alvesson (2001) also makes more or less the same point when he points out the difficulties in defining knowledge and the limitations of working with scientific forms of knowledge, and also emphasizes that most “knowledge-workers” in organizations do not operate “according to a handbook of scientific methodology” (866).

Yet, a number of questions remain to be answered in relation to the type of expert knowledge used (or not used) in public relations practice. Is there a relation between various issues facing the public relations practice and the value of academic knowledge? Can public relations learn from other professional disciplines regarding the type of expert knowledge presented to organizations or clients? What is the role of continuous learning and reflection in practice? How can public relations practitioners address the gap between scientific knowledge and practical applications?

Assessing that there is a chasm between academic public relations knowledge and day-to-day public relations practice, Stephen Waddington (2014) acknowledges the contribution of academic/scientific knowledge to the profession of public relations, and suggests that scientific theory should drive strategy, underlining the success of management consultants in incorporating theoretical models into their work. This means that public relations practitioners need to utilize academic knowledge and move beyond simple SWOT analyses, and increase their awareness about academic public relations work that usually provides hints for issues with potential to become significant for the future of the profession.

2.4.2. Legitimacy and Trustworthiness of Experts

According to Giddens (1990), the issue of trust in networks of experts is one of the core dilemmas of modernity. While complexity of modern societies makes it more and more difficult to trust the judgements of experts in various domains, there is also the need to control such judgements. For Luhmann (1979), trust in general serves to reduce social uncertainty, therefore it can be considered as having a function of power. This is also echoed in Fukuyama's (1995) conceptualization of trust as social capital, in the sense that it regulates both the social order and the capital markets.

When the expert and the expert judgement is legitimized as means of regulating information, what follows is the use of such judgements in certifying the quality of certain products and services, to demonstrate the seriousness (or the insignificance) of problems, or to support legal arguments (Mieg 754). Especially in today's increasingly complex and uncertain social and economic environment, it is almost impossible to speak of experts as representing certain 'objective' assessments that are independent of specific values or preferences. As the background, education, training, and political preferences of experts influence expert advice or expert knowledge, to draw a clear-cut line between 'objective expert knowledge' and 'policies' or 'politics' would be misleading (Jasanoff 2003).

A strong argument questioning the neutrality or objectivity of the experts is elaborated by Timothy Mithcell (2202) in *Rule of experts: Egypt, techno-politics, modernity*. Tracing the role of experts and expertise in the modernization project of Egypt, Mitchell contends that experts such as social scientists, economists, and engineers do not merely understand and interpret the world, but also actively support the 'creation' of a particular world order. Accordingly, in the specific case of Egypt, expertise does not represent a neutral support for 'progress', but a significant contributor to the establishment of Western domination. Furthermore, as Mitchell illustrates through the construction of the Aswan Dam, the series of human and ecological problems generated by the dam (positioned as a masterpiece of modern engineering expertise) required the introduction of more expertise to solve those problems, and those expert solutions only generated more uncertainty (36-7).

Perhaps the most radical and the best known argument challenging the neutrality of the experts used by the public relations practitioners, is Rampton and Stauber's (2002) book *Trust Us, We're Experts PA: How Industry Manipulates Science and Gambles with Your Future*. The authors provide several cases to demonstrate that the public relations industry, through a strategy known as "third party technique" or "third party endorsement", uses experts in various fields in order to convince the public about the benefits of a product, service, or an idea. Rampton and Stauber's earlier book (1995) *Toxic Sludge is Good for You*, also targets the public relations experts, claiming that public relations consultancies representing the interests of the corporations engage in efforts to discredit environmentalist organizations and their concerns.

Traditional views of public relations position the public relations experts as agents who design strategies for establishing, and when necessary, restoring trust (Bourne 2013). Accordingly, the legitimacy, survival and success of organizations are closely linked to implementing strategic trust building programs or campaigns, and to the measurement and evaluation of such programs. In cases where organizations lose public trust, public relations expertise then proposes ways to restore it again through various programs and schemes (Poppo and Schepker 2010) .

Trust is also positioned as a significant component of ethical and professional public relations conduct. Emphasizing that public relations practitioners are intellectually qualified to address issues related to organizational trust, Starck and Kruckeberg (2004) argue that they have a unique professional and social responsibility to guide corporations towards establishing mutual trust with their stakeholders. According to the authors, as the relationship between public relations practitioners and their clients "has been defined in terms of a relationship of trust between the individual practitioner and the individual client" (37), this type of professionalization prevents public relations practitioners from acting as mere message transmitters or advocates of corporations.

> As complex organisations with many stakeholders, corporations depend on professionals. While managers, accountants, engineers, human resource staff and other occupational specialists contribute unique knowledge and skills to the corporations and are answerable to the corporation for their employment, they nevertheless exert

great control over the behaviour of the organisation through their own theories, ideologies, values and, yes, worldviews. These professional communities, through their ethical values, influence the behaviour of corporations. Similarly, public relations practitioners, through their professional communities, can influence the behaviour of members of the larger organisation. Thus, professional values can become corporate values. (38-9)

2.4.3. Professional Expertise

Winch's (2010) discussion of expertise in terms of the possession of know-how and the ability to apply systematic knowledge to an occupation, suggests that the acquisition of "technical proficiency" and the growth of personal identification with the profession have to be evaluated as two intertwined processes on the way to expertise. The quest of the expert for excellence, according to Winch, is multidimensional, including the internalization of high-quality performance and concern for the reputation of the profession, for client needs, for the future generation colleagues and for the social implications of the professional activity (170-2).

Gorman and Sandefur's (2011) overview of the different research streams about professional work following the emergence of new expert occupations as a result of developments in knowledge and technology is interesting for the purposes of this study, as public relations is among these new expert occupations. According to Gorman and Sandefur, increasing domination of professional work by large organizations, the increasingly international character of markets for professional services, demographic transformations of professions as a result of the expansion of higher education, difficulties in enforcing codes to limit competition among members of professions, and the emergence of new occupations offering services based on expert knowledge but lacking the features attributed to traditional professions, have transformed the professional world (279-80).

Gorman and Sandefur demonstrate that, in spite of this transformation, there is continuity between the classical sociology of the professions and contemporary research on knowledge-based occupations. The central themes of the sociology of professions – expert knowledge, autonomy, a normative service orientation, and high status, income and rewards - continue to exist in current research under new forms. Yet, the authors contend, these themes, rather than serving as pre-conditions for professionalism, represent characteristics that vary across both knowledge-based occupations and work contexts (290).

> The world of work is increasingly divided into two hemispheres: one which requires expert knowledge accessible only through higher education, and one which does not. Within the knowledge-based hemisphere of work, many of the same questions apply to both traditional professions and occupations of questionable nature. [….] To the extent that differences remain between traditional professions and other forms of knowledge-based work, this new perspective permits them to be treated as variables in need of explanation- thereby opening the door to many intriguing questions that were previously ruled out of bounds. (291)

Referring to Ericsson's (2004) suggestion that expertise is developed through learning and Abbott's (1988) view that expertise is a distinguished position acquired through accreditation, professional standards and professional organizations, Treem (2012) contends that both views are "actor-oriented", the first attributing special competencies to experts and the second positioning standard-defining organizations as endorsers of expertise (25).

Pointing at the limitations these views encounter within knowledge-intensive dynamic environments, Treem suggests a communicative view, treating expertise as a product of social relationships, emerging through social interaction. Experts are judged to have more knowledge about a particular domain. Yet, Treem contends that knowledge-intensive environments pose difficulties for differentiating among the abilities of individuals.

The first major difficulty is borne out of task specialization, which limits the insights into the real work of individuals, replacing them with "other visible communicative behaviours believed to reflect superior ability" (26). Therefore, if a certain individual can effectively communicate about a domain, then he/she is treated as an expert even if this could not be the case. The second difficulty arises due to the fact that knowledge-intensive environments are subject to greater uncertainty and complexity. Faced with unique challenges born out of uncertainty and complexity, organizations rely on the knowledge of experts in domains which they cannot or choose not to dedicate human capital. Yet, the reliance on experts in complex or uncertain environments also makes it difficult to validate the actual expertise performed:

> Given the amorphous nature of knowledge work, organizations lack an artefact or reliable standards upon which to judge outputs. Furthermore, experts often find it difficult to explain the process by which they accomplish tasks and others in the organization, lacking expertise themselves, may struggle to competently judge the presented expertise. (26)

Treem suggests exploring the routine behaviours of individuals in order to understand how they are valued as experts both by their managers and their peers in PR agency environments and analyses data collected through a field study of public relations professionals at work. Choosing two different public relations firms as research sites – the first one an established global agency claiming expertise in all areas of public relations work, and the second one a specialist agency with established expertise in specific areas-, Treem aims to determine a set of general practices through which the workers in these agencies establish themselves as experts. The services provided by both agencies were grouped under four major categories: media monitoring, media pitching, construction and maintenance of ongoing publications on behalf of clients, and strategic planning and counsel (28).

Analysis of the ways through which the workers of the two PR agencies developed attributions about the expertise of their colleagues while the above mentioned services are performed brings about four major themes, each associated with specific observable behaviors. The first of these is that experts have a tendency to transcend established procedures, demonstrated by behaviors such as ignoring or going beyond specific procedures, bringing in additional information, and creating new procedures. The second major theme focuses on the ability of experts to create opportunities for further specialization, demonstrated by volunteering for particular tasks, and working autonomously. Handling large quantities of information is the third major theme, observed in behaviours such as locating relevant information, using additional tools, and reaching information quickly. The final and the fourth theme is that experts share unsolicited information, demonstrated through making past experience visible, highlighting past success, and monitoring the environment (33-41).

Treem contends that these results support the communicative view of expertise in knowledge-intensive organizations in the sense that the emerging themes were not connected to stable and domain-specific abilities, or to membership in an exclusive social category. As the knowledge-intensive environments in the public relations agencies included "dynamic, ambiguous and frequently invisible tasks" (43), the perceptions of individuals on expertise were built on their interactions with their colleagues. In other words, the attributions of expertise in such knowledge-intensive organizations emerge through social interactions rather than from a set of objective criteria.

Saks (2012), through the discussion of how a profession has been defined by various approaches, highlights the relative merits of the neo-Weberian perspective in relation to the role of knowledge and expertise. According to Saks, defining a profession in relation to knowledge and expertise sheds light on what professions are about and how they actually operate (1). Yet, Saks claims, neo-Weberian approaches to professions and professionalism have shown that professionalism does not always follow the linear process based on knowledge and expertise, as demonstrated by several studies underlining the fact that not all occupations claiming a formal education necessarily become professions and that there are socio-political dimensions at the macro level affecting the process of professionalization of different occupations:

> These examples indicate that professionalization is a socio-political process, involving power and interest in the market at a macro-level. For neo-Weberians then, the definitions of professions cannot be pivoted on knowledge and expertise per se. Although it may be important to demonstrate some knowledge and expertise related to educational certification in making a successful case for professionalization, this is seen more as part of the credentialist ideology linked to professional projects than a claim necessarily reflecting substance. (5)

2.4.4. Consultancy Expertise

Management consultancy is regarded as being closely related to public relations consultancy (Clark 1995 78). Therefore, tracing the evolution of scholarly work on management consulting, with an emphasis on major theoretical approaches and main frameworks of analysis will provide useful for external public relations consultancy or the public relations agency, as it is called. Management consultants are employed by various organizations to provide expert solutions to various organizational issues. In the same line, public relations consultants are also contracted to provide expertise on issues or problems categorized under organizations' communication with a set of stakeholders. Furthermore, perceptions about both professions exhibit similarities, as will be demonstrated.

Management consultancy, like other external consultancy work, is attractive for the clients because consultants put forward a claim of a specific knowledge. This specific knowledge could include a technique or a novel way of defining a client problem. Fincham et al. (2008) contend that no matter what the specific knowledge is about, it is usually supported by experience of problems and solutions regarding a particular industry or sector, therefore representing an accumulated knowledge about various sectors, gained through repeated assignments (1146).

Fincham et al's (2008) exploration of the roles of consultants as "sector intermediaries" or "sector experts" through a case study of management consulting reveals several discussions also valid for public relations consultants and the public relations consultancy. Combining Abbott's (1998) and Carlile's (2002) frameworks about expertise and expert knowledge, the authors examine the types of knowledge that makes management consultants credible and legitimate in the eyes of the clients. Although the type of knowledge presented to the client plays a major role in their discussion, they also refer to other factors of credibility and legitimacy.

Fincham et al.'s (2008) case study shows that management consultancy firms extract the sectoral knowledge through client interaction and then formalize it as collective knowledge of the firm, before moving on to the next assignment or experience. Consultants also organize their careers and occupational identities around this knowledge (1150). Another finding the case study provides is that although the consultants brought in sector knowledge, exchange between the consultants and the client staff was also constituting sectoral knowledge. Therefore, the information and views of the clients are incorporated in consultancy solutions to problems (1153).

According to the authors, these findings suggest that expert work does not imply a simple transfer of ready recipes by the consultants, and that boundaries between inside knowledge of the organization and outside knowledge of consultants are complicated and variable (1155).

> Placing ‘knowledge’ at the heart of expert groups identifies some widely differentiated occupations. Different kinds of expert labour include familiar forms like the powerful professions and technical/design occupations that command ‘strong knowledge’. Groups such as management consultants, on the other hand, are often linked with ‘weak’ knowledge, esoteric skills, and persuasive devices. However, even the so-called weak knowledge may contain structures that are the basis of longer term appeal to clients, and that have perhaps not received the attention they deserve. (1157)

So, how do the consultants develop this sectoral knowledge? The aforementioned accumulation of experience and knowledge through repeated assignments in certain sectors is an opportunity for consultants to develop their knowledge base through client interaction, during which clients provide information in several formats, ranging from technologies used to problems faced (1148). There is, of course, the intellectual and the cognitive capacity of the consultant, which results in both the capacity for abstraction and the ability to perform a set of skills specific to the area of consulting.

The role played by management consultants and prescriptive roadmaps for consultants were the main themes of literature before the 1980s (Schein 1969; Higdon 1970; Argyris 1970). During the 1980s, the study of external consultants and external consultancies was mostly undertaken in parallel to the emergence and growth of the “service economy”, and explored within fundamental changes taking place in industrialized economies, such as the increasing size of markets, impact of changes in transportation and technology, and the rise of large corporations (Noyelle 281). Literature on management consulting increased significantly during the 1990s and 2000s; focusing on the development of the profession and the industry (McKenna 2006), and guidelines for consultants (Kubr 2002). The same increase was observed in critical literature, danger of hiring consultants emerging as one of the dominant themes (Rassam and Oates 1992; O’Shea and Madigan 1998; Pinault 2000):

> Indeed, one of the salient characteristics of the consulting literature has been, and continues to be, that both journalists and academic commentators tend to have strong feelings about the business, considering consultants to be anywhere in a broad spectrum from shallow charlatans to modern carriers of economic growth. (Armbrüster 2006 2)

Other themes in the similar vein include linking hiring of consultants to the insecurity of managers resulting in a bandwagon effect (Jackall 1988; Huczynski 1993); to the fear imposed by consultancies by making managers ‘addicted’ to new ideas (Kieser 2002); and to the evolution of managerial capitalism under which consultants act as extensions of managerial power (Fincham 2002). Kaarst-Brown’s (1999) identification of the physical arrival of a consultant in a workplace as a signal of change is an example of the symbolic roles attached to external consultants both by client firms and the consultants themselves. In discussing the shortcomings of especially the inexperienced, recent graduate external consultants, Bloch (1999) claims the shortcomings in knowledge and experience are polished over with extravagant “buzzwords”.

2.4.4.1. Major Scholarly Approaches

In the above-mentioned increase in literature on external management consulting, it is possible to trace two dominant perspectives, namely the *functionalist*, and the *critical* approaches. According to the functionalist approach, management consultants are considered as vehicles of knowledge. The critical approach, on the other hand, focuses on the problematic nature of management consultancy knowledge and how this knowledge is represented and utilized.

2.4.4.1.1. The Functionalist Approach

The functionalist approach, more or less, is based on the assumption of a knowledge asymmetry between the consultant and the client. Here, due to their knowledge on new management techniques, management strategies and tactics, consultants hold an advantageous position through which they disseminate this expert knowledge between different industries and organizations (Armbrüster 2006). The same is true for global consultancy firms, which through their large network, gather and disseminate knowledge in order to provide solutions for the problems of their clients. In this context, global management consulting firms have been positioned as 'thought leaders' representing the 'best practices' in management and as examples of 'knowledge-intensive' organizations (Alvesson 1993, Starbuck 1992); and as transmitters of managerial innovation (Sahlin-Anderson & Engwall 2002; DiMaggio & Powell 1983).

The prescriptive (or normative) literature on consulting, which also positions consultants as carriers of knowledge, usually focuses on how external consultants can build relations based on trust with their clients (Schein 1987; Maister et al. 2002). Here, the emphasis is on relationship building with a relatively more active role prescribed for consultants. Maister et al. (2002) conceptualize the consultant-client relationship as more or less similar to everyday personal relationships and argue that consultants need to build a close personal relationship with the client. On the other hand, although Schein (1987) uses the concept of "client system", he also emphasizes the importance of relationship building on the personal level. Both approaches are similar in the sense that they think of the consultant as the main agent in building and developing relations based on trust, even if both imply that there is mutuality when it comes to developing and maintaining a relationship.

2.4.4.1.2. The Critical Approach

According to critical approach, on the other hand, to evaluate consulting as a process through which expert consultants transfer knowledge to the clients does not provide a wholesome understanding. Therefore, the complexities of the consultant-client interaction should also be included for a more comprehensive picture (Fincham & Clark 2002). By focusing on different social aspects of this interaction, the critical scholars aim to draw attention to different dynamics which characterize both the consultants and the consulting industry.

The critical approach underlines the contested nature of consultancy knowledge and the various strategies undertaken by consultants and the consulting industry to influence clients and gain legitimacy. As consultant knowledge is not based on a formal body of knowledge, and as the service promised by consultants is mainly intangible, consultants have to put into practice various techniques of persuasion. These include usage of rhetoric, labels and terminology in order to convince clients of their expertise and in order to introduce so-called innovative management strategies and tactics (Sturdy 1997b; Alvesson & Anders 2002; Fincham 2002).

Collins (2000) contributes to the critical discussion by underlining the views of certain academicians about management gurus and their showmanship, with an emphasis on the lack of valuable knowledge and expertise to support client organizations. Collins also points at the claim of the academicians that external consultants do not generate new information but present what is already out there in a new format and argues that conceptualizing the external consultancy merely as a function of providing a body of expert knowledge for the clients bears certain shortcomings and leads to a discussion of what constitutes new and valuable knowledge.

In the critical vein of literature on external consulting, while the focus is on how consultants position themselves in the client-consultant relationship (Alvesson 1993; Clark 1995; Clark & Salaman 1996; Alvesson & Johansson 2002; Fincham & Clark 2002), there is an apparent opposition to prescriptions on how consultants should behave, and the idea of the consultant as the "competent professional", (Alvesson & Johansson 229) is challenged.

The critical literature on consulting also has a main theme that is of relevance for this thesis: the conceptualization of consulting as a process of persuasion during which consultants use various rhetorical devices and engage in various performances to manage the impressions of clients (Alvesson 1993; Clark 1995; Clark & Salaman 1996). Clark (1995) describes the consultant and an active agent who manages and controls the client-consultant interaction:

> If service characteristics, particularly intangibility, imply that a client will have difficulty in evaluating the quality of a service delivered, then there is a scope for the consultant to construct a reality which persuades clients that they have purchased a valuable and high-quality service. (18)

The idea that the consultant can construct a reality certainly implies some form of manipulation and challenges the taken-for-granted acceptance of the value of consulting put forth by the prescriptive literature. Yet, in both the prescriptive and the critical literatures, we find the same idea that consultants can, and should manage the client-consultant relationship. Furthermore, in both approaches, the active agent is the consultant. The difference lies in whether consultants possess information/guidance of actual value or they possess the ability to create an experience (in the client) of receiving valuable information or guidance.

Clark (1995) builds his argument upon empirical examples of consultants providing executive search services and management gurus. In such settings, the consultants perform in ways necessary to manage the impressions of their clients in the desired direction. Here, the consultant is a performer who aims to shape both the client definition of the situation and the interaction itself, through impression management; while the client is the audience. Although Clark is inspired by Goffman's point that all social actors seek to manage impressions and influence the definition of the situation, it is again Goffman (1959) who argues that not all individual (or team) efforts in this direction are successful:

> When we allow that the individual projects a definition of the situation when he appears before others, we must also see that the others, however passive their role may seem to be, will themselves effectively project a definition of the situation by virtues of their response to the individual and by virtues of any lines of action they initiate to him." (20)

According to Goffman, to ensure a smooth social interaction, all the participants in any given situation have to work within a consensus (21):

> Ordinarily the definitions of the situation projected by the several different participants are sufficiently attuned to one another, so that open contradiction will not occur. […] Together the participants contribute to a single over-all definition of the situation which involves not so much a real agreement as to what exists but rather a real agreement as to whose claims concerning what issues will be temporarily honored." (20-21)

In this framework, it is possible to evaluate external consultancy and external consultants as operating through such a working consensus in the organizational context. We may assume that in the organizational context, there are certain common views regarding the characteristics, abilities and roles of consultants. When external consultants interact with clients in such a context, together with their clients, they create collective definitions of the situation, in order for the consulting process to work.

Sturdy (1997a, 1997b), who criticizes the idea that the practice of consulting is characterized only by rhetorical persuasion, emphasizes the inherent uncertainties of consulting which put consultants in a vulnerable position. According to Sturdy, consultants, in the same manner as their clients, are under pressure to provide solutions to complex problems and to project a sense of control over clients.

> […]there is no reason to suggest that consultants are immune from the insecurities of either modern life or those peculiar to their position or job . Even in the high status / profile firms, consultants are under similar, if not greater, pressures than clients to resolve uncertainty and secure a sense of control over market (including client) environments and personal careers / identities. However, this view is rarely explored. (Sturdy 1997b 528)

Sturdy's (1997b) research demonstrates the pressure consultants experience in both presenting their expertise to potential clients at a decent price, in providing solutions in a timely fashion, and in managing conflicts and resentment from client staff. Furthermore, in order to provide solutions that fit clients' definition of the problem, consultants can be led to offer conservative or less innovative solutions.

2.4.4.2. Levels of Analysis

In management consulting literature, three levels of analysis can be identified, namely the macro, meso and micro levels. While the macro level of analysis involves political, economic, institutional and societal dynamics; the meso level considers relational and network issues; and the micro level focuses on psychological and social psychological foundations (Bies et al. 2007 789). In the following sections, management consulting literature that can be classified under each level will be summarized.

2.4.4.2.1. Macro Level

In the macro level analysis, the major focus is the management consulting industry and its relationship to organizations. The exploration of this relationship raises issues such as the economic and social dynamics of the management consulting industry, management consulting industry as a significant part of organizational life, and the rationale of organizations in hiring external management consultants. Such issues have been tackled by four major theoretical frameworks, namely sociological neo-institutionalism, signaling theory, transaction cost economics, and social embeddedness theory (Armbrüster 2006).

Sociological Neo-Institutionalism

Sociological neo-institutionalism focuses on the combined behavior of large groups of people. As regards the organizational literature, this approach rejects the idea that organizations are rational actors, and aims to explain the collective, rather than the individual behavior:

> The new institutionalism in organization theory and sociology comprises a rejection of rational-actor models, an interest in institutions as independent variables, a turn toward cognitive and cultural explanations, and an interest in properties of supra individual units of analysis that cannot be reduced to aggregations or direct consequences of individuals' attributes or motives." (DiMaggio & Powell 1991 8)

One of the key concepts emphasized by sociological neo-institutionalism is legitimacy, seen as a driving force that justifies particular forms and practices. Accordingly, such justifications lead to institutional mimicry, which demonstrates that organizations are highly sensitive to their cultural environments. As a result of this mimicry (mimesis), institutional isomorphism takes place, as organizations tend to model themselves after other organizations that they perceive to be more legitimate or more successful (Selznick 1996 273).

Sociological neo-institutionalism further contends that in order to understand the formal structure of organizations, one should not look for a rational system that coordinates organizational activities. Instead, the formal structure of an organization is institutionalized through external as well as internal factors, reflecting the then dominant/popular concepts of how work has to be organized. In line with this view, Meyer et al. (1991) argue that "the formal structures of many organizations in post-industrial society dramatically reflect the myths of their institutional environments instead of the demands of their work activities" (41) and the more this is the case, the more the organization displays confidence and satisfaction both internally and externally. Relying on such myths and routines, and developing several rituals out of them, organizations are able to cope with uncertainty.

The perceived necessity or efficiency of management consulting, according to sociological neo-institutionalism, is the result of the popular belief in its legitimacy. Therefore, organizations hire management consultants due to mainly external norms and trends. Since management consultants formulate and spread various management 'innovations', what the organization purchases is not the individual consultant (or the consulting firm), but the institutionalized products or ideas of specific consulting actors. Armbrüster (2006) notes such waves of fashionable management ideas such as 'Business Process Re-Engineering' (BPR) or the 'multidivisional organizational structıre' (M-form). DiMaggio and Powell (2000) also provide examples about the interventions of large consulting firms resulting in isomorphic changes in other organizations.

Although sociological neo-institutionalism could be considered much closer to critical view on management consulting, it also includes certain functionalist positions. Both the critical perspective and sociological neo-institutionalism have reservations regarding the legitimacy of management consulting, attributing its survival to external fashions and to popularization of innovative management ideas by large firms. Yet, sociological neo-constitutionalism also values the input of management consultants as independent from why this input is purchased. Moreover, in order for the ideas of management consultants to become popular and to be adapted, these ideas must have a standard, purchasable format. Therefore, both the value of input and its commoditization contribute to the legitimacy of management consulting.

Signalling Theory

Signalling theory is mainly concerned with understanding the behavior of buyers towards sellers of various services or products in situations where they do not have access to full information regarding these services or products (Spence 1973, 1974). In other words, the theory is interested in conditions of information asymmetry, which is seen as a common feature of market interactions:

> Asymmetric information is a common feature of market interactions. The seller of a good often knows more about its quality than the prospective buyer. The job applicant typically knows more about his ability than his potential employer. The buyer of an insurance policy usually knows more about her individual risk than the insurance company. Such asymmetries immediately give rise to a number of questions. What happens to prices, traded quantities and the quality of traded goods, if agents on one side of the market are better informed than those on the other? What can better informed agents do to improve their individual market outcome? (Lofgren et al. 196)

Signalling theory contends that in such cases, those in a position to decide whether or not to purchase what is offered have to operate with limited knowledge, that is, the knowledge provided by the sellers. In order to overcome risks that could arise from such a selection process, the buyers try to identify observable characteristics (signals) that would provide hints about the potential performance of the sellers.

A signal is defined as an activity or attribute that conveys information to others or alters their beliefs. Within the framework of the signalling theory, signals are a form of cımmunication that transmit information from the seller to the buyer (Spence 1974). In order for a signal to be effective, it has to have a sufficient cost (for the seller) so that sellers can be differentiated, and buyers must believe that the signal and the underlying quality of the seller are positively correlated (Stiglitz 1985).

In markets where there is high information uncertainty regarding products or services, such as the market for management consultancy, where it is usually hard to prove the quality of consultancy advice in advance, both the sellers and buyers are engaged in producing and monitoring signals. When top management consultancy firms monitor the signals produced by potential employees, they prefer to employ the graduates of top universities, and in turn, buyers of the management consultancy services prefer consultancies that signal the quality of their employees. In turn, the clients of top management consultancy firms are able to signal the quality of the advice they receive, and therefore gain legitimacy for management decisions (Armbrüster 2006 11).

Transaction Cost Economics

Transaction cost theory aims to explain why an organization carries out certain activities and services internally while others are bought and sold in the marketplace, by building upon the difference between production costs and transaction costs. While the production costs are those associated with productive activities such as manufacturing, product development and logistics; transaction costs are those that are related to organizing the economic activity such as determining the price of a product or a service, and negotiating various contracts (Canbäck 1998).

Transaction cost economics, therefore, can help our understanding of why organizations prefer to hire external consultants for a variety of services rather than using their internal expertise related to those services. When organizations decide whether to use their internal resources for improving the quality of management, or to purchase the services of external management consultants, they will have to compare the sums of production and transaction costs for each choice. Such a decision will be influenced by three factors: uncertainty, frequency, and the asset specificity of a transaction. If a transaction is high in all of these factors, it will be best to choose an internal solution. If the opposite is true and all the factors are low, it would be better to outsource the transaction (Armbrüster 2006 12-3).

Social Embeddedness Theory

Social embeddedness theory focuses on the significance of social ties and networks, arguing that economic decisions of organizations cannot be explained only through cost comparisons and calculations. The theory contends that, since exchanges of economic nature are embedded in social networks, in order to understand economic behavior, the larger context in which it is embedded should be considered (Borgatti and Foster 2003).

Considering the management consultancy market, where there is uncertainty of service quality and standards, both the decision of whether or not buying a consultancy service, and the process of choosing among alternatives are influenced by social ties and networks. From the perspective of the embeddedness theory, the initial driver that guides the decision to purchase the services of a management consultancy could be the knowledge gained through social interaction with business partners, then followed by calculative cost calculations (Armbrüster 2006 15-6).

Since it is quite difficult to objectively assess the quality of management consulting services prior to the contract, the purchasing organization will have to refer to informal criteria such as trust, reputation, and word of mouth of its specific social network:

> Standard economic analysis neglects the identity and past relations of individual transactors, but rational individuals know better, relying on their knowledge of these relations. They are less interested in *general* reputations than in whether a particular other may be expected to deal honestly with them, mainly a function of whether they or their own contacts have had satisfactory past dealings with the other. (Granovetter 1985 491).

2.4.4.2.2. Meso Level

While analysis at the macro level examines the relations between organizations and the management consultancy industry through specific focus on the rationale behind the acquisition of management consulting services; the meso level of analysis focuses on the interaction between the organization (client) and the consultant. The objective, at this level of analysis, is to decipher the dynamics of this interaction. As such, research at this level of analysis attempts to classify different types of client-consultant interaction, to understand the roles of both parties during the interaction, and to define the social dynamics influencing the interaction.

Literature demonstrates that a variety of roles have been attributed to external consultants. They have been described as agents of change, providers of resources, or transmitters of skills. The process of consultation has also been examined, with specific focus on its contribution to organizational learning (Kakabadse et al. 2006). Considering these different roles and the nature of the interaction between the organizations and external consultants, four models can be identified, namely the expert model, the critical model, the reflective practitioner model, and the interpretive model.

While the focus of the expert and critical models is the consultant, the reflective practitioner and interpretive models emphasize the process of learning between the organization and the external consultant (Nikolova et al. 2009). Although the theoretical approaches relating to these models have been discussed previously, they will also briefly be covered here in order to provide a comprehensive picture of the levels of analysis in management consulting literature.

The Expert Model

As noted by Fincham and Clark (2002), the expert model has dominated the literature on consulting from the late 1950s until the mid-1980s. According to this model, the consultant is in possession of expert knowledge that can be utilized to solve the problems of the client organization (Schön 1983). It is assumed that this knowledge is not available to the client, implying that the expert consultants are in possession of a monopoly in their respective areas of knowledge (Stehr 1992).

Schein's work (1969, 1987) has strongly influenced the expert model through his three client-consultant interaction models. These are the purchase model, the doctor-patient model, and the process consultation model. The assumption behind these models is that the consultant provides the client with expert knowledge which will be used for solving the problem of the client. The consultant, who is in a privileged position as regards possessing abstract and easily transferrable knowledge, is correctly able to decide upon the needs of the client and to develop effective problem solutions. Here, the client's role is just to supply information for problem diagnosis without being involved in the actual problem solving process (Nikolova et al. 2009).

The Critical Model

According to the critical model, knowledge is socially constructed and the recognition and sources of legitimacy are through social interaction (Alvesson 2001). In this regard, the knowledge acclaimed by consultants is not objective and scientific by nature, but rather constructed through the language of managers and management consultants (Clark and Salaman 1998b).

The critical model challenges the idea that consultants are in a privileged position regarding the possession of knowledge (Nikolova et al. 2009), and observes the specific behaviours presented during the client-consultant interaction. The model argues that consultants use persuasion and impression management techniques, and rhetoric and symbolism in order to gain legitimacy (Clark and Salaman 1998a). A rather negative interpretation of such techniques have led to describing consultants as manipulative and opportunistic individuals, who feed on the insecurities of the clients and advertise generic solutions to complex problems (Fincham 2002).

In the critical model, therefore, the power of consultants is not a result of their expertise as suggested by the expert model, but is the result of their rhetorical and impression management skills during the interaction with clients.

> Accordingly, consultants exercise influence over clients by constructing the meaning of what clients experience and by producing and disseminating new management fashions. In this process, clients also play a role as consultants need to build alliances with them in order to institutionalize new consulting practices. Thus, by acknowledging the evolving and strategic character of power, the model provides a more sophisticated understanding of the power processes within client-consultant teams, insights that are ignored within the expert and the 'reflective practitioner' model. (Nikolova and Devinney 2012 11)

The Reflective Practitioner Model

Developed by Schön (1987, 1983), the reflective practitioner model sees client-consultant interaction as a reflective conversation, during which the parties create knowledge. According to this model, in order to arrive at the best possible solutions for complex problems, such an interaction is necessary. The emphasis on mutual interaction means that this model does not conceptualize the consultants as owners and carriers of knowledge. Instead, the consultants reflect on their knowledge during the process of problem solving, explore their interpretations and assumptions, and share them with their clients (Nikolava and Devinney 2012 5).

Schön's reflective practitioner model proposes two types of consulting expertise, namely knowing- in- action and reflection-in-action. Knowing-in-action is tacit knowledge that is based on rules and procedures; whereas reflection-in-action is new knowledge created through reflection when routinely applicable knowledge is not sufficient to solve a problem (Schön 1987).

In the reflective practitioner model, both the consultants and their clients contribute to the problem solving process. While the consultants reflect on their expertise, the clients also join the process by providing experience and knowledge.

> In this model the relationship between client and consultant is balanced and is based on the demystification of expertise and on mutual exploration. Schön views both consultants and clients as interdependent as both parties make valuable contributions to the problem solving process. Consultants are now expected to reflect in the presence of clients on their expertise, thus making themselves confrontable by their clients rather than keeping their expertise private and mysterious, which is the case in the expert model. **[** ...**]** On the other side of the relationship, clients have to agree to join the consultant in the problem solving process and to work to make their knowledge and experience clear to themselves and to the consultants. As a result, the relationship becomes equilibrated and free of power issues as both parties give and receive help. (Nikolova & Devinney 2012 7)

The reflective practitioner model contends that knowledge relevant to the solutions of problems is created only through client-consultant interaction, due to the reflective process that both parties engage in.

The Interpretive Model

The interpretive model is also built on Schön's ideas and argues that the different approaches of clients and consultants arise from the interpretive communities they respectively belong. These communities are called communities of practice, with an identity defined by a shared domain of interest. Members have a commitment to the domain, and they share a specific competence that differentiates them from other people. Such communities may not necessarily be recognized as "experts" by outsiders, yet the collective competence of the community is valued by all members (Wenger 2009).

A community of practice, through the interaction between its members, develops a specific worldview or perspective. This development takes place as a result of the alignment of conceptual frameworks. This way, while the community reproduces itself by shaping its members, it is also transformed by the individual members (Devinney & Nikolova 2004). In this context, the consultant belongs to such a community that produces a body of knowledge from which he/she can draw. However, the clients, as an outsiders, cannot always understand such knowledge, as they are members of a different community. Therefore, the consultant has to make use of symbols, stories, rhetoric and models in order to provide an interpretive platform for the client.

Mechanisms for sharing/transferring knowledge to clients can include the construction of boundary objects such as narrative maps, labels, and diagrams; or the inclusion of 'brokers' - individuals with the knowledge and ability to understand differences between interpretations and to translate these between different communities. As demonstrated by Malefyt (2003) in the case of an advertising agency, the ad agency as a community of practice, makes use of symbolic representations and certain styles of conversation as tools to interact with the client during a workshop meeting, thus implementing a certain strategy that will allow them to achieve their objectives:

> Meetings give the appearance that they are guided by practical aims and reason when they really facilitate relationship negotiations, struggle for positions, and commentary. By this I mean that the agency's intentions are not realized in the rational exchange of information about brands and consumers. Rather, they become apparent in the subtle interpersonal dynamics that occur between people when they are carrying out specific tasks. In other words, the workshop offers a view into the type of interaction and devices used by the

> agency to build client rapport. Goffman termed this type of interaction 'impression management '[...]. (141)

In the interpretive model, the use of such devices and symbols are necessary in order to enable better knowledge transfer between different communities of practice, also contributing to a more successful relationship. Accordingly, within the framework of client-consultant interaction, the client side as a different community of practice also transfers knowledge to the consultant side. As a result, the interaction between the two parties "becomes a source for knowledge creation for both clients and consultants" (Devinney & Nikolova 2004 14), and neither side is positioned as more powerful.

2.4.4.2.3. Micro Level

In the management consulting literature, the micro level analysis focuses on the individual consultant and the client, and their specific interactions. As observations of client-consultant interaction at the micro level constitute frames for both the meso and the macro level analyses, the boundaries of this level are somewhat fluid.

Some of the major themes of micro level research are power relations between consultants and clients (Sturdy 1997a), the knowledge asymmetry between consultants and clients (Stehr 1992; Berglund & Werr 2000; Treem 2012), rhetorical tools used by consultants (Alvesson 1993), role positions of consultants and clients (Alvesson et al. 2009), and identity (Patriotta and Spedale 2009).

The focus of the micro level research on consultant-client relationship is mostly observed in discussions centered around rhetoric, handled mostly as the rhetorical tools used by consultants to legitimize their expertise (Sturdy 2004; Berglund & Werr 2000). Another discussion relates to identity construction by consultants (Alvesson & Willlmot 2002). Both these themes can be related to the concept of “impression management” developed by Erving Goffman (1959).

2.5. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Through the literature review on the concepts of expertise, expert knowledge and professional expertise, it was demonstrated that the distinguishing character of knowledge-intensive firms -like the management consultancies- was their proposal for claiming valuable expert knowledge (Starbuck 1992). The motivation of the clients in hiring expert professionals was shown to be the need to access to the skills and the abilities that are not usually secured by themselves (Stehr 1992; Stehr & Grundman 2011). The literature review and the related discussions also revealed the relational character of expertise, in the sense that expertise is essentially delivered for another party. The relational character of expertise is also detectable in the discussion on the legitimacy and trustworthiness of experts, as the judgments on the quality of professional expertise is made by the clients (Stehr & Grundman 2011).

The discussion of the major three levels of analysis in the management consulting literature, revealed that within macro level literature, the nature of the dominant perspective was functionalist. Within meso level analysis, on the other hand, the critical perspective was more dominant, where the interactions between the consultants and their clients were critically observed. Micro level analysis in management consulting literature, on the other hand, was shown to focus on the individual consultant and the client, and their interaction. One of the major and the most popular themes of this level of analysis, is the focus on rhetoric and related discursive practices used by consultants in constructing and presenting their expertise. The relationship of this focus with Goffman’s “impression management” was mentioned, but not detailed, as this detailing will be provided in the coming chapters.

CHAPTER 3
PR PROFESSION & PR EXPERTISE

3.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter concentrates on the debate of professionalism in public relations, linking this debate to the relationship of public relations practitioners with the issues of professionalization. In this respect, arguments of scholars and industry organizations whether public relations is an established profession are discussed in relation to scholarly literature on the criteria necessary for becoming a profession.

From arguments that public relations must adhere to a set of values or ethic that serve the public interest before it can claim professional status (Bivins 1993), to arguments on the necessity of a consensus about specific standards of performance as a condition for professionalism (Cameron et al. 1996; Sallot et al. 1997), and arguments for the establishment of a formal education as a major element of professionalization (Hainsworth 1993), this debate continues with more contemporary work. The more or less standard character of the public relations education, the growth of the theoretical body of knowledge, and the focus of the industry on professional standards and codes of ethics (Sha 2011), has impacted and contributed to the process of professionalization in public relations.

The chapter also discusses, at length, the professionalization research on the roles of public relations practitioners and some of the key typologies identified in this context. The discussion is then broadened to include the relationship of public relations consultancy services and the industry with the debate on professionalization. In this respect, the character and nature of consultancy services (Bruning & Ledingham 2002; Pieczka 2002); the consultancy practice as a component of professionalization (L'Etang 2004); and the different aspects of the consultancy industry (Verčič 2012, Wright 2013, Bashir and Fedorava 2014) are discussed. The reflections of these discussions in the context of both scholarly and industrial efforts in Turkey are also provided.

3.2. THE PROFESSION OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

Whether public relations is an established profession or an occupation striving for legitimacy through a professionalization project, has been and continues to be a major debate in public relations scholarship, education and practice. This is echoed, among many studies, in the findings of Hornaman & Sriramesh (2003) that although the least agreed upon area of public relations education was professionalism, both educators and practitioners agreed public relations education was the best tool in helping PR grow into a profession.

The traits approach has been adapted to public relations by Marston (1968) and Cutlip and Center (1982), among others. Marston (1968), applying the traits approach in the study of professions to public relations, defined eight characteristics or traits for the profession: a defined area of competence, an organized body of knowledge of some consequence, self-consciousness, competence of entrants determined by controlled access, continuing education, support for research, assistance with education of competent replacement, and independence.

Grunig and Hunt (1984) condensed these to five: a set of professional values, membership in a strong professional organization, adherence to professional norms, an intellectual tradition associated with an established body of knowledge, and technical skills acquired through long periods of prescribed professional education. They also argued that since professionalism is a certain set of attributes associated with an individual rather than with an occupation, some within the industry can be professionals, while others cannot, contending that an occupation becomes a profession when a majority of its practitioners qualify as professionals (441).

Wylie's (1994) list is also similar: A well-defined body of scholarly knowledge, completion of a standard course of study, examination and certification by a governing body which also has the power of disciplinary enforcement. Cameron et al. (1996), including a code of ethics, a comprehensive self-governing organization, licensing of practitioners, and performance based on a substantial body of knowledge; also call for intellectual development, broad autonomy and a greater emphasis on serving the interests of the public. Emphasis on serving the society rather than only the needs of the clients/employers is also proposed by Parsons (2004), along with ethical conduct, mastery of particular intellectual skills through education and training, high standards of performance, and objectivity.

In a similar line, Cutlip et al.'s (1982) criteria for professionalism in public relations include a specialized education for a body of knowledge and skills based on theory developed through research, provision of a unique and essential service to be recognized by the society, emphasis on social responsibility over client/employer interests, accountability of practitioners, enforceable codes of ethics and performance standards through self-governing associations, and accreditation policies and procedures to ensure high professional standards.

The traits approach was reflected in public relations literature through research on issues such as the protection of an autonomous area of practice, the contents and enforcement of the codes of ethics and standards of performance, clear jurisdiction over specific tasks, accreditation of professionals, the nature of public relations education, the capacity to offer unique and essential services, and the role of public relations professionals on emphasizing public service and social responsibility (Cutlip & Center 1982).

The same approach has also been confirmed and reinforced through the efforts of various professional PR organizations such as The Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) and International Public Relations Association (IPRA) among many, in the establishment of codes of ethics, the formulation of professional norms and the proposal of accreditation procedures (Ehling 1992). The foundation of the Global Alliance for Public Relations and Communication Management in 2002, with the objective of providing a global umbrella in addressing industry concerns, was another milestone in commitment to professionalism. Through the Stockholm Accords (2010), the field of communication management was formally defined, while practitioners were urged to be more closely involved in strategic business issues such as sustainability and governance. The Melbourne Mandate (2012) also emphasized the importance of professional accountability through adherence to ethical codes and high professional standards, as well as continuous learning to ensure these standards (Meyer & Leonard 2014).

Yet, whether there is a consensus among public relations scholars, educators and professionals on the understanding of professionalism, is a legitimate question as it relates to the construction and presentation of expertise in public relations. A study by Sallot et al. has pointed out the educators as having a clearer understanding of what professionalism is, and another study by the same scholars (1998) showed that educators were also more optimistic about the standards in the field than PR practitioners. This latter study also showed that educators tended to believe that they held themselves to higher standards than the practitioners in the field.

Lages and Simkin (2003) contended that professionalism in public relations can be examined at three different levels: the individual practitioner level, the industry level, and the academic level. The constructs they put forward and that were relevant at these levels respectively included the opportunity to engage in the management of communication at the organizational level, having an understanding of the strategic needs of clients, conforming to the standards of the industry, and attaining a quality of public relations graduates.

The clarity of PR educators regarding professionalism was also confirmed by Van Ruler (2005), who studied the understanding of professionalism through historical models from sociology. Van Ruler contended that scholars usually thought of professionalism in terms of a rationally-oriented knowledge model, and practitioners tended to view professionalism emotionally in terms of the personality model, while the professional organizations opted for the status model by developing rituals and standards of professional behaviour. Van Ruler claimed if the field wanted to create a valued expertise, all models had to be integrated and a single method had be used by all segments for the assessment of professionalism.

Suggesting a distinction between professional knowledge and professional action, Pieczka (2006a) argued that professionalism can better be understood in terms of this distinction. Pieczka defined professional knowledge as theory and professional action as the ability to apply abstract knowledge to real-life situations and problems, proposing that without a way to link the two, professionalism could not be understood and established adequately.

Aiming to provide future insights into the evolution of public relations as a profession, Bartlett and Hill (2007) examined the relationship between the public relations profession as a desired goal, and the contingent and responsive profession as a community of practice. Their findings in the pilot study among public relations and communication professionals in Queensland, Australia, suggest that while public relations professionals possess the educational, professional and organizational backing that reflect features of the traditional understanding of public relations as a profession, the actual work is practiced as a technical function. Elaborating on these findings, Bartlett and Hill suggest that instead of defining a set of rules arising from formulaic applications of professional practice to situation (as in accounting or law), flexible characteristics of a profession as a community of practice will provide a focus on the strategic nature of the public relations profession. Accordingly, it is through this approach that the strategic function of public relations can be understood fully, as this strategic role will shed light on organizational environments and improved methods of developing relationships with organizational stakeholders (10).

Pang and Yeo's (2012) study of the expertise and experience of crisis consultants in Singapore, although focused only on one specific area of public relations expertise, provides conclusions that are also valid within the more general frame of public relations expertise. The study showed that a majority of the consultants were generalists rather than specialists and a very few were trained specifically in communication. Furthermore, none had studied crisis communication as a speciality. Another finding was that the "rules" of managing a crisis were based on traditions, experience and common-sense knowledge developed through practice (861-2).

Brante (2013) notes the emergence of a generation of occupational groups in recent decades and emphasizes that these new expert groups provide services to various organizations by functioning as knowledge-based organizations, which he classifies as pre-professions. According to Brante, these are "pre- paradigmatic", which means that they have no clearly defined scientific platform, with open and fragmented practices. The increasing demand for pre-professionals, the widening of the financial sector, changes in the management of the public sector, advances in communication, emergence of new social and ecological problems, the development of new areas of profit, and the demand for innovators who exist at the margins of established professional domains, have led to pre-professions such as software experts, experts in international business transfers, management consultants, public relations consultants, environmental experts, alternative tourism experts, and certified wellbeing consultants among many others (7-8).

The recent study by Meyer and Leonard (2014) among member associations of the Global Alliance, with the objective of understanding their goals and actions in relation to professionalism in public relations demonstrates that there are several similarities between different countries regarding the mechanisms used to achieve professional status, including codes of ethics, contribution to a body of knowledge, and organization of professional training opportunities. Yet, not all the participating associations agree on issues of accreditation and a standardized public relations curriculum.

Meyer and Leonard's findings show that although there is a general consensus regarding the necessity of a quest for professionalism, strategies for achieving a professional status varied between countries. While accreditation is an urgent priority for some associations, others do not emphasize accreditation as a necessary factor for public relations to be qualified as a fully recognized profession. Most participating associations are actively engaged in educational programmes to support the professional development of practitioners, and in a similar manner, most contribute to their country-specific body of knowledge (385).

Yang and Taylor (2014) contribute to the professionalism debate in public relations by examining the structure of global PR professionalization manifested through networks between national and global public relations associations. The authors argue that professional associations have a significant role in professionalization processes:

> Professional associations, often invisible to the public, play crucial roles in the professionalization process. Associations create normative values, standardize practices,and present a unified identity to both practitioners and organizations that use their services. Consider how the American Bar Association (ABA) works across the world to strengthen the rule of law by disseminating American legal values. In public

> relations, associations such as the International Public Relations Association (IPRA) and the European Public Relations Education and Research Association (EUPRERA) represent some of the largest professional associations. Partnerships among organizations may influence the development of public relations." (2)

Applying World Polity Theory (WPT), which argues that worldwide models are formed on the basis of widely accepted values of usually the developed nations, to the professionalization process of public relations, Yang and Taylor take a closer look at the structure of the global network of professional associations of public relations. They assess that (at the time of their study) there are professional public relations associations in over sixty countries, providing training, accreditation and mentoring schemes; developing relations with the academy, sponsoring research projects; and socializing entrants to the field. As these associations also define professional norms and standards, they have an influence beyond their members (4).

Yang and Taylor's findings reveal the presence of a global network of industry associations, which suggest that public relations associations in various parts of the world recognize the value of cooperation at the international level. Within this global network, the dominance of European associations is observable and their frequent participation in international collaborations indicate the possibility that they are more likely to influence the norms and ideals enacted by international and regional associations (16-7).

Public relations industry associations have been involved in professional accreditation programs since the second half of 1960s. The Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) initiated its accreditation program in 1964 (www.praccreditation.org). The Universal Accreditation Board (UAB) (http://www.praccreditation.org/about-uab/) was formed in 1988, with the objective of making public relations professional accreditation more broad-based. Yet, although presently this accreditation is open to public relations practitioners all over the world, candidates for accreditation are dominantly from the United States. The UAB is the responsible body for overseeing the process through which practitioners earn the designation of APR (Accredited in Public Relations) (https://www.prsa.org/Learning/Accreditation/index.html#.V63Rdvl96M8) (Hainsworth 1993). The other international accreditation is the CMP (Communication Management Professional) certification (https://www.iabc.com/professional-development/certification developed by the International Association of Business Communicators. Also, the Chartered Institute of Public Relations, the largest public relations association in Europe, offers a professional certification called the Chartered Practitioner (www.cipr.co.uk). All of these accreditation schemes are optional for practitioners, and as reported by Kiefer (2013), the number of professionals with the APR credential has declined from an average of 256 per year between 1993 and 2002 to an average of 157 per year between 2003 and 2012.

Launched initially to distinguish those practitioners who uphold professional and ethical standards, these individual accreditation certificates mostly target employers that are likely to choose accredited practitioners for their serious and significant communication needs. On the other hand, whether accredited practitioners are a priority in hiring practices, remains a matter of debate, as all these certifications that are endorsed by professional organizations are voluntary. Therefore, there is a need to distinguish between accreditation and licensing, where the latter is a required process mandated by governments. Historically, it has been argued by Bernays (1979, 1980) that without a mandatory licensing, public relations could never become a profession. Forbes (1986) has supported this point of view, contending that voluntary accreditation cannot be enough to prevent malpractice in public relations and ethical standards can only be enforced through mandatory licensing.

Yet, there are also arguments against licensing. For example, Lesly (1986) argues that licensing would result in more bureaucracy, it would constitute a barrier against free trade, and it would limit practitioner mobility. Baxter (1986), in a survey of Midwestern legislators, showed that licensing of public relations practitioners would face an upward struggle for enactment, and licensing should be viewed as a last resort measure to be used in only in cases where the unlicensed practice of an occupation poses a serious risk to the public. Sharpe (1986) suggests that efforts for the recognition of public relations as a profession should focus on high standards instead of licensing.

3.3. PROFESSIONALISM AND PUBLIC RELATIONS PROFESSIONALS

The identity of the public relations practitioners has been considered from different angles in the public relations scholarship, such as literature focusing on practitioner roles (Zerfass et al 2013), practitioners as ethical guardians or advocates of client issues (Baker 2008; Bowen 2008), and how practitioners identify or distance themselves from public relations as a profession (Jeffrey & Brunton 2012). Yet, how professional identity is constructed has not been researched largely. Some exceptions are Edward's (2010) work on the gendered and racially defined PR identity and Curtin and Gaither's (2005, 2007), among others, use of the concept of "circuit of culture" to examine public relations identity.

Roles of public relations professionals have been researched extensively within the professionalization project of public relations, with the objective of identifying some key typologies. This body of research is based dominantly in the organizational context and therefore defines public relations practitioner roles within organizations. Broom and Smith (1979) have suggested four types of practitioner roles: expert prescriber, communication facilitator, problem solver, and communication technician. The expert prescriber is considered an authority regarding public relations problems and their solutions. The communication facilitator positions the public relations practitioner as an intermediary between the organizations and publics. The problem solver is a member of the management team and integrates public relations plans to overall organizational planning through rational problem-solving processes. The communication technician is equipped with skills needed to implement the public relations program (Broom & Dozier 1986 18)

Dozier's (1992) two major role definitions for practitioners, namely the managerial role and the technical role, have later been used in various studies. The major assumption of this line of research is that if public relations practitioners in organizations are members of the dominant coalition, they have a managerial role, enabling them to act beyond mere communication implementers or technicians.

Dozier and Broom, in their 1995 study, noted that the two major roles of manager and technician could only describe the primary functions of PR practitioners and that the majority of practitioners were responsible for both managerial and technical tasks. Noting the mutually inclusive character of these roles, they also put forth certain key factors, such as gender, professional experience, educational background, and the size of the organizational communications department that had the potential of affecting the enactment of managerial roles.

DeSanto and Moss (2005) have criticized this assumption as being a normative aspiration and argued that public relations practitioners in most organizations did not have such managerial roles. Berger's (2005) criticism of the managerial perspective centred on the argument that it was not possible to speak of a single dominant coalition in organizations, and that there were several decision-making coalitions. Moss, Newman and DeSanto (2005), through the findings of an international research program to map and depict the main elements of the managerial role performed by public relations practitioners, argued the need to conceptualize this role beyond the limits of the traditional manager typology:

> Public relations role research has offered a relatively simplistic one-dimensional view of management, focusing largely on the reported '*tasks*' performed by public relations managers, and largely ignoring the '*how*' and '*why*' dimensions of management. Even in examining what public relations managers do, questions arise about the adequacy of the role inventory measures used to try to capture what it is that public relations managers *actually* do. (877) (italics in the original)

Moss et al. further asses that management work and management expertise varies in scope both within a single organization and also across different organizations, and suggest a five-dimensional model to effectively represent the complexity of the work undertaken by public relations professionals. The five role models defined by this study are "monitor and evaluator", "issue management expert", "key policy and strategy advisor", "trouble-shooter problem-solver", and "communication technician". The authors also underline that most practitioners participating in the study reported performing a series of technical tasks along with managerial ones.

Beurer-Züllig et al. (2009) developed a classification of public relations practitioner roles in Europe through a study representing 1,410 communication professionals from 30 different European countries, and found five job clusters. The first cluster includes "negotiators" whose main function is lobbying; the second cluster represents "brand officers" who are marketing communication specialists; in the third cluster are the "policy advisors" who mainly advise the top executives; the fourth cluster is composed of "internal communicators", and the fifth cluster represents "press agents" who facilitate external communication through mainly media relations (165).

Molleda and Moreno, in their 2012 study, evaluated the relationship between professionalism and social roles of public relations practitioners. The authors assess the accumulation of a set of standards that guide the modern practice of public relations and the achievement of various levels of development in different parts of the world, hence underlining that an understanding about the levels of professionalism and social roles of practitioners is necessary (129).

Molleda and Moreno used an index of professionalism based on 16 items drawn from Freidson and Krause; along with four internal and external social role dimensions of practitioners in organizations (ethics and social responsibility, employee well-being, community well-being, and government harmony). The results of their study showed that higher levels of professionalism were positively related to internal and external social roles of public relations professionals (139). The authors argue that these results are significant, especially at a time when the impact of organizations on society has become a major issue, and say:

> One of the most important aspects of a legitimate profession is the commitment of its institutions and members towards their society of influence. The association between professionalism and social roles of practitioners should be used as a basis to promote the social impact of public relations in evolving economic and political systems worldwide. (140)

The objective of Vieira and Grantham's (2014) study was to discover key public relations practitioner roles through a survey among Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) members. Although they used different items, the results were similar to Beurer-Züllig et al.'s (2009) study. The five major roles they found were the "Brand Officer", "Press Agent", "Internal Communicator", "Negotiator", and "Policy Advisor" (65).

Johansson and Larsson (2015), summarizing the findings of previous research on public relations practitioner roles, contend that similarities between roles are more than the differences, and the function of strategizing is underlined in most studies (125). The findings of their study also confirm that the manager/technician dichotomy is too simplistic to embrace the scope of work and the responsibilities of public relations managers. Public relations managers perform tasks and duties in a broad spectrum, and their responsibilities are not limited with purely communication but include service, support and advisory tasks (137).

Fieseler et al. (2015) used data from a survey conducted with the European Association of Communication Directors (EACD) among marketing and public relations professionals in late 2010 / early 2011 and tested the roles model for the European context. As a result, they found four major role models: the “Diagnosis Model”, the “Coaching Model”, the “Liaison Model”, and the “Execution Model” (80). The first model is about providing information to the management about stakeholder demands. In the second model, communication managers act as advisors and consultants for management regarding the development of communication skills. In the third model, communication professionals are mainly responsible for communicating with external stakeholders including the media. The fourth model represents technical and organizational activities (80-1).

The results of the 2010 European Communication Monitor (Zerfass et al. 2010) showed that there were four professional managerial roles in public relations: the strategic facilitator, the business adviser, the isolated expert, and the operational supporter. More than half of the participants described themselves as strategic facilitators.

Defining public relations as a culturally relativist practice and positioning public relations practitioners as cultural agents who create meaning through the shaping and transfer of information, Curtin and Gaither (2005) attempt to reconstruct the traditional concept of practitioners as “boundary spanners” in terms of Bourdieu’s notion of cultural intermediaries. This conceptualization positions public relations practitioners as important actors of the cultural economy, in the sense that they play an effective role in generating representations and framing issues and events through their expertise in signifying (107).

Hodges (2006), commenting on the professionalization debate in the field of public relations, claims the move towards the professionalization of the field has been mostly concerned with depicting professionalism in terms of the establishment of professional industry bodies, and linking the issue with improving the identity of the field and the status of the occupation (81). Emphasizing the importance of public relations in the development of culture, and again drawing on Bourdieu's concept of "cultural intermediaries", Hodges suggests an understanding of public relations as a cultural intermediary occupation (83-4).

In Hodges' model of the circuit of cultural intermediation, there is no reference to a public relations expertise, but to knowledge as a constituent of the "occupational structure" and to "experiences" as a constituent of the "practitioner life world" (86). This reasoning is in line with the definition of public relations as a body of practical knowledge of a craft, reinforced with the accumulated experience gained through a socialization process during which the individual practitioner is exposed to various components of a culturally specific occupational life world.

Positioning public relations as a support function within and for organizations, Mintzberg (1983) said the source of power of public relations was its "expertise" in communication. The issue of power for public relations and its practitioners has dominantly been researched within the context of the "dominant coalition" (Thompson 1967; Hage 1980; L.A.Grunig 1992) in organizations and in relation to the differentiation of technical versus managerial roles of public relations professionals (Broom & Dozier 1986).

The relevance of public relations professionals as strategic management consultants (Simkin & Dibb 1998) emphasizes/presupposes the expert knowledge of outside public relations consultancies about the dynamics of their clients' industries as well as their board level policies, enabling these consultancies to assist client organizations in strategy development.

Identification of two major patterns of public relations, namely the synchronic and diachronic patterns, and the subsequent extension of these patterns into four models (press agentry/publicity, public information, two-way asymmetrical and two-way symmetrical) of practice throughout the development of the profession has been a dominant theoretical approach in various areas of public relations literature, as well as in discussions towards the professionalization of the occupation. Projecting a linear and progressive approach to the history of profession, this approach assumes that the practice of public relations has become increasingly more professional and ethical (Gower 178).

Grunig's (1976) "two-way symmetrical model", developed and renamed as the "mixed-motive model" by Murphy (1991), conceptualizes a win-win zone between the organization and the publics' self-interests. It follows that, since such a communication practice requires the organization to change its behaviour, the PR practitioner (or consultant) must be part of or have access to the decision-making body, or the "dominant coalition". The goal behind this reasoning, which promotes the public relations as a management function, is to legitimize and professionalize the occupation.

Yet, criticisms against this paradigm have questioned the definition of public relations as a management function, the reliance on functional models of communication, the emphasis on organizational-level theory and the failure to recognize the issue of power (Curtin & Gaither 2005). Taking a critical position against the ideal of professionalism, Steiner (1995) contends that professionalism begins with specialization, and argues that both professionalism and specialization reduce the richness of experiences and insights (8), detaching individual public relations practitioners from the holistic public world and reducing them to discipline-defined professional identities (10).

According to Steiner, this is achieved through efforts to establish a PR education paradigm to serve as the basis for accreditation and subsequent professionalization of the discipline, also reflecting a control over specialist public relations knowledge as a basis for expertise. Steiner says, “A push for professionalism always involves a degree of homogenization and reduction in diversity” (11), and although this could be desirable in professions like medicine or law, advocating a narrow professional role for public relations practice is highly controversial, during when even the business paradigm has shifted from “scientific management” to leadership and diversity management (11). Accordingly, for Steiner, the search for professionalism as such would lead to conformity, a narrowing of vision, a denial of capacities like intuition and creativity.

As noted by Hutton (1999), the aspiration of the PR practitioners/professionals to win management approval, to have seat at the management table, or to be part of the dominant coalition is still valid. This is also an important issue in domain battles between public relations and other functions such as human resources and marketing (135). When an external public relations consultancy is concerned, the same issue is observed in the level of relationships between the consultancy and the organization. Whether the external public relations agency team is able to communicate directly with the top management or not, is of concern also at the consultancy level.

However, Berger’s (2005) emphasis upon the need to examine dominant coalitions in relation to social contexts of public relations practice and the orientations and values of individual practitioners provides a wider and a richer perspective for understanding the roles of public relations practitioners, and their relationship with the dominant coalition. Berger suggests questioning whether public relations practitioners serve the organizations, their own career interests, the profession itself, or the society at large. According to Berger, the actors defining the public relations service should also be examined, whether they are the practitioners, their professional organizations, or the top level managers in organizations. This way, the roles of public relations practitioners can be grasped and discussed beyond the mere manager-technician dichotomy:

> These conflicting interests and perspectives create tension in practitioners and highlight the importance of roles taken on in practice, which cannot be separated from whom or what one serves or how one is defined. Those serving their own interests will adopt roles that best accommodate achievement of self-interests. Those who serve the organization and achievement of its financial and market objectives are likely to take on roles wherein they carry out instrumental directives as efficiently and effectively as possible. Those who seek to serve the interests of the organization and greater society are likely to find their roles to be complex and constrained. Diverse definitions of roles and interests, found even among professionals working in the same public relations team or function, render even more difficult the determination of what public relations will be and how it will be used in an organization. (23-4)

3.4. PROFESSIONALIZATION OF PUBLIC RELATIONS IN TURKEY

At this point, a brief look at the professionalization of public relations in Turkey will provide hints about the level of professionalization of the profession and the roles of public relations practitioners. In this context, the development of public relations education, the emergence of in-house communication departments and public relations agencies, efforts towards the representation of the profession and towards the establishment of ethical public relations practices will be summarized. Additionally, literature in Turkey about various aspects of professionalization of public relations will be examined.

Pinpointing the factors which demonstrate that public relations in Turkey can claim the status of a profession, Canpolat (2012a) provides a brief history of the development of formal public relations education, the initiation of communication and public relations departments both in public and private organizations, the rise and the growth of public relations consultancy industry, the development of professional ethical codes, and the status of professional bodies and associations. This brief history demonstrates that the first formal public relations undergraduate program in Turkey dates back to 1960's; the publicity and public relations efforts of first the public and then the private organizations have gained pace especially during the 1970s; the first public relations agency was founded in 1974; and the first professional public relations association was founded in 1972.

Asna (1988) refers to the initial steps of public relations efforts in the public sector followed by accelerated development of private sector efforts, underlining the then mistreatment of the profession:

> As in many areas, (public relations efforts) in the private sector have overtaken those of the public sector. The most important reason for this is that the financial resources of the private sector are more ample and that the private sector can closely monitor international developments, and it is more flexible. Yet, can we say this is good? I don't think so, because the profession has devolved. In Turkey, the profession of public relations is moving away from its true identity and the PR practitioner is being treated like a master of ceremonies or a protocol officer. (28)

Asna also criticizes the positioning of public relations function under advertising or sales departments in private sector companies, and the shortcoming of the public relations education in preparing graduates for the challenges of the profession such as good knowledge of a second language, developed writing skills, and awareness about the macro environment (29). Akil (1988) also points to difficulties in the establishment of public relations as a respected profession in Turkey, underlining the importance of the ‘educating’ the business world about the correct positioning of public relations function and PR professionals within organizations (230).

The first professional public relations association of Turkey (TÜHID- Turkish Public Relations Association) currently has 120 individual members (http://www.tuhid.org/tuhid-uyeleri.html) including in-house communicators, PR agency practitioners, and public relations scholars. Aiming to gather public relations practitioners under a single umbrella, TÜHID engages in several activities for increasing awareness about the profession, for enhancing professional solidarıty, and for supporting continuous professional development . Throughout its history, the association has cooperated with International Public Relations Association (IPRA), the Global Alliance for Public Relations and Communication Management, and Confédération Européenne de Relations Publiques (CERP) (Bıçakçı and Hürmeriç 5). The association has also been organizing the first and only public relations award scheme of Turkey, Altın Pusula (Golden Compass) (http://www.altinpusula.org/altin-pusula-halkla-iliskiler-odulleri.html), since 15 years.

On the public relations consultancy side, the initial efforts to establish a professional association date back to 1997, when top executives of some Turkish public relations agencies started participating in international public relations events organized by IPRA and ICCO. The outcome of these exchanges created a will to establish international professional standards and to increase awareness about measurement and evaluation of public relations efforts in Turkey, resulting in the foundation of PRCI Turkey (Public Relations Consultancies Inc. of Turkey) in 1998. The pioneers of PRCI Turkey also made a call to establish a measurement and evaluation agency, and PRNET was also founded in 1998. The first president of PRCI Turkey was Salim Kadıbeşegil, who led the integration of PRCI Turkey with ICCO.

The founders of PRCI Turkey also pioneered to accredit their agencies with CMS auditing. They regularly participated in ICCO international summits, set up an internship programme, established a certificate programme in collaboration with London School of Public Relations, and organized conferences with keynote speakers such as Christopher McDowall and Charles J. Fombrun. The efforts of the founders of PRCI Turkey (Salim Kadıbeşegil, Meral Saçkan, Ali Saydam, Necla Zarakol, Cem İlhan, Aytül Gülçelik, and Kaya Toperi) to increase awareness about international consultancy service standards, measurement and evaluation of public relations efforts and ethical practices resulted in the foundation of IDA (Meral Saçkan, personal communication, August 2016 ; Kadıbeşegil 2016).

Founded in 2004 by 13 public relations consultancy agencies, the Communication Consultancies Association of Turkey (İDA- İletişim Danışmanlığı Şirketleri Derneği), which currently has 27 member consultancies (http://www.ida.org.tr/eng/?page_id=57), aims to support the growth of the public relations consultancy industry and to elevate the standards of service. Other objectives of İDA include improving the reputation of the industry, supporting fair and ethical competition, and defining the standards of external PR consultancy service. İDA is also the Turkish national trade organization, representing the Turkish public relations industry as an ICCO member (http://www.iccopr.com/members/) at the international level.

İDA has also adopted The Consultancy Management Standard (CMS) (http://www.iccopr.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/CMS.pdf) through ICCO membership. CMS, a quality certification standard specific to public relations consultancy, is mandatory for Turkish public relations consultancies that are members of İDA, and all İDA members have to renew their certification every two years. Developed by the Public Relations Consultants Association of the UK, CMS combines elements of ISO 9000 and Investors in People. In Turkey, İDA positions CMS accreditation as a badge of professionalism for the public relations consultancy services. While supporting the improvement of consultancy business, CMS is also an assurance for both clients and consultancy employees that audited agencies offer quality management and performance. Carried out by independent auditors, the CMS accreditation covers 8 key business areas, namely “Leadership and Communications”, “Business Planning”, “Business Improvement”, “Financial Systems”, “Campaign Management”, “Client Satisfaction”, “New Business”, and “People Management”. Currently, xxx Turkish public relations agencies have CMS certificates.

The professional organization of in-house communication managers, The Association of Corporate Communicators (KİD- Kurumsal İletişimciler Derneği), was founded in 2009 and currently has 74 members, including national and international corporations (http://www.kid.com.tr/uyeler.aspx). Focusing on in-house public relations and communication professionals, KİD works to increase awareness about the profession, to lead the elevation of professional services, to support the education of new entrants, and to develop professional solidarity (http://www.kid.com.tr/amacimiz.aspx).

Both TÜHID and İDA have developed and continue to advocate the ethical practice of public relations through the principles and codes they impose upon their members. TÜHID’s Professional Principles (http://www.tuhid.org/tuhid-meslek-ilkeleri.html) and İDA’s Professional Ethical Principles (http://www.ida.org.tr/?page_id=96) offer ethical guidelines for Turkish public relations practitioners in line with the spirit of similar international documents. İDA, through its ICCO membership, has also adopted the IPRA Charter on Media Transparency (http://www.iccopr.com/members/media-transparency/), a document dictating ethical behaviour in the relationship between public relations consultancies and editorial providers. The joint declaration of TÜHID and Turkish Journalists Association (TGC-Türkiye Gazeteciler Cemiyeti) (http://www.tuhid.org/deklarasyon.html), announced in 2010 and also signed by İDA, and various other journalists’ and media associations, aims to improve the mutual relationships and the joint working environment of public relations professionals and journalists through professional and ethical values and practices.

A recent development concerning ethical professional practices is the document enttiled “Professional Principles in Communication and Media Relations Management” (http://www.ida.org.tr/?p=3400#more-3400), has been jointly signed by TGC, IDA, TUHID, KID, The Association of Informatics Reporters (BMD- Bilişim Muhabirleri Derneği), The Association of Economy Reporters (EGD- Ekonomi Gazetecileri Derneği), The Association of Advertisers (RVD- Reklamverenler Derneği), and Turkish Media and Communication Assembly of The Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB-Türkiye Odalar ve Borsalar Birliği, Medya ve İletişim Meclisi). The document proposes ethical and professional guidelines for both public relations practitioners and journalists, summarizes the responsibilities of each party towards a smooth collaboration model.

In Turkey, the debate concerning the professional standards of public relations is relatively new. Tuncer’s (2011) research, inspired by standards proposed by Cameron et al. (1996), investigates how public relations practitioners in Turkey perceive these standards. Although limited by 88 in-house practitioners employed by corporations listed in İstanbul Stock Exchange, the results of the study point out to professional dimensions that need to be developed. According to the results, although the practitioners think having a competency for research is a positive asset, they report acting with intuition during their professional practice. The practitioners think their role within the organization is defined more as a technician than a consultant who is part of the decision-making mechanism. On the other hand they believe that the public relations practitioners should report directly to the top management and participate in the executive body of the organization .

The results of Tuncer's research also reveal that the perceptions of practitioners regarding ethical performance, ethics and education do not demonstrate a consensus as to the establishment of professional standards; whereas perceptions about professional bodies are dominantly negative (74-77). The negative attitudes of in-house public relations professionals about professional organizations might be due to the inefficiencies of those organizations in reaching out to practitioners and launching initiatives designed to increase awareness about the profession and professional standards. As Canpolat has found (2012a), in more than half of the 43 public relations agency websites there is no information regarding professional responsibilities, and also no information about industry organizations. Nevertheless, nearly 20 % of the websites include information about IDA and ICCO, which is a demonstration of higher awareness of professional standards among IDA member agencies.

The presence of these professional and trade bodies, along with their emphasis on professional standards and ethical public relations guidelines demonstrates that significant steps towards professionalization have been taken. Furthermore, the presence of undergraduate, graduate and PhD level education, the emphasis on professional standards and ethical working principles are all factors promising a future potential for the profession of public relations in Turkey (Canpolat 2012a). Nevertheless, since formal public relations education is not a precondition for practicing the profession, individuals with a formal university degree in other fields or individuals without a university degree can work as public relations practitioners in PR agencies or in- house departments (Öksüz 2015 258).

The fact that there are no formal barriers for entrance to the profession of public relations in Turkey, which is also true at the global level -as explained previously in this chapter-, sometimes results in insufficient and sometimes unethical practices that tarnish the industry as a whole. This point is also emphasized by Öksüz (2015), who argues that lack of any mechanism to oversee that public relations is practiced in line with ethical codes, and the fact that individuals with no formal education or capability can practice public relations freely are factors that hinder the professionalization process.

3.5. PUBLIC RELATIONS CONSULTANCY SERVICES

Public relations practitioners as external consultants – “the invisible players” (Lages & Simkin 2003 305)- have rarely been the subject of academic research. Although a number of ethnographic studies detailing newsroom culture (e.g. Epstein, 1973; Gans, 1979; Tuchmann, 1978) have been produced in the 1970s, studies on the organizational culture of public relations agencies (or in-house departments) are rare (Curtin 2011).

Furthermore, the public relations consultancies and the consultancy industry has been related to negative attributes such as deception and been condemned as serving powerful capitalist and neoliberal interests, especially by critical scholars such as Miller and Dinan (2007). Public relations industry, therefore, has been treated as if existing in isolation through omittance of its obvious position of serving the in-house PR practitioners employed by powerful business.

The concept of consultancy has been defined by Williams and Woodward (1994) as a process in which the consultant provides a service to a client in order to meet the needs of that client. The service thus provided implies an expertise for which the consultant gets paid. Schultz and Ervolder (1998) emphasize corporate image-building to various external stakeholders when describing the services provided by public relations agencies.

Gabbott and Hogg (1996), in their examination of the particular features of public relations services that affect the decisions of the purchasers of these services, position public relations as a business advisory service, whether procured by the organization internally through the employment of specialist staff or by using the services of a consultancy(440).

Contending that public relations services or the public relations “product” displays a number of distinct and recognizable characteristics, the authors underline the need for the cooperation of the purchaser and the external consultancy in the specification and delivery of the service, and the perishable and the heterogeneous nature of the service. Taken as a whole, these factors create difficulties for the purchaser, as the product is intangible and cannot adequately be described prior to the purchase (439).

Gabbott and Hogg’s identification of three distinct clusters of purchasers is based on the information the purchasers consider important in the selection of the external public relations service provider. The research of Gabbott and Hogg, while demonstrating the importance purchasers place upon recommendation (especially from similar businesses who have used the same consultancy), also shows that third-party accreditation such as membership to an industry association or attainment of a national/international quality certification is not valued much by the purchasers (450-1). A similar point is made by Röttger & Preusse (2013), who describe public relations consulting both as an “experience good and a credence good” (111), in which the quality of the good and the effectiveness and efficiency of the actions of the consultant can be examined with limited reliability before or after the purchase.

Bourland (1993) has identified five categories for exploring the relations between client organizations and public relations consultancies: factors leading to satisfaction and/or dissatisfaction with current relationships, the selection (or pitching) process for a public relations consultancy, ideal criteria for successful PR consultancies and/or consultancy top managers, consultancy issues or trends, and others. She has also identified four common consultancy based conflict issues as clients’ dissatisfaction with the actual or potential output; issues relating to the actual accomplishment of the assignment (productivity of meetings, deadlines, access to the client team, etc.); issues relating to the structure of the agency and the account/client team; and issues relating to the “chemistry” between clients and agency teams.

Focusing on the nature of work, carried out in the public relations agencies/consultancies, with a specific emphasis on creativity, Daymon (2001) notes that most of the work in public relations consultancies is routine. Consultancies implement strategies that are similar across the industry. Even though there are different campaigns, tactics such as writing and distributing press releases, contacting the media, organizing special events, etc. are also similar; implemented on the basis of accumulated experience and expertise. Daymon also notes the working structure of public relations consultancies that are broken down either into single projects or “accounts”, managed by teams dedicated to the specific project or client (20).

Daymon underlines the multi-skilled character of public relations consultancy employees and points out to differences between advertising agency teams and public relations consultancy teams:

> In comparison with advertising agencies, whose teams encompass discrete functions (creative, account handling, media planning, etc), public relations consultancies comprise multi-skilled individuals able to undertake a range of practices: planning, implementation and evaluation, for example. Unlike advertising, distinctions within teams are not the result of different functional abilities, but concern the specialist client and market knowledge held by individual members. (21)

According to Daymon, the response of public relations consultancies to the issue of creative work depends on their size, the expectations of the clients, and the individual characteristics of employees, which in turn affect the management styles and organizational structures. While the smaller agencies have less external restrictions for developing creative solutions, they could at the same time be more cautious and tend to conform to the standard.

Creative teams in public relations consultancies (large or small) might compromise their own notions of creativity at the expense of conforming to client expectations about quality and innovation. Finally, procedures such frameworks of analysis, definition of objectives, benchmarking and budgeting systems, even if they might seem as restricting creative thinking, at the same time serve as enabling devices (27-8).

White's (2002) summary of the results of the study commissioned by The Public Relations Consultants' Association (PRCA), supported by the Public Relations Education Trust, and carried out during the latter part of 2000 and early 2001 contributes to the debate o the value of public relations services. The study aimed to find out the fee-setting practices of public relations consultancies and the clients' perception of these practices. The results of the study revealed that the major factors that were taken into account by the consultancies for fee setting were the scope, value and the complexity of the work requested as these had a direct effect on the formation of the account team and the amount/quality of work on the part of the consultancy. The relationship with the client, whether it was a new or an already existing one, and the available budget were also considered (358).

Although most agencies reported having established formulae for calculating fees, there were also comments that these formulae were no longer appropriate and applicable, due to increasing pressure from clients, especially about "markups"[2] . Issues of concern on the part of the consultancies were over-servicing, the shortage of good human resources, the insufficient professionalization of the industry, and the lack of financial and commercial awareness of the consultancies (358).

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[2] Markup: the ratio between the cost of a good or service and its selling price. It is expressed as a percentage over the cost. A markup is added onto the total cost incurred by the producer of a good or service in order to cover the costs of doing business and create a profit.

The study also found that clients judged consultancy fees according to the value of the client team, the level of advice offered, the creativity, and the time and expenses involved in the management and implementation of services. Clients expressed awareness about stronger brands among agencies, but said the services of some of the "top" brands could be inconsistent with the brand values they communicated (360).

The overall results of the study showed that fees for public relations services could not be determined with exact precision across the industry, due to several factors mentioned above, as well as the intangible nature of public relations work. According to the public relations consultancies, clients' limitations about fully appreciating the scope of public relations work, consultancies' lack of negotiating skills and financial awareness were the major problems that affected fee-setting practices. As for the differences in fees charged by different consultancies, consultants thought these were due to the reputation of the consultancy, the location and the size of the consultancy, specialist capabilities, the management of the consultancy, willingness of the consultancy to offer services at less than the market value, quality of the services, and the efficiency of the consultancy (364).

Bruning and Ledingham's (2002) study, which applies the interpersonal communication model to public relations agency-client relationships, aims to provide cues for public relations practitioners for the management of organization-public relationships through pinpointing the emerging and declining behaviors, communication and interaction patterns between the two parties. Although the study focuses on adding value to in-house public relations practice, it also provides helpful insights for exploring the relations between outside consultants and their clients in the public relations context. Presenting Knapp and Vangelisti's (1996) interpersonal interaction stages (introductory phase, exploration phase, escalating phase, assimilating phase, fidelity phase, contrasting phase, spiraling phase, idling phase, evading phase, discontinuance phase) to public relations consultants, the authors sought to trace these stages in the development and decline of agency-client relationships, also looking for “specific relationship markers” (Coombs 2001) for each phase. Account executive consultants of a large public relations agency met in groups to provide examples of communication, behavior and interaction patterns during these phases, which were then elaborated through a facilitated discussion.

The focus upon the creation of a positive impression upon the client during the introductory phase, the face-to-face exchange to reduce ambiguity during the exploration phase, the increasingly personal content of communication between the parties during the escalating phase, the generation of harmonious opinions during the assimilating phase and the public expression of mutual loyalty during the fidelity phase are also relevant in the context of the construction and presentation of the expertise of the external public relations consultancy. In the same manner, in order to mend the endangered agency-client relationship during the decline phases, the expertise of the external consultant in representing resolutions or solutions is vital for continuity of the relationship. An important outcome of the Bruning-Ledingham study is that public relations agency consultants adapt behaviors and patterns of interaction that are appropriate to the phase of relationship (31). Moreover, it was noted that inappropriate relationship strategies often adversely affected the relationships with clients.

The perceptions of the agency consultants about behaviors occurring in the introduction, exploration, escalation, assimilation, fidelity, contrasting, spiraling, idling, evading and discontinuity phases as the relationship starts, develops and ends, are noteworthy in the sense that they can also be drawn on for cues of impression management, especially by the agency (consultant) side of the relationship.

The introductory phase is focused on “creating the right impression” (26) to demonstrate that the agency will provide benefit to the client. The exploration phase, during which face-to-face interaction increases, is about information exchange to better define the role of the agency, and the attempt to “cast oneself in the best light possible” (26) is significant. The display of behavior to demonstrate that the agency understands and feels responsible for the needs of the client during the escalation phase, cultivation and performance of harmony during the assimilating phase, and the expression of loyalty to the client publicly during the fidelity phase show that management of impressions are essential in the building and maintenance of a beneficial relation with the client.

Equally essential is the finding that public relations practitioners think managing the client relationships during the phase of decline is challenging and requires additional relationship management skills (28). The contrasting phase during which differences between the client and the agency begin to surface, providing clients with acceptable explanations about the causes of conflicts and plans for resolution becomes an important persuasion skill. When differences of the previous phase are magnified during the spiraling phase, the relationship is still recoverable if the necessary actions are taken. If the opposite happens, the relationship continues to develop in a negative direction. The idling, evading and discontinuance phases are marked with lack of face-to-face interaction and the motivation to manage client impressions toward re-initiating the relationship is gradually lost (29-30). The comment of the participating consultants that “there are forms of communication, patterns of interaction, and behaviors that are appropriate” (31) based upon the phase of the relationship demonstrates a pre-conception and pre-modeling of the right behavior to create the right impression.

Magda Pieczka (2002), emphasizing the significant role played by the public relations consultancy in today’s contemporary public relations, calls for further research on the distinct nature of public relations expertise, often presented through an external agency. Pieczka notes that the interaction of this external consultancy with the clients is characterized by "re-interpretation of their needs in ways malleable to professional expertise" (322).

Focusing on the role knowledge plays in the constitution of public relations as a profession, Pieczka examines the links between knowledge and professional practice, also referring to Abbott's (1988) claim that professional work is constituted by tasks which a profession has successfully claimed for itself. Within this framework, Pieczka underlines the necessity for the presence of an abstract body of knowledge as the basis for this claim (301).

Pieczka defines public relations expertise as a body of practical knowledge, conceptualizing practice as both what the practitioner actually does and as tasks and techniques of an occupational group (302). According to Piezcka, public relations professional knowledge is made up of professional tools, problems to which these tools are applied to and truths that are held to be self-evident by public relations professionals (316).

Drawing on Bourdieu's "logic of practice", Pieczka suggests that public relations practice is examined as emerging from a particular "habitus" and identifies the components of professional expertise in public relations as "picture of the world", "conceptual frame" and "professional knowledge", and goes on to describe the function of each component in the overall construction of public relations expertise (304). Talking about the "conceptual frame", Pieczka emphasizes the situation of the public relations expertise between client interests and the sphere of public knowledge and public opinion.

Tracing the origins of the modern day public relations consultancy in the United States, Rudgard (2003) provides information about the roots and expansion –through mergers with and acquisitions of bigger marketing and advertising networks- stories of today's global PR networks including Hill & Knowlton, Burson-Marsteller, Fleishman-Hilliard, along with

Edelman, an independent international PR network. The contribution of these global PR networks to the practice of public relations is summarized as follows:

> No matter how these global agencies evolved, there is no doubt that they have helped transform the landscape of international public relations. The agencies have made international- even global PR- truly possible through their networks and connections to practitioners across the world that has been hard for many companies to afford or recreate in-house. The practitioners throughout their network have helped transfer public relations concepts and skills from one part of the world to the next, even making public relations in some markets more sophisticated. The scale of the assignments and the commitment by world-renowned clients has shown businesses, small and large, the power of public relations. In addition, clients cannot make such an investment without being able to see a demonstrable return on their investments—driving forward the development of PR evaluation methods. All of this has helped to make public relations a more valued and respected marketing tool (462).

Rudgard concentrates on the international PR networks and states that the most important reason for clients to prefer these agencies is their need for control and consistency over their international communication. The second most important reason for clients to work with international networks is the client's lack of internal resources or expertise. Yet another reason is the rapid expansion of businesses, often into new and/or unfamiliar markets, in which the clients need strong communication. Other reasons are the need for management of issues and crises, the need for quick results, necessity of an international program when there is no support from local management, the objective of greater cost-saving, the reluctance of the client to invest in an internal communication team, and the knowledge of the network about local media and culture. (462-63)

As for the services required by clients from global networks, Rudgard lists coordination and quality control at the international level, strategy and program development, creative ideas, development of communication tools and materials, implementing best practices, delivery of public relations activities at a local, regional or international level, reporting on communication activities, intelligence regarding subjects of interest to the client, evaluation and measurement of communication efforts, and resourcing for short-term or long-term staff (466-67).

The handling of international client accounts by the global public relations consultancies exhibit different structures. One common structure is implementation by the local in-house team or a local independent PR agency through the strategic management, coordination, and guidance of an international team of agency consultants. Another is the presence of an international lead team and local market implementation teams, these being either the local representative of the global network or an independent local agency. Although less common, a third structure is an international agency being assigned to work in multiple markets or regions, without the central coordination of a leading agency team or consultants (467).

Appointing a global public relations agency and choosing one of the above working structures does not mean that the relationship between the agency and the client organization will be a fruitful one, and the expected communication outcomes will be achieved. There are certain barriers to be considered, such as the harmony between the structuring of an international campaign and the available local sources, whether in the form of in-house teams or local agencies, the reluctance of the local clients to work with internationally imposed PR agencies, and the insufficiency of the clients' senior management as regards strategically defined communication objectives, the unrealistic expectations of clients, and positioning the agency only as an implementation team without taking into account its strategic input. Although very few of the in-house or agency public relations practitioners interviewed by Rudgard thought the poor performance of the PR agency was a major barrier to success of communication programs, it is common that the PR agency usually becomes a scapegoat for various client shortcomings:

> Yet, when clients are asked about their previous agency or put an account up for repitch, the current agency's performance is often the first explanation given—it seems that, all too often, the agency becomes the scapegoat for "poor results." However, the message from the practitioners we contacted seems to indicate that these dissatisfied clients might also want to look inside their own organizations for clues as to why the relationship wasn't as successful as it could have been. From the feedback of the interviewees, it seems that clients should make sure that they have absolutely communicated their objectives and expectations clearly to internal staff, have their staff's full commitment to the effort, have the right structures in place, and have the appropriate levels and mode of financing to match. Because it is clear that, from an agency perspective, all the training and tools in the world cannot address these issues. (471)

Rudgard notes that international public relations agencies also face other criticisms from clients, from other disciplines such as marketing, and from independent and local competitor agencies. One of the most common criticisms raised by clients is the lack of creativity, due to the global communication formulas used by international networks. Another complaint is the increased bureaucracy born out of global reporting structures. Problems that arise from human resources management, although not unique to international networks, also give rise to complaints, especially in the form of lack of knowledge of young practitioners and high turnover rate (472).

Since international PR networks are largely dependent on large global clients, retaining those clients is a major challenge. Another equally important challenge is the difficulty of demonstrating the value of the services provided. As international public relations agencies, as well as independent or local ones, are assigned a v complex variety of services, it is difficult to determine a single, all-applicable measurement and evaluation system. The difficulty increases also due to the very nature of public relations work, which is less tangible compared to marketing or advertising.

> Advertising agencies are performing a service that is primarily linked to consumer awareness and understanding. This can be measured through consumer surveys. On the contrary, PR agencies, especially those with an international focus, might be hired for a variety of reasons such as product PR, repositioning a brand, and managing or preventing a communications crisis. The fact is that PR assignments, even consumer assignments, can be much more complex in their objectives than advertising assignments and possibly other assignments for marketing services firms. The reality is that having one standard industry tool for measurement (similar to tools used by the advertising industry) is proving difficult. (473)

The public relations consultancy or the PR Agency has also been examined in the public relations scholarship in relation to the professionalization of the field. For example, L'Etang (2004) interprets the emergence of public relations consultancies in Britain as a development in terms of professionalization in the sense of a claim to expertise for counsel. Pointing out to the similarities between public relations and management consultancy business, Pieczka (2008) contends that the unique nature of the PR consultancy knowledge and expertise necessitates rhetorical work for the legitimization of professionalism; conceptualizing the public relations consultancy work as a practice carried out in a complex environment and drawing attention to public relations consultancy expertise which is usually not supported by an academic background (2002, 2006).

Pieczka (2008) emphasizes the need for exploring the nature of knowledge utilized in public relations practice through consideration of the specific type of knowledge used, the effectiveness of the counseling through this knowledge, and the dynamics of client-consultant relationship, in order to understand "how public relations constructs itself as a profession" (7). In this respect, it is useful to capitalize on the similarities between management consultancy and public relations consultancy, as the service provided by both depends on knowledge that the organization/management needs and in both sectors, the ownership structure and the unique dynamics of this specific type of business create different processes of knowledge production and different operational structures (8).

Pieczka (2008) further observes that although the emphasis on professionalization has ironically led to diversion of attention from external consultancy, the rise of global public relations consultancy networks has been noted in literature, usually from a critical stance (5). Public relations, as practiced by consultancies, has been examined through the concept of "public relations industry" (Miller & Dinan, 2000, 2007), pointing out to the practices of consultancies, big businesses and governments and ignoring, in a way, the in-house public relations as practiced by public relations professionals employed by organizations.

Pieczka (2008) notes the under-conceptualization of 'industry' and warns against drawing conclusions from an unrepresentative basis and equating the consultancy industry with the biggest global networks. Another well-directed assessment by Pieczka is that the analysis of the so-called public relations industry at the macro-level is insufficient in providing information and insight about the actual work, application of expertise, and generation of economic income at the consultancy level (6).

Pieczka's analysis of the public relations consultancy industry in Britain is based on PR Week Magazine's top 150 consultancy listings between 1995-1999, annual reports of publicly owned communications companies, interviews with consultants and journalists, and fieldwork notes gathered in 1997, 1998 and 2007 (9). This analysis reveals that there are a number of parallel points between public relations, advertising and management consultancy industries regarding the effects of globalization, consolidation and diversification on their structures and practices. Other outcomes of Pieczka's analysis are that the public relations consultancy sector is focused on a diverse range of services and clients and estimating the exact size of the industry is difficult as the data available is focused on a small section of the sector (26-7).

Ki and Khang's (2008) study points out to the increase in the number and scale of mergers and acquisitions in the public relations industry, especially in the form of large public relations firms acquiring independent companies with expertise in specific areas to support their global public relations businesses. A typical example is the acquisition of Nelson Communications Group and Copithome & Bellows Public Relations by Porter Novelli in 1999. Another trend is smaller agencies merging with larger ones in order to gain access to larger networks and new clients (282).

Analyzing the Thomson Financial Securities Data for all mergers and acquisitions completed by U.S. based public relations agencies and all mergers and acquisitions targeting U.S. based public relations agencies between 1984 and 2005, and dividing such activities of public relations agencies into three types – identical, related, and different sectors- Ki and Khang found that there was an increase in the frequency of mergers and acquisitions from the early 1980s to the early 1990s. Followed by a decrease after the early 1990s, mergers and acquisitions once more took upon an increasing trend from the mid-1990s to the early 2000s. The results of the analysis also showed that most cases of mergers and acquisitions conducted by and targeting public relations agencies were of the identical type (282-3).

Proposing to differentiate public relations agency, public relations services and public relations consultancy, Verčič (2012) contends that while agencies primarily sell experience, services sell efficiency and consultancies sell expertise and that their cultures are respectively publicity, business and professional oriented (246). Public relations agencies mainly deal with generating media coverage for their clients, generating a culture similar to that of journalism, and focusing on good writing, visuals and attractive stories. Public relations service firms are dominantly engaged in supporting marketing efforts, also offering other services such as media relations, lobbying, employee communications, etc. Public relations consultancies offer services that concentrate on the communication needs of corporations, governments, and non-governmental organizations at the top executive level. This level of service requires strong conceptualization and analysis skills in order to understand the clients' situation, needs, and alternative solutions (247-251).

Verčič emphasizes that these three different types of agencies are idealized classifications and that they do not exist in their pure forms in real life and what usually happens is that most of the agencies exhibit combined forms of them. Although not linear and pure, once can speak of dominant forms in different periods:

> The three public relations cultures –media, business, and professional- are consecutive in the dominance they can claim among public relations firms. Publicity culture was dominant in the form of public relations agencies in the first half of the twentieth century, business culture began taking over the dominance in the form of public relations firms in the second half of the twentieth century, and professional culture is claiming dominance in the form of public relations consultancies in the new millennium. Not that consultancies dominate in numbers; empirically they are in minority, but the majority of firms would like to be (like) them, or even claim, without any basis, that they are. (252)

Verčič also argues that the three different cultures can be depicted and related to positional differences within the same agency. Publicity culture exists at the lower level among communication technicians, business culture is observed at the middle level among mid-level account managers and professional culture belongs to the top level (252).

Stating that there is a detailed and empirically grounded knowledge about various aspects of management consulting and consultants, Frandsen et al. (2013) emphasize the insufficiency of research on communication consulting:

> However, we still know very little about the external or internal consulting work offered and performed by communication professionals in the field of strategic communication (including public relations and corporate communication) in Europe, North America, Asia and other parts of the world. Although communication consulting agencies play an important role when private and public organizations are in need of communication to reach their organizational goals, they have not often been subjected to scientific study. (81)

Inspired by the autopoietic systems theory of Niklas Luhmann and envisaging organizations as nontrivial systems that cannot be changed from outside, Röttger & Preusse (2013) contend that consultants, instead of focusing on the possibility of exerting a direct influence on organizations, should rather focus on systemic learning and self-reflection to support their clients through observation, presenting different possibilities that might not be available to the client (105). Accordingly, the unique contribution of the external public relations consultancy for the client organization is supporting the organizational capacity for reflection, understood as attaining a higher capacity for processing the environmental complexity. Apart from enlarging the organizational capacity for reflection, external public relations consultants can also contribute to the harmonization of the self-description of the organization and of its description by external stakeholders (108).

Another significant point made by Röttger and Preusse is their distinction between advice and action with regard to external public relations consulting. Underlining that the boundaries between advice and action are fluid in practice, the authors note to the limited application of purely advisory public relations consulting and the inclusion of public relations consultants in producing communications at the operational level:

> From the client's perspective, cooperation with external PR service providers is particularly aimed at redressing human resource deficits in partly understaffed press and communication departments and bringing in specialist know-how, for instance, for campaigns or new communications technologies. There is only a minor demand for

> the central PR consulting functions in the proper sense of the term. PR consulting is, in some instances, even explicitly rejected because the domain of policy is regarded as being too sensitive and the consultants as being unsuitable. (109)

Röttger& Preusse's systematization of different roles of public relations consultants can shed light upon the different ways through which external public relations consulting is interpreted by both the client organizations and the consultants. The first role dimension is expert consulting versus process consulting as two typical forms in practice, where the expert consultants apply their knowledge and propose solutions to communication problems and the process consultants provide the necessary know-how for the structuring of the problem solving process. The second role dimension is conceptual consulting versus implementation-oriented consulting, where the conceptual consultants focus on questions regarding the strategy /management of communications and the implementation oriented consultants provide advice for the planning and implementation of communication actions (112-13).

Wright's (2013) overview of the operational structures of public relations agencies, although based on the practices of US based global PR networks, is valid for agencies in other parts of the world, including Turkey. Wright assesses that public relations agencies have two main kinds of operational models, the functional structure model and the accounts group model. In the first model, agencies operate with expert staff members in various practical working areas of public relations. In the second model, teams of agency employees work with a number of clients with related interests. This latter model has evolved and resulted in "account practices" or "account sectors", enabling agencies to offer unique branded services with the objective of displaying specific expertise and gaining competitive advantage (142). Examples include Genesis Burson-Marsteller's "GBM Client Studio" for coaching corporate leaders, Golin's brand communications service "BrandVoice", Hill & Knowlton's crisis management and communication service “Flight School, and FleishmanHillard’s celebrity public relations brand “CelebFluence”.

Wright notes that the ability to attract and retain top talent is one of the major concerns facing the public relations agency industry. This is supported by various recent industry surveys and reports, as expressed in more detail later in this chapter. Barriers to finding, motivating and keeping talented staff include the discrepancy between public relations education and the expectancies of public relations agencies, considerable movement of employees between agencies, the low wages especially in entry-level positions, and restricted possibilities of promotion and salary increase (146).

Bashir and Fedorova (2014) have used industrial organization theory as a framework and investigated the degree of conglomeration among the top 100 U.S. public relations agencies and the characteristics of these conglomerated agencies, by analyzing the official websites of these agencies and by using the *Mergent* database. Conglomeration, as defined by the authors is the expansion of a company by acquiring other firms in related or unrelated fields with the objective of achieving efficiency and effectiveness in a target market. According to the results of the study, only 24 % of all of the leading U.S. public relations agencies were part of conglomerates such as Omnicom, Interpublic and WPP Group, and nearly 22 % of these conglomerates operated in businesses that were related to public relations (766).

Bashir and Fedorava’s analysis revealed that public relations agencies that were part of conglomerates, employed an average of 50 or less staff, had public relations as their primary service followed by marketing, merged with a conglomerate in a related communication business, provided full public relations services - only 35 % of them claiming expertise in specific areas of public relations-, tended to be located in metropolitan cities, and had higher fees (766 -69).

3.6. THE COMMUNICATION CONSULTANCY IN TURKEY

3.6.1. The Scholarly Literature

In the Turkish context, public relations consultants in public relations agencies have come into the scholarship radar in a rather limited scale and studies have dominantly focused on the perceptions of consultants on various issues and functions of public relations or public relations agency human resources.

Şenkal's (2013) exploration of how public relations in Turkey was impacted by its roots in the public sector including related perspectives of two senior practitioners; Boran's (2006) inquiry about the expectations of public relations agency presidents from the graduates of communication faculties; Canpolat's study of the public relations agency web sites to understand their attitudes on professional ethics; Görpe's (2005) examination of the perceptions of public relations practitioners on corporate social responsibility; Özkoyuncu's (2015) focus on the contribution of in-house public relations practitioners and PR agency consultants to strategic management of organizations; and Aydınalp's (2012) examination of the websites of Turkish public relations agency websites to assess how they present themselves online are some examples.

Uzunoğlu and Onat's (2012) research providing insights on how Turkish public relations firms adapted to the 2008 economic crisis is an example which highlights the changing business models in the Turkish public relations agencies. Another example in a similar line is Uztuğ et al.'s (2005) study aiming to present a frame to determine the types of services provided by Turkish public relations agencies, and to understand how these agencies define themselves and their services.

Yılmaz and Karademirlidağ's (2007) study focuses on understanding the attitudes of Turkish public relations agencies about reputation management, finding out how they position this service within their larger service pack, and whether or not they are able to utilize any means for the measurement of the results of their reputation management services. Carried among 20 CEOs of public relations agencies who are members of the Turkish Public Relations Association (TÜHİD), the research revealed that the majority of PR professionals researched, although they associated corporate reputation with concepts such as responsibility, honesty, reliability, and continuity; were not able to provide clear definitions for the term. Within the framework of the services demanded by clients, the consultants reported that the service most demanded was media relations, followed by marketing communication. The demand for corporate reputation services was not strong, as only 8 consultants said they were providing corporate reputation management services for their clients . Among benefits of corporate reputation management, surviving crises with minimum loss was the most popular benefit cited (183-4).

Yılmaz and Karademirlidağ's research demonstrates that back in 2007, the concept of corporate reputation could not be very clearly defined by PR consultants, the benefits of corporate reputation management were not fully grasped both by clients and consultants, and the PR industry still could not define and present it as a valuable consultancy product. Yet, as early as 1995, following participation in a conference by Charles Fombrun, some public relations agencies had started including reputation management as a speciality service, and the first private sector reputation management program was initiated at Koç Holding (a leading Turkish conglomerate) by the strategic support of a consortium including two PR consultants and a management consultant (Bıçakçı & Hürmeriç 2013 7).

The descriptive study of Tandaçgüneş (2005) aims to understand how Turkish public relations agencies operate and how they define the relation between public relations theories and their services. Through semi-structured interviews with 6 top-level public relations agency executives, the research seeks to depict the level of academic knowledge of the interviewees; the extent to which academic knowledge is integrated into their agency operations; and the profile of the agencies vis-a-vis their attitude towards theory. The results show that the interviewees, even if they have majored in communication, have not specifically taken courses on public relations theory. Although the executives participating in the study said they followed public relations publications regularly, their access to books on public relations theory proved to be very limited. Furthermore, the in-house training of agency staff had no theoretical focus, but was generally directed towards improving agency services such as media relations, project management, and marketing public relations. The interviewees also could not cite the names of prominent public relations theories and the names of scholars in this field. When asked how they saw the relation between theory and practice, the majority of agency executives said practical implementations constituted a base for theory development (309-11).

Susar’s (2003) study among 60 Turkish public relations agencies provides information about their average age, their geographical location, the number of partners and employees they have, their organizational structure, their service focus and the services they provide, their client profile, and the criteria of their clients in preferring them. The study also presents data on the demographic profile of agency executives. According to the results of the study, more than half of the agencies researched were founded after 1995 and 81.7 % of them were situated in Istanbul’s European side. 70 % of the agencies had 2 or 3 partners, with an average employee count of 12. Regarding the organizational structure of PR agencies, the majority of them had media, account, creative, and consultancy departments (54-57).

While 20 % of the agencies said their service focus was “public relations consulting”, those reporting their service focus as “publicity and event management” also constituted a considerable percentage of 18.3. When asked about the services they provided, “publicity and media relations was at the top of the list (98.3 %), followed by “event management” (95 %), and PR consulting (84.7 %). While a significant majority of public relations agencies participating in the study said their clients were mostly private sector companies, the top four private sector industries retaining PR agencies were reported as information technologies, health, textiles, and tourism. When asked why their clients preferred their agencies, the agency executives reported the top three reasons as “experience and expertise”, “quality service”, and “reliability, honesty and consistency” (58-60). The educational backgrounds of PR agency executives in Susar’s study demonstrate that during the period of the research, although the graduates of communication faculties constituted the majority, the graduates of public relations programmes among them were represented only by a 38 % (62).

Uztuğ et al.’s (2005) study aims to put forth a frame that exhibits the service areas of Turkish public relations consultancies are, and to provide descriptions for these areas. To this objective, the authors investigate and discuss the terms used in PR agency names and services. Content analysis of the websites of 19 PR consultancies reveals that more than half of them do not have the term “public relations” in their names, and “communication” is a more preferred expression when naming the agencies. This tendency is also confirmed by Tunçel’s (2003) article in which the author assesses the preference of public relations agencies to call themselves as “communication consultancies” (120). Agencies using both the terms in their names represent only 10.5 % of the investigated population. Contending that this is due to the popularization of the concept of “integrated communication” (termed as “combined communication” in the study), Uztuğ et al. (2005) state the following:

> This situation seen in the agency names is important in two respects. First of all, it could be stated that the combined communication discussions having been experienced since 1990s in Turkey have forced the agencies to revise

> their service areas and service definitions. The advertisement and public relation agencies have tried to achieve widening of their own service areas with the help of the concept of "communication" once the combined communication has been put on the agenda. Second, it could be said that the developing and improving sector has made renovations so as to make good use of new business opportunities. (5)

Regarding the services provided by the agencies explored in the study, the authors group them under three main titles, which are, the "traditional services" (media relations, issues management, crisis management, event organization); "marketing related services" (marketing PR, event marketing, sponsorship, brand management, consumer related marketing); "corporate communication" *(named as "institutional communication and esteem" by the authors)* (social responsibility, leadership communication, reputation management). Although there are problems and ambiguities with respect to the groupings and categorization of these services, the study reveals that the most sought after service is media relations, followed by crisis management, corporate communication, and event management.

Canpolat's study (2012b) examines the websites of Turkish advertising and public relations agencies with a focus on the information they provide regarding their services, in order to determine the similarities and differences between services. The results of the analysis reveals that the public relations, more than the advertising agencies, are communicating their service areas, sometimes in detail, in their websites. Furthermore, it is assessed that public relations agencies and advertising agencies have overlapping service areas such as marketing communication and online communication, the differentiating factor for advertising agencies being the creative services. Canpolat's study also reveals that PR agencies offer services in almost all working areas of public relations, ranging from employee communications to special events organizations; and from strategic communication planning to international public relations (100-101).

Another study by Canpolat (2006) aims to understand how public relations agencies in Turkey are positioned towards crises and crisis management; and whether they develop proactive strategies in this respect. Moreover, their methods of communication during crises, and their relationships with the media at times of crisis are also investigated. According to the results of the study, nearly half of the PR agencies participating in the research see crises as both a threat and an opportunity; and they report that they would advise their clients to engage in symmetrical communication during crises and to take responsibility. All the PR agencies included in the research agree that the media should be positioned as an ally during crises; and prioritize media as the most significant stakeholder. The fact that only a small ratio (7.1 %) of public relations agencies prioritize the victims of the crisis as the most significant stakeholder is rather interesting and perhaps needs to be questioned through other research (127- 132).

Canpolat's study also reveals that the public relations agencies see the top four priorities during crises as communication of correct and ample information; acting fast; managing the crisis; and being fully informed. While almost all public relations agencies report that they have pro-active crisis plans for their clients, only half of them report in implementing crises simulations. Overall, the ideas and attitudes of Turkish public relations agencies about crises, crisis management and communication show that PR agencies in Turkey demonstrate a fairly well degree of professionalism (133).

The research of Uzunoğlu and Onat (2012), although its specific focus is to determine how Turkish public relations consultancies have reacted to the economic crisis of 2008, also provides hints about the approach of these consultancies to advances in digital technology, and about the common challenges faced in agency-client relations in times of economic turbulence. The authors conducted interviews with the owners and/or partners of 10 İDA (Turkish Communication Consultancy Companies Association) member public relations consultancies, and found out that the majority of the consultancies developed new pricing strategies to cope with tightening client budgets, experienced dramatic cuts regarding budget sensitive services, and saw an increasing focus by the clients on media relations. Uzunoğlu and Onat’s study also showed that the emerging digital technologies and the rise of the Internet as a medium was rapidly changing the way clients communicated, leading public relations consultancies to adapt their structures accordingly.

Aydınalp’s (2012) content analysis of the websites of 43 Turkish public relations agency websites describes how these agencies present themselves online, and discusses whether they are able to use this tool effectively in terms of public relations techniques. Analysis of the web sites in terms of agency corporate information, corporate identity, corporate publications, media-friendliness, publicity and promotion of the agency, and communication channels provided reveals that the PR consultancies examined can and need to improve their websites in order to communicate their identity, values, human resources, and credentials more effectively, and that the web sites also need improvements to include more user-friendly features.

3.6.2 Industry Research

In this context, research sponsored by the public relations consultancy industry is also enlightening. The first ever formal research conducted to understand the perceptions about public relations industry, to reveal the expectations of different stakeholders from the industry, and to forecast the trends in public relations services was sponsored by PRCI Turkey in 2003. The research was conducted among 71 top-level business executives, 20 media members and 20 top-level public relations executives. The results revealed that the business representatives thought corporate reputation management, research and evaluation and media relations would become the most important services within two years. While the media members predicted that online communications would become increasingly important, the public relations executives underlined the increasing importance of corporate social responsibility initiatives (*Marketing Türkiye* 2003).

Research on Perception of Communication Consultancy Services (2006) sponsored jointly by TUHID and IDA aimed to reveal the attitudes and expectations of stakeholders about the public relations consultancy industry, and to pinpoint areas of development. In this context, the research examined the significance of communication consultancy services in achieving business objectives, the types of consultancy services given and/or outsourced, the areas in which communication consultants and in-house practitioners need to develop further, the expectations from public relations agencies, and relationships between PR agencies and the media. The participants of the research included external communication consultants, in-house communication managers, top level corporate executives, and media members.

According to the results, nearly 75 % of corporate executives said they were retaining public relations agencies, and 78 % of these retainer agreements were annual. A very significant percentage (93.2 %) of executives reported their organization had an independent department responsible from communications, mostly entitled as corporate communications departments. In line with this finding, the external communication consultants stated that they worked with corporate communications departments and managing directors of corporations they serviced. Regarding professional standards, only 20 % of the external consultants had professional accreditation certificates, and only 35.4 % were audited by independent auditors. These figures hint that those with professional accreditation certificates are IDA member PR agencies, as accreditation by independent auditors is mandatory for them.

When asked about the types of communications they utilized, the corporate executives and in-house practitioners listed media relations, special events management, and employee communications as the top three areas. These were followed by marketing communication, online communication and corporate social responsibility communication. In more or less the same direction, the top three service received from public relations agencies were listed as media relations, product and/or service publicity, and marketing communication. In this context, the external consultants said while the top management of their clients were able to link communication efforts with business objectives, they could not use all the services provided by external consultancy effectively. According to external consultants, the five capabilities predicted to be of significance for external consultants were the knowledge and experience of agency management; the ability to think strategically; creativity and problem solving; keeping up with promises; and working ethically and transparently. As for media members, the top three capabilities of significance for PR agencies were enabling fast and effective access to information, quality of agency staff, and having an insight about the way media operates.

Research on Perception of Communication Consultancy Services, again with the joint sponsorship of TÜHİD and İDA, was repeated in 2009. According to the results, the ratio of corporate executives who stated a belief in the positive impact of communication efforts on achievement of business objectives increased from 77.7 % (in 2006) to 100 %. Yet, both the external communication consultants and in-house communications managers, when asked whether their clients and/or managers could link communication efforts with business objectives, the ratio of positive responses provided by both groups were 61 % and 45 % respectively.

The managing directors of public relations consultancies reported the top 5 services demanded by clients as “media relations”, “corporate social responsibility communication”, “corporate reputation management”, “crisis communication”, and “marketing communications”. When asked about the most important consultancy services that supported the achievement of business objectives, the corporate executives listed the top three services as “corporate reputation management”, “marketing communications”, “media relations”, “crisis communication”, and “online communication”.

The research revealed that the top executives of corporations believed the external consultancies has to develop themselves more in “issues management”, “corporate reputation management”, “crisis management”, “lobbying”, and “research and measurement”. The five capabilities that external consultants predicted to be of significance in external consulting were the same as those of the 2006 Research.

The *Research on Perception of Communication Consultancy Services* was conducted once more in 2014, this time with the additional sponsorship of Association of Corporate Communicators-Turkey (KİD). Different from the first two studies, the participants of this research were only the in-house communication managers. The in-house communication managers participating in the research said corporate communication and marketing public relations efforts supported the achievement of business objectives; citing “marketing communication”, “crisis communication”, “media relations management”, and “digital and social media communication” as the most effective services provided by PR agencies in this respect. These practitioners also thought while “digital and social media communication” and “marketing public relations” would continue to be important, the importance of “media relations” would decrease. They also assessed that “sustainable development communication” and “corporate social responsibility communication” would become increasingly important.

The results further revealed that corporate communicators pointed out to “strategic communication”, “issues management”, and “digital and social media” as areas and competencies that the public relations agencies had to develop. When inquired about the difficulties faced in working with public relations agencies, they reported the following: insufficient level of creative communication solutions, lack of information about the specific industries of clients, and the lack of quality in texts produced by agency staff. Even though 57 % of the in-house public relations practitioners said the corporate resources allocated to strategic communication increased over the last 2 years, they also stated that it was usually difficult to convince their managers to increase communication budgets. Other difficulties the in-house communicators faced were to demonstrate the contribution of communication efforts to bottom-line, and to convince managers to invest more in in-house communication departments.

3.7. CONCLUDING REMARKS

To start with, the object and the nature of public relations profession presents a challenge of legitimacy. Relationships of public relations professionals with their clients as well as with various stakeholders, and the intermediary position of the profession between the business world and the society, are subject to this challenge. Being responsible both to the clients and the public, the way public relations affects a wide array of publics with different interests, and how the practice is perceived by the society are topics under the challenge of legitimacy.

Merkelsen (2011), pointing at this challenge, discusses the issue through four axes, namely the "client-public axis", the "profession- public axis", the "profession-academia axis" and the "profession-client axis" (131-33). Merkelsen's suggestion that the major question in the "profession-client" axis is how public relations professionals can document their efforts to the client is in fact closely related to the question of expertise and how this expertise is constructed and presented.

The importance of legitimacy in the development of a profession, as discussed in detail by van Ruler (2005), is obviously linked with power and influences of the public relations consultants vis-á-vis their clients, which will be achieved only if the expertise of the consultant is acknowledged by the client. Van Ruler also suggests that professional consultants can add value to their clients through the acceptance of the value of their expertise and refers to theories on expertise, emphasizing the ability of the consultant to adapt to change, thus enriching the routine expertise with problem solving adaptive expertise. This is also echoed in Schön's (1983) "flexible expertise" and Holyoak's (1991) "adaptive expertise" concepts.

Another significant challenge for the profession, as well as the industry of public relations falls in the domain of human resources. According to the findings of the World PR Report 2014 produced through the collaboration of the Holmes Report[3] (http://www.holmesreport.com/) and the International Communications Consultancies Association (ICCO), the most important challenge facing the public relations consultancies worldwide is the ability to attract and retain talent, with almost 4 out of 10 consultancy principals citing "staff recruitment" as one of the most significant challenges.

> There are few opportunities for promotion in the flat structures of most consultancies. Unless employers offer work with greater responsibility or the chance to service more prestigious accounts, consultants move on, determined to develop their personal reputations, their portfolio of contacts and their specialist knowledge. In the new job, financial rewards and self-actualisation are of less importance than the status of the consultancy and the client list. Frequent moves by consultants have implications for client servicing arrangements: a consultancy may lose expert knowledge of a client and its markets when an account handler leaves. Indeed the business may move with the consultant, such is the trust relationship that often exists between client and consultant. (Daymon 2001 22)

[3] The Holmes Report: founded in 2000 by Paul Holmes, publisher and CEO. Provides reporting and analysis on public relations trends and issues, along with an extensive global footprint of events and awards.

The ability to understand and use digital and other new technologies is the second most important challenge, while the third most significant challenge is to demonstrate the worth of investments in public relations, namely measurement and evaluation of public relations work. The fourth significant challenges is cited as client education, with 24 % of consultancy managers agreeing that the focus of clients on short-term is an obstacle to the growth of the industry.

While the most significant challenge is directly related with the issue of public relations expertise, the need to master digital and other new technologies reflects the continuously changing requirements for public relations expertise. The need for client education on the nature of public relations work, on the other hand, demonstrates the gap between clients' and consultants conceptualizations of public relations, underlying the need for better management of client impressions about the value provided by communication consulting.

Among the four most important issues that the field of public relations faces, identified by nearly the two-thirds of the respondents of *The Cross Cultural Study of Leadership in Public Relations and Communication Management* conducted by the Plank Center for Leadership in Public Relations at The University of Alabama; managing the volume and velocity of information (23%) and dealing with fast-moving crises (11.9 %) underlines the significance of public relations expertise in attributing meaning and prioritising the right data for counsel on informed client decisions, and the need for better expertise in handling of especially the online crises clients face.

Examining the current and future challenges of public relations through the views of public relations professionals employed by global corporations, Kiesenbauer and Zerfass (2015) put forth how these communications leaders and the emerging leaders (named by the leaders) conceptualize strategic communication, how they understand communication leadership and what their criteria are for a successful corporate communication career. Although the professionals interviewed in this study are not public relations practitioners working in PR consultancies, the challenges pointed out by them are meaningful for agency professionals too.

Communication leaders interviewed are aware that the concept of corporate communications has changed, and they see communication “as a strategic variable that supports the goals and visions of the company, controls its reputation and helps to build acceptance, and is carried out especially by managing stakeholder relationships” (427). Emerging leaders, on the other hand, believe that the primary task of the communication departments is reputation management, and that corporate communication provides added value through the presentation of a credible and consistent image. Regarding the operation of the communication department, a majority of the emerging leaders report that they have an open door policy that encourages the perspectives of young communication professionals. Although they vary according to the specific company and industry, similar and typical daily tasks listed by leaders of the communication departments include leader communication, human resources management and the organizational development of the communication department, and designing the communication strategy (427-8).

Patwardhan and Bardhan’s (2014) research carried out among Indian public relations professionals as part of a global research project by the Plank Center for Leadership in Public Relations (Berger 2012) provides insights from agency professionals, in-house corporate communicators, communicators working in public and non-governmental organizations, and freelance communication consultants about challenges facing public relations. Although the insights collected reflect certain specific issues in the local contexts, most insights are similar to results at the global level. The top challenge cited by public relations agency leaders is finding and retaining talent, followed by measurement of public relations input, management of information flow, dealing with social media and the digital revolution, and improving image of the profession. On the other hand, while the top challenge cited by in-house communicators is the effective measurement of public relations input, the top challenges for public and NGO communicators is dealing effectively with crises, and transparency.

As for future challenges, both the communication leaders and emerging leaders participating in Kiesenbauer and Zerfass' 2015 study think that in 10 years time, the major tasks and the content of corporate communications will be similar, yet there will be major changes in the instruments and channels of communication, as well as in communication activities in growth markets . Other challenges identified by both leading and emerging communicators include the need for tailored approach and openness to dialogue, the increasing importance of intercultural aspects of communication work, the need to identify new opinion leaders, the ability to strategically place communication messages, and the increasing importance of employer branding and reputation management (431-2).

The challenge of attracting and retaining talent is once more confirmed by the findings of the *Global Communications Report* (2016), where both PR agency and corporate communication executives agree that this is the greatest challenge preventing them from achieving their futıre goals. As regards the pools of recruitment, PR agencies say they are most likely to recruit new talent from competitive agencies, and corporate communications departments focus mainly on other in-house departments. Both PR agency and in-house communication executives agree that the industry is not good at sourcing talent from outside its ranks, mainly due to expected salary levels. Another difficulty is that both parties are looking for the same skills in the new talent they will recruit, namely the skills of written communication, strategic planning, social media expertise, and multi-media content development.

The results of the *Global Communications Report* (2016) reveal that the future growth of both the profession and the industry will be driven by content and digital. Accordingly, this implies a different talent equipped with bolder ideas, and better measurement of results. It follows that the services that will drive future growth are predicted as content creation, social media, brand reputation, and measurement and evaluation. The participants in this study also predict that structural changes in their in-house communication departments and new business models in their public relations agencies will be necessary in order to meet these demands. Although the results show that public relations executives are optimistic for the future growth of the industry, it is apparent that the industry has to develop better practices for attracting the right talent, as well as for adapting new technologies and designing new work models.

Francis Ingham, Chief Executive, ICCO, (*Global Communications Report* 2016) emphasizes the key challenge of talent, contends that hiring senior staff and attracting people from non-traditional backgrounds are the two specific concerns relating to this challenge. Commenting on the same challenge, Colin Byrne Weber Shandwick CEO, UK & EMEA (*Global Communications Report* 2016) says the industry has to consider hiring talent from advertising and marketing firms, and also concentrate on more trainee-level intake. According to Pascal Beucler, MSLGROUP Senior Vice-President and Chief Strategy Officer (*Global Communications Report* 2016), points at the increasing complexity of the institutional environment and argues that new areas of consulting will emerge as a result.

In addition to the challenges summarized above, the Turkish public relations practice and the profession faces additional obstacles. The scholarly work reviewed reveals that in the current practice, implementation, rather than theory, is the driving force; one of the main reasons being the weak collaboration between the academy and the industry towards theory building (Tandaçgüneş 2005). Furthermore, the ability of the industry to produce solid criteria for the measurement and evaluation of the public relations practice is limited, hindering the legitimate status of the profession, although there is an emergent assessment that the development of social media will impact these efforts in a positive direction (Ertem 2014).

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

4.1. INTRODUCTION

This study applies Erving Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical perspective for exploring the construction and the presentation of communication consultancy expertise in Turkey. In doing so, qualitative methodology is adopted in order to gather information to answer the research question. To explicate on the theoretical background and the research methodology, this chapter is divided into two major sections. In the first section, the premises and the scope of the dramaturgical perspective is discussed, and then linked to Goffman's approach to dramaturgy. Elements of Goffman's dramaturgy are detailed and explained, as constituting a base for theoretical analysis categories. This section also wraps up the critics forwarded to Goffman's dramaturgy, and the outstanding examples of the application of Goffman's approach for the study of consulting work.

In the second section, an explanation for the rationale in adopting a qualitative methodology is offered. Later on, the data collection process is detailed with reference to the participants, their recruitment, and the interview procedures. The chapter is concluded with a discussion of validity and issues of reflexivity relating to the identity of the researcher as a public relations consultants and a public relations scholar.

4.2. THEORETICAL APPROACH: THE DRAMATURGICAL PERSPECTIVE

The dramaturgical perspective proposes that we can conceptualize social life in terms of a theatre stage, and that action is inherently dramatic (Clark & Mangham 2004). The suggestion of Kenneth Burke (1969), who is considered the ‘father of dramatism’, that the focus has to be on action for a proper understanding of human behaviour, results in the emphasis of expressive and impressive dimensions of human activity (Brisset & Edgley 2005 3). Burke’s social actors create and sustain relationships with each other, therefore are accountable for either the success or the failure of these relationships (Combs & Mansfield 1976).

As summarized by Brisset and Edgley (2005), the dramaturgical perspective studies meaningful behaviour, yet meaning is problematic and arises in and through interaction. The sense of individuality is established in interaction. Socialization, rather than a mechanism for cultural uniformity, is seen as a process that provides resources for situational variation. In this sense, the dramaturgical perspective rejects classical determinism, and is both culturally and situationally relativistic. It follows that particular situations are defined through interaction. In the dramaturgical perspective, the human individual is a communicator, who consciously rationalizes throughout his/her interaction process. The emphasis of the dramaturgical perspective is on interaction between individuals (2-5).

Since meaning arises through interaction between individuals, it is not given and stable, but problematic.

> What is crucial to the dramaturgical vision of social life is that meaning is not a bequest from culture, socialization, or institutional arrangements, nor the realization of either psychological or biological potential. Rather, meaning is a continually problematic accomplishment of human interaction and it is fraught with change, novelty, and ambiguity. (2)

For meaning to emerge, then, at least two actors and a behavioral consensus as regards responses to people and the environment are needed. When at least two actors communicate, they do it through both discursive (speech and language) and non-discursive (clothing, gestures, etc.) means. Accordingly, all verbal communication occurs within a particular non-verbal context (5).

George Mead (1946) is credited with laying the foundations of the dramaturgical view of the self. Mead proposes that the self is rooted in the acting nature of human beings, emphasizing that it always emerges as a part of a social process. It follows that one's interaction is not a reflection of the self, but the interaction is what establishes the self.

For the dramaturgists, the self (and individuality) is a social phenomenon, and only emerges through interaction with others. The self, like any other meaning, is created through individual action and the action of the others with respect to it. In this regard, the self is situationally specific, and different situations lead to the establishment of different selves. As formulated by Brisset and Edgley (2005), "Whenever human beings interact, selves are created and shared. Like other meanings, they arise, are sustained for a while and then may become irrelevant in the face of new possibilities. [...] To appear before others is to involve oneself in the process of selfhood" (18).

The dramaturgical perspective has a significant focus on interaction. As noted by Foote (2005), the episode is the basic unit of interaction, and the resulting human development is the product of successive outcomes of interaction. Each outcome of a specific social interaction is uncertain, with exploratory, formulative, and creative aspects. Accordingly, when an episode of interaction is concluded, the position of the participants vis-a-vis each other is always different from what it was at the beginning of the episode (65-67). This complexity of the interaction is also underlined by Strauss (1959), who describes face-to-face interaction as a fluid, moving, and indeterminate process.

It needs to be underlined that, due to this complexity, the dramaturgical perspective is not simply about comparing social life with a theatre play, or drawing one-to-one correspondences between the theatre stage and social life. As Perinbanayagam (1982) emphasizes;

> Hence when one talks of the drama of social life one is not engaging in a simple-minded comparison of human relations to what is going on at a theatre, but saying something about act, communication and meaning as the fundamental medium of human existence since the evolutionary emergence of symbolicity. Drama is not then something that occurs in theatres to which some sociologists want to compare social life. Far from being the case, drama is a description of certain ways of doing and being that can occur in both places. (263)

Another emphasis is necessary regarding the dramaturgical awareness. Besides being dramatically expressive, individuals can also be aware of this expressiveness, enabling one to organize one's experiences, to use more effective means of communication, to present oneself more favourably, or even to deceive and manipulate others. This awareness has led to the interpretation of the dramaturgical view as describing individual actors as manipulators and deceivers.

Yet, while it is possible that some individuals may be indulged in such manipulation at certain times (or all the time), this does not mean that impression management in the dramaturgical sense is all about manipulating or deceiving others. Projecting a definition of the situation through impression management may as well have other objectives such as resolving conflicts or revealing facts (Brisset & Edgely 2005 7). Furthermore, dramaturgical awareness, along with impression management, could enhance the possibilities of anticipation, mutual understanding, interpretation, and adherence when necessary (Lalonde and Gilbert 2016).

4.3. ERVING GOFFMAN AND DRAMATURGY

4.3.1. Erving Goffman- Life

Although Goffman was not at all enthusiastic about sharing the details of his personal life (Treviño 2003 2), in order to arrive at a better understanding of his thought, it is necessary to position him within his specific time and location and the various effects these had on the development of his work.

Erving Goffman was born in 1922 in Manville, Alberta, Canada. His parents were Jewish immigrants from Ukraine. When his family moved to Dauphin near Winnipeg, Goffman attended St. John's Technical High School, from which he graduated in 1939 (3). He later attended the University of Manitoba where he majored in Chemistry. During the period (1943-44) he worked for the National Film Board of Canada, Goffman met Dennis Wrong, who encouraged him to take an interest in sociology (Fine, et a. 2000, vol.1:xiii).

In 1944 Goffman enrolled at the University of Toronto and studied with anthropologist C.W.M. Hart, who introduced him to the works of Émile Durkheim and Talcott Parsons. Another instructor, Ray L. Birdwhistell, encouraged him to read in cultural anthropology and sociology (Treviño 2003 3). In 1945 Goffman graduated from Toronto with a degree in sociology and moved to the University of Chicago for his graduate work. Almost immediately after completing his MA Thesis in 1949, he left for Shetland Islands to collect empirical ethnographic data for his doctoral dissertation. Disguising himself as an American interested in agricultural techniques in the Island of Unst, he observed the daily lives and interactions of the islanders between 1949-1951. Treviño notes that although the initial intention of the dissertation was to study the social structure of the farming community, Goffman's dissertation "Communication Conduct in an Island Community", turned out to be a work on the social interaction between the locals and the visitors of the island, marking the first step of his life-time focus, the field of *interaction order* (4).

Goffman then went to Paris to complete the draft of his dissertation, and in 1952 he returned to Chicago and married Angelica Choate, with whom he had a son, Tom, the following year (Fine & Manning 2003, 35-6). After completing his Ph.D. at the end of 1953, he worked as an assistant for Edward Shils, completing the first edition of *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, which was published as a monograph by the University of Edinburgh (Manning 1992 4). The Goffman Family then moved to Washington D.C., where Goffman was appointed as a visiting scientist at the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) in Maryland. Between the fall of 1954 and the end of 1957, he was a member of the Laboratory of Socio-environmental Studies at NIMH, conducting participant observation at St. Elizabeth's Hospital in D.C. and producing his early essays on *face work* (Treviño 2003 4).

In 1961, Goffman was invited by Herbert Blumer to join the sociology faculty at the University of California at Berkeley. During this period, the revised and expanded version of *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* was published, followed by other significant works, *Asylums* and *Encounters* in 1961 and *Behavior in Public Places* and *Stigma* in 1963 (5). During his stay at Berkeley, Goffman's wife Angelica, who was suffering from serious mental problems, committed suicide in 1964 (Fine and Manning 2003 36).

Following a period of six years at Berkeley, he spent a year as a Visiting Fellow at Harvard, producing *Interaction Ritual* and then moving to the University of Pennsylvania in 1968 (Manning 1992 4). Goffman's *Strategic Interaction* was published later in 1968, his *Relations in Public* followed in 1971 and *Frame Analysis* was published in 1974. Being in close contact with the Annenberg School of Communication and the Department of Linguistics at the University of Pennsylvania and developing further interest in sociolinguistics and communications theory, Goffman published *Gender Advertisements* in 1976, *Forms of Talk* in 1981 and "Felicity's Condition" in 1983 (Treviño 2003 5). Goffman stayed at the University of Pennsylvania until his death in 1982.

4.3.2. Intellectual Influences

A number of scholars writing about Goffman's life and work, such as Javier A. Treviño, Philip Manning and Murray S. Davis agree that Erving Goffman's work was significantly influenced by prominent and pioneering fin-de-siècle sociologists Georg Simmel (1858-1918) and Émile Durkheim (1858-1917).

According to Manning (1992, 19), it was Simmel's ideas and Simmel's analysis of social activity that led Goffman to the detailed study of everyday life. In support of this assessment, Treviño (2003) notes that Goffman acknowledges the similarity between Simmel's and his own microsociological approach in the preface of *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (6). Davis contends that especially the early work of Goffman includes the application of the macrosociological concepts of Durkheim, such as the notion of *ritual* and the idea of the *sacred*, to the micro sociological concepts of Simmel (1997 378).

Another figure of influence on Goffman's early work is George Herbert Mead (1863-1931), regarded as one of the founders of social psychology and an important member of the Chicago School of sociology. This influence sheds light on Goffman's interest in the self as a product of social interaction. Furthermore, it is assumed that Mead's *Mind, Self, and Society,* printed after his death in 1934, was a required reading in classes that Goffman took from Herbert Blumer at the University of Chicago (Treviño 2003 7). Herbert Blumer, himself a student of Mead is credited for organizing various social-psychological concepts and methods under the approach known as *symbolic interactionism*. Yet, when asked whether he saw himself as a symbolic interactionist, Goffman said the label was rather vague (Winkin, 1988 235-6).

It was Everett C. Hughes, one of the instructors of Goffman at the University of Chicago, who was a major influence on Goffman's methodology, ethnographic fieldwork.

Under Hughes's leadership, Goffman and his classmates carried out various fieldwork –based studies of neighborhoods, institutions and occupations (Treviño 2003 7). Furthermore, as pointed out by Tom Burns (1992 11) and Treviño (2003 7), Hughes's positioning of the basic patterns of behavior and institutional structures within analogies which underlie seeming incongruities can be traced in Goffman's persistence to examine the actions of various social types such as gamblers, mental patients, con artists and surgeons, in order to discover similarities between their behavior and that which occurs in everyday interaction.

Other important figures in the development of Goffman's work are Sigmund Freud, Talcott Parsons, Harold Garfinkel, Ray Birdwhistell, Gregory Bateson and Alfred Schutz (Treviño 2003 8).

4.3.3. The Social and Historical Context

Goffman's work extends over a period covering three eras, 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. According to Lemert (1997 xxiii), Goffman's early work reflected many features of the American life of the 1950s.

The 1950's sociology scene in America was dominated by the views of Talcott Parsons, with an emphasis on the "proper" socialization of individuals. This socialization, Parsons claimed, would enable individuals to make legitimate choices that the society required (Treviño 2001: xxiii). Even though Goffman was not directly critical of Parson's thoughts, the social world he interpreted was not orderly and stable as Parson envisaged, but full of contradictions, ironies and absurdities. Lemert, linking Goffman's thought to his period, positions him as a postmodern sociologist and emphasizes that both moral consensus and social hope were imaginary constructs according to Goffman (1997 xxxiii).

Scheff (2005), argues that Goffman, for the most part of his career, was a symbolic interactionist, following up the implications of the "looking- glass self"(LGS) formulated by

Charles Cooley (1902). The idea of LGS proposes that self-consciousness involves continuous monitoring of the self from the point of view of others, and that this gives rise to real and intensely powerful emotions of pride or shame. Especially most of Goffman's earlier work, says Scheff, was focused on the exploration of the process of living in the minds of others, and the emotions generated by this process (147).

Scheff admits that even Goffman himself repeatedly rejected any affiliation with the symbolic interactionist tradition, claiming to be a structuralist in the Durkheimian sense; and that especially the first part of *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Lif*e , where performances, dramaturgical staging, and rituals of theater are elaborated, is indeed structuralist. However, Scheff contends, the second half of the book focuses more on the motives of the actors, and their efforts to manage embarrassment. In the same manner, other works of Goffman also examine the individual who is constantly developing responses to his/her own standing in the eyes of the others (150-1).

Gonos (1977) argues that if Goffman's work is situated within the symbolic interactionist school, much of the actual meaning and significance of his work will be lost. He says there are theoretical differences regarding the origin and nature of the self, the place of meanings and actors' subjective orientations in analysis, and the appropriate research method between Goffman and symbolic interactionism (855).

According to Gonos, "situation" and "frame" are constructs that represent two opposing paradigms in the study of everyday life. While "situation" represents an interactionist approach, "frame" represents a kind of structuralism (855). For the symbolic interactionist tradition, each social situation is unique and each one is described by its particular contents, especially by those elements that are unique to it, and have been composed within its own existence.

Goffman on the other hand, Gonos contends, wanted to abstract a definite and a limited number of forms or modes for the occurrence of life and his intention was to identify structures behind actual events (856-7). In Goffman's analysis, which Gonos claims is structuralist, everyday life is made up of different "worlds", "realms of special meaning within which a particular language of reality is binding" (857) and "His work suggests that the apparent continuity of everyday life masks a real discontinuity, the coexistence of forms of daily life showing dramatic differences in principle" (858).

Gonos supports his argument by Goffman's conceptualization of the "frame", which suggests that whatever the circumstances of any particular enactment are, there are stable rules of operation. Furthermore, according to Gonos, we cannot claim to have reached a scientific understanding about an interaction unless we understand the rules governing the frame in which this interaction takes place (858). Another argument that positions Goffman as a structuralist is that of Denzin & Keller (1981). They state that if Goffman's work is read from a structural perspective, than it is possible to assess his contribution to an understanding of interaction, experience, and everyday life (52).

Although Goffman has been mainly associated with symbolic interactionism or structuralism, in this study, his work will be interpreted as a comparative and qualitative sociology that aims to provide an in-depth understanding about human behaviour, through focusing on everyday interactions between individuals. Firstly, as also underlined by Fine and Manning (2000), it is rather difficult to position Goffman within a specific school of sociological thought. His sources of inspiration are numerous, as well as varied, including Simmel, Durkheim, Mauss, and Mead. His ideas are also linked to continental philosophers such as Kierkegaard, Husserl, and Sartre; and his dramaturgy draws a lot from Burke (Williams 1986).

Secondly, appreciating the contribution and unique style of Goffman is more meaningful than trying to categorize him under a specific tradition of thought. Goffman applies the metaphor of drama to everyday interaction, problematizes the taken for granted aspects of this interaction, and thus offers a new perspective.

Thirdly, the concept of “relationship/s”, along with “relationship building”, has been considered as an important component of public relations process (Braun 2015). Yet, as elaborated by Coombs & Holladay (2015), although the concept has a central position in both the public relations academia and the industry, it should not lead to uncritically applying the principles of symbolic interactionism to public relations. Considering the complexity of the discipline of public relations, rather than positioning Goffman under a specific school and applying the core principles of that school to public relations; this research is inspired by Goffman’s theoretical perspective as a framework to analyse how public relations consultants position themselves and their expertise.

4.3.4. Goffman’s dramaturgy

Goffman’s perspective of theatrical performance is best illustrated in *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959), in which Goffman uses the dramaturgical approach and the metaphor of theatre in order to examine, explore, and explain face-to-face interactions. In doing this, Goffman focuses on the dynamics of everyday social interaction, and with the objective of “decoding” the dynamics of this interaction, he conceptualizes the individual as a theatrical “performer” who uses several impression management techniques vis-á-vis the others (the “audience”) in a social context. The focal point for the individual using the impression management techniques is the preservation of “face”, which is the public image of the individual. According to Goffman, impression management, as well as saving the “face” of the individual in the social context, also contributes to the maintenance of the social order.

Goffman's dramaturgical metaphor enables us to view everyday social life as a theatre stage, on which individual 'actors' strive to present and maintain a positive impression of themselves before several different audiences. Individuals resemble actors on stage, and their interaction with other actors result in 'performances' towards positive impression management. The audiences, on the other hand, as they try to pick up cues for possible deception, may cause embarrassment and humiliation for the actors (Treviño 2003 18).

Providing a retrospective perspective on the theatre as a concept and dramatism as a method of analysis, Clark and Mangham (2004) refer to Kenneth Burke's "dramatistic" model of human behavior, and contend that Burke, Burke's major interpreter H. Dalziel Duncan, and Gustav Ichheiser had a major influence upon Goffman:

> From Burke Goffman took the notions that behavior is to be treated as a process of people relating to each other as actors; that meaning is not a characteristic of the world but is the result of a process – an evolving social process- with others and consequently it is fragile and problematic; and the notion that self is not a given but is derived and sustained through interaction. From Ichheiser he took the idea that the processes of everyday interaction were of fundamental importance to the understanding of social order, that these processes could be seen as involving 'actors' and 'spectators' giving and receiving 'impressions'. (40)

Goffman's dramaturgy was inspired partly by Burke's ideas on dramatism and how people try to manage the impressions that others receive from them when they interact (Meltzer et al. 1975). Burke (1969) proposes five dimensions that are important in understanding what people are doing and why they are doing it : Act, Scene, Agent, Agency, and Purpose (xv). Referring to these dimensions as the 'pentad', Burke also claims that there needs to be both performers and an audience for the interpretation of the pentad.

The Act is the name given to what takes place, the Scene is the situation in which the act occurs, the Agent names the person (or the kind of person) who acts, the Agency is the mean or instrument used, and the Purpose. According to Burke, is the internal relationship of these terms is examined, considering the mutual possibilities of transformation, and the range of permutations and combinations they allow, it is possible to arrive at statements about human motives:

> Men may violently disagree about the purpose behind a given act, or about the character of the person who did it, or how he did it, or in what kind of situation he acted, or they may even insist upon totally different words to name the act itself. But be that as it may, any complete statement about motives will offer *some kind* of answers to these five questions: what was done (act), when or where it was done (scene), who did it (agency), and why (purpose). (xv) (Italics in the original)

Goffman (1959) builds his concepts of dramaturgy in relation to dramatism, focusing on the theatre metaphor to understand and explain social interaction. The influence of sociologists such as Mead, Durkheim, and Simmel among others, on Goffman's dramaturgy has been noted by a number of scholars including Meltzer et al. (1975), but it it has also been demonstrated that Goffman, instead of using dramaturgy as a theoretical base, used the language of dramaturgy and "thought it more a guide to thinking than a theory" (Brisset & Edgley 43). In this manner, in order to analyse face-to-face interactions, Goffman concentrated on certain theatrical elements: scripts, performances, stages (front and back), roles, performers, and audiences.

Brisset and Edgley (2005), although they situate Goffman in the dramaturgist tradition, think that it would be too simplistic to label him as a dramaturgist in the strict sense. They contend that Goffman used the language of dramaturgy, but used it as a guide, rather than a theory. Furthermore, they argue that Goffman used the dramaturgical principle on some occasions and abandoned it on others. In other words, Goffman used drama as a root metaphor to explore a wide range of theoretical and empirical areas:

> Goffman is best seen as as a series of empirical themes with a lot of theoretical points buried in the margins. He was dramaturgical to be sure, but he was also interactional, semiotical, functional, and phenomenological. Yet none of these identities hold his work, and that is why he was a kind of theoretical Rorschach Test- you could see in hm almost any theory of your choice. He was not really a dramaturgist, because he was not really committed to any perspective at all. [...] He is an enigma to intellectual classifiers because theory, method, ideology, and all of the other accouterments of social science, seemed to Goffman mere means to ends rather than ends in themselves. (44)

4.3.4.1. Elements of Goffman's Dramaturgy

According to Goffman (1959), scripts are verbal communications, including rhetorical skills, which are like directions that guide the dialogue, scenes, personas of the actors, and the whole performance. A script can also be understood as a set of expectations of different situations that are constructed as a result of accumulated experiences of individuals. When individuals face new and unfamiliar experiences, new scripts that will serve as guides are built (Gardner 1992).

In Goffman's dramaturgy, a performance is the activity (verbal or nonverbal) of an individual during a period "marked by his continuous presence before a particular set of observers and which has some influence on the observers (Goffman 1959 13). Goffman defines performance "as all the activity of a given participant on a given occasion which serves to influence in any way any of the other participants" (8); to which the audience both observes and contributes to.

The decoration, furniture and other related elements constitute the setting, where the performance takes place. The setting has a supportive function for the performers. Usually, a setting is fixed geographically, therefore an individual can only begin his/her performance upon arrival at the proper setting, and ends the performance when he/she leaves it. Yet, there are exceptional settings such as funeral processions and the like, when the setting sort of follows the performers (13).

Goffman makes use of two theatrical concepts within this performance activity, namely the front stage and the back stage. The front stage is where the performance takes place, while the backstage is a region where the 'actors' make the necessary preparations for a successful performance. The front stage has a specific physical setting, also including the 'personal front' with notions of the 'appearance' and the 'manner' of the performer (14). The personal front includes "insignia of office or rank; clothing; sex, age, and racial characteristics; size and looks; posture; speech patterns; facial expressions; bodily gestures; and the like" (14-5). While appearance provides cues about the status of the performer, manner provides hints about the role the actor will play.

The backstage refers to a region that the intended 'audience' cannot enter. Besides serving as an area where the necessary preparations for the performance is made, the backstage also allows the 'actors' to relax in an informal manner (Kivisto & Pittman 2007 306). Since the members of the audience are not present at the backstage, this region allows for informal communication, including informal language. The facts that are suppressed at the front stage appear in the backstage.

> A back region or a backstage may be defined as a place, relative to a given performance, where the impression fostered by the performance is knowingly contradicted as a matter of course. There are, of course, many characteristic functions of such places. It is here that the capacity of a performance to express something beyond itself may be painstakingly fabricated; it is here that illusions and impressions are openly constructed. (Goffman 1959 69)

Goffman's (1959) social actors are involved in different roles during social interactions, presenting themselves to their audiences, who in turn interpret the cues and signs provided by them. The interaction between the 'actors' and their 'audiences', and the mutual signs given off shapes the continuing performance, also defining the mutual roles. This way, both the performers and the audience contribute to the maintenance of the specific script. Social actors make an effort to stay in their roles while they are in the front stage, but when they are in the relaxed atmosphere of the backstage, they may break out of role.

> When we allow that the individual projects a definition of the situation when he appears before others, we must also see that the others, however passive their role may seem to be, will themselves effectively project a definition of the situation by virtue of their response to the individual and by virtue of any lines of action they initiate to him. Ordinarily we find that the definitions of the situation projected by the several different participants are sufficiently attuned to one another so that open contradiction will not occur. (3)

For Goffman, this consensus is a result of a temporary agreement, within the framework of which participants conceal their own genuine feelings or wishes, so that a smooth functioning of society is facilitated.

> We have then a kind of interactional *modus vivendi.* Together the participants contribute to a single overall definition of the situation which involves not so much a real agreement to what exists but rather a real agreement as to whose claims concerning what issues will be temporarily honoured. (4) (Italics in the original)

In other words, when an individual projects a certain definition of the situation, there is an expectancy that the other will cooperate. This, for Goffman, is the moral character of the projected definitions of the situation. Society, Goffman contends, is organized "on the principle that any individual who possesses certain social characteristics has a moral right to expect that others will value and treat him in a correspondingly appropriate way" (6).

Furthermore, preventive measures are taken continuously in order to avoid definitional disruptions. When these are employed by the individual projecting a definition of the situation, they are referred to as ‘defensive practices’, and when the others involved employ these measures, they are considered as ‘protective practices’ or ‘tact’ (7).

Goffman also suggests different roles within the framework of team performances. When team performance is examined, there are three crucial roles: the team members that perform, the audience that watches (and contributes to) the performance, and outsiders who are neither performers nor observants. Considering the different regions, the performers appear in the front and back regions; the audience is in the front region; and the outsiders are excluded from both regions. In this sense, we can speak of an harmony between the function of the roles, the information each performer possesses, and the regions accessible to each performer. Yet, according to Goffman, such a congruence is seldom complete due to the development of additional positions relative to the performance, and these complicate the relation among function, information, and place. Goffman refers to these positions as ‘discrepant roles’ (90).

These discrepant roles suggested by Goffman are the ‘informer’, the ‘shill’, ‘the go-between’ (or the ‘mediator’), the ‘service specialist’, the ‘confidant’, and the ‘colleague’. The informer pretends to be a member of a team, therefore being allowed to the backstage, and then openly or secretly sells out the show through information he/she has accessed. The shill, on the other hand, pretends to be a member of an audience, but cooperates with the performers. The go-between knows the secrets of both the performing team and the audience, and although he/she gives each side the impression that their secrets will be kept confidential, and who also persuades each side that he/she is more loyal to them (91-96). The roles of service specialist, the confidant and the colleague are the ones that are most applicable to external public relations consultants.

The ‘service specialist’ refers to individuals who specialize in building up, correction (when necessary), and the maintenance of the performance of a team vis-a-vis the clients of that team. In order for service specialists to contribute to the performance of a team, he/she must access as much information as possible about various ‘secrets’ of that team. Here, professional ethics is an instrument that is meant to enforce the specialist to comply with the confidential nature of the backstage information. Sometimes, the service specialist is positioned in the verbal front of the team on a retainer, in order both to ensure the protection of confidential information, and to assure that his/her expertise is utilized for the interests of the team. In such cases, there is the risk that the service specialist will lose his/her objectivity, compromising the professional standards for client interests:

> The specialist in verbal fronts who is brought into the organization will be expected to assemble and present data in such a way as to lend maximum support to the claims the team is making at the time. [….] The more the specialist can be made to set aside his professional standards and consider only the interests of the team which employs him, the more useful may be the arguments he formulates for them; but the more he has a reputation for being an independent professional, interested only in the balanced facts of the case, the more effective he is likely to be before the audience and presents his findings. (100)

The ‘confidant’ is the person to whom the performer confesses his weak points or wrong doings. Unlike the service specialist, the confident does not receive a fee, accepting the information conveyed as an expression of friendship and trust. Goffman assesses that clients would often try to convert their service specialists into confidants, as a means of increased ensurance of discretion.

Colleagues are those individuals who do not directly participate in the same performance, but “share a community of fate” (102). Being the members of the same profession, they are engaged in similar performances, knowing each other’s difficulties and perspectives. Among colleagues, it is not necessary to maintain the front that is presented before others, therefore relaxation is possible. Since colleagues are usually in competition, they may keep strategic secrets from each other. However, keeping certain secrets from colleagues is more difficult, due to familiarity with the professional performance (102).

If a particular colleague grouping has a corporate character, which is the case in public relations consulting, the reputation of each practitioner is affected either positively or negatively by the conduct of other colleague practitioners. In such cases, such groups of colleagues tend to organize and form a professional body that represents the professional interests.

4.3.4.2. Impression Management

Goffman (1959) situates impression management within a dramaturgical framework and describes the way the self is presented and the perception of this presentation by others, or the “audience”. According to Goffman, the individual uses his/her expressiveness to create certain impressions on the others (or the audience). The audience/s, on the other hand are involved in a continuous process of decoding these expressions.

Goffman’s individual resembles an actor playing a part, trying to perform in a convincing manner, interacting with other actors on the stage, making use of the current setting to support his/her performance, and controlling his/her performance to support the image he/she wants to project (Miller 1984 142). A significant part of this endeavour is to avoid embarrassment and humiliation, so when individuals anticipate either, they try to manage the impressions of the audience in order to avoid them (Solomon et al. 2013). If and when the impression presented by an individual is inconsistent with ‘reality’, the individual manages impressions through the creation of a ‘front’, and indulges in concealment. The ‘front’ is created through the individual’s control of his/her expressiveness, which may also involve communicating misinformation (Goffman 1959).

According to Goffman, individual performers tend to offer impressions that are idealized, incorporating the officially accredited values of the society to their performance (23). Thus, the actions that are considered inconsistent with these values will somewhat have to be concealed or suppressed. This points to a discrepancy between appearance and the overall reality, and Goffman points out to certain major kinds of concealment in this respect.

First, the performer might conceal his/her economic activity that he/she thinks might hinder the impression he/she hopes to create. Second, since errors and mistakes are usually corrected before the performance, the individual may maintain an impression of infallibility. A third kind of concealment is when the individual presents a product to the audience, he/she tends to show only the end-product, so that he/she will be judged only by something that is finished and perfected. A fourth kind of discrepancy between the projected impression and the reality occurs when physically unclean, cruel, illegal, and degrading tasks are necessary in order to create a positive performance; necessitating the concealment of ‘dirty work’ involved. Yet another concealment is necessary when a number of ideal standards need to be sacrificed in order to stage a good performance (26-29).

Although Goffman suggests that the performers can usually rely on their audiences during a performance, he also elaborates on the possibility that the audience may misunderstand certain cues, or may be sceptical of the reality that is being managed, due to certain ‘accidents’ and ‘unmeant gestures’ that hinder the definition of the situation. When this is the case, even a single minor communication accident may destroy the whole performance (33).

Goffman lists three groups of such unmeant gestures and underlines that since they occur during a wide variety of performances, and result in impressions that are very contradictory to the projected impression, they have acquired a “collective symbolic status” (34). These are, the accidental expression of incapacity through a momentary loss of bodily control (falling down, stumbling, belching, yawning, etc.); the performer’s act of exaggerated or little concern for the interaction (appearing nervous, exhibiting anger, laughing inappropriately, etc.); and the lack of dramaturgical direction (insufficient setting, improper timing, etc.) (34). In contrast to their seemingly minor character, their power in disrupting the projected impression, according to Goffman, demonstrates that impressions put forth by performances are delicate and fragile:

> The expressive coherence that is required in performances points out a crucial discrepancy between our all-too-human selves and our socialized selves. As human beings we are presumably creatures of variable impulse with moods and energies that can change from one moment to the next. As characters put on for audience, however, we must not be subject to ups and downs. [….] A certain bureaucratization of the spirit is expected so that we can be relied upon to give a perfectly homogeneous performance at every appointed time. (36)

4.3.4.3. Teams and Team Performance

Goffman defines a team as a “set of individuals who cooperate in staging a single routine” (48), and contends that exploration of impressions projected by teams is useful especially for understanding the contingencies that arise during impression management, and the techniques to overcome these contingencies. The relationship between individuals in the same team is important, as the team also aims to manage the impressions of its particular audience(s), and “each team-mate is forced to rely on the good conduct and behaviour of his fellows, and they, in turn, are forced to rely on him” (50) . Another significant aspect of the relationship between team members is that since they are like “accomplices in the maintenance of a particular appearance of things” (51), they do not have to foster a particular impression before one another.

In the same manner as an individual performer, the objective of the team is to project a particular definition of the situation. Yet while the individual performer can decide on his/her own on how to define the situation and project an appropriate impression, the definition of the situation by a team necessitates a group consensus. Once this consensus is reached, each member is expected to be loyal both to the team and the team-mates (53).

While examining the interaction between two separate teams, Goffman differentiates between a performing team which manages and controls the social setting, and the spectator (audience) team which is in a position to respond to the performance. The spectator teams may be customers in a shop, clients in an office, or a group of hosts in a home (58).

Besides the group consensus within a team, there is also a working consensus between two teams that are in interaction. When two teams interact, individual participants in both teams maintain the established balance, assisting the other team in the maintenance of the impression it wants to project. Yet, although less obvious, there are also discrepant sentiments, four of which are examined by Goffman: treatment of the absent, staging talk, team collusion, and temporary re-alignments (107- 108).

When members of a team are at the backstage, they may give out signals and communicate emotions about the audience that are not compatible with their front stage treatment of them. According to Goffman, such derogation, which may include mocking and using uncomplimentary terms of reference, contributes to the solidarity of the team. Furthermore, in the absence of the audience, the team members may approach their own work in a cynical way, hinting that they do not take what they are doing as seriously as they project in the front stage (108-110).

Staging talk occurs between the members of a team, and includes subjects such as evaluation and revision of past performances, the nature of the audience, the advantages and disadvantages of possible front regions, etc. At the same time, news about colleague teams are also shared. Staging talk helps both to ensure the success of the coming performance and to increase the team motivation.

Team collusion occurs when individual performers in a team communicate certain signs and symbols that may not conform to the definition of the situation. These are conveyed such a way that the audience does not realize any breaches.

> By means of such by-play, performers can affirm a backstage solidarity even while engaged in a performance, expressing with impunity unacceptable things about the audience as well as things about themselves that the audience would find unacceptable. I shall call 'team collusion" any collusive communication which is carefully conveyed in such a way as to cause no threat to the illusion that is being fostered for the audience. (113)

Team collusion includes the use of staging cues (change in the tone of voice, changes in posture, usage of certain phrases, etc.); derisive collusion (facial gestures hidden from the audience, casting looks between team members, team members teasing each other during a performance, etc.).

Re-aligning actions occur during the interaction of two teams, when performers choose rather risky channels of communication during a performance. These channels, although risky and usually aggressive in nature, still do not openly threaten the integrity of working consensus. Examples include appropriate jokes, overtones, significant pauses, guarded disclosures, cooperation between members of separate teams, and temporary betrayals (120-130).

Usually, a team member is assigned as the director, ensuring that the performance runs smoothly without any hindrances. The director is also responsible for overseeing the other team members, and making sure that they do not perform in an unsuitable manner. In case of unsuitable behaviour, it is the director who corrects improper appearances. Yet another responsibility of the director is to allocate the parts of the performance. As such, the attitudes of the team members toward the director are different from those toward other members, positioning him/her as the one with the biggest responsibility (61).

Since the major objective of any particular team is to sustain their definition of the situation, while certain facts could be over-communicated, certain others could be downplayed. The facts that could discredit or disrupt the performance, according to Goffman, could provide 'destructive information', therefore the team has to employ information control. In the same manner, disclosure of various types of secrets could also endanger the performance of the team.

Goffman provides five types of such secrets: dark secrets, strategic secrets, inside secrets, entrusted secrets, and free secrets. Dark secrets are those that a team knows and conceals, because they pose a threat to the impression the team wishes to convey. Strategic secrets are the ones that are not shared by the audience, in order to avoid the audience from adapting to the plans of the team. The inside secrets, even though they may not have a strategic quality and they may not be considered dark, are the ones 'whose possession marks an individual as being a member of the group and helps the group feel separate and different from those individuals who are not 'in the know'' (88). If a team member discloses an entrusted secret, his/her loyalty to the team will be questioned. On the other hand, a free secret, although it is somebody else's secret, can be disclosed without discrediting the image of a team member. (87-89)

4.3.5. Critics of Goffman's Dramaturgy

Although Goffman's ideas on impression management that link back to dramaturgy (Tseëlon 1992) have been adopted by many scholars (Johansson 2007), it has also been criticized by other scholars in relation to its application, processes, limitations, and depth. As regards the application of impression management, Prasad (2005) is critical of Goffman, contending that he generalizes human behaviour that can only be characteristic of the Western society. However, Goffman (1959) addresses this issue, stating that although the illustrations of impression management in *The Presentation of Self* are from the Anglo-American society, impression management studies in other societies could consider cultural differences that result in different degrees of dramatic enactment. Furthermore, he underlines political and social influences that could make it difficult to match certain performance patterns of the Anglo-American society to those of other societies (157).

Yet, as underlined by Brissett & Edgley (2005), dramaturgy is not tied to a specific culture and the dramaturgical principle that interaction between individuals and/or teams can be examined by the expressions they give off, is applicable in all societies. They furthermore assess that,

> There is little doubt that the awareness and utilization of the dramaturgical principle is surely variable, both within and without the Western world. The critics are at least correct in pointing out that there are certain features of contemporary Western society that have elevated this form of awareness to a higher priority that in other cultures and at other times within our own. [...] In summary, while awareness of the dramaturgical principle may vary from time-to-time and place-to-pace, more elevated in people's consciousness at some times and in some places, and virtually nonexistent in others, the principle itself

> does not- it represents a culture universal since it is not possible to conceive of a society whose members have no forms of expressive communication. (25)

Another criticism against Goffman's dramaturgical approach is that the focus on the impression management and persuasion strategies employed by individual actors (or teams) reduces the audience to a mere spectator, implying a one-way communication (Sturdy 2004). Yet, in his statements about the audience, Goffman (1959) clearly explains that the audience is also engaged in the process of impression management:

> When we allow that the individual projects a definition of the situation when he appears before others, we must also see that the others, however passive their role may seem to be, will themselves effectively project a definition of the situation by virtue of their response to the individual and by virtue of any lines of action they initiate to him. (3)

In line with this emphasis, the audience as an integral part of the interaction process, and the guiding role of the audience upon the performances of actors have been assessed by other scholars as well (Mangham & Overington 1987; Gardner 1992; Mangham 2005). Therefore, when any particular impression management scene is examined, it is necessary to view and understand it as a joint performance of the actors and the audience.

Goffman's dramaturgical perspective and impression management framework is further criticized for focusing only on the micro-level analysis of the actor-audience interaction, neglecting the macro perspective of different levels of hierarchy and of different organizational/institutional frames (Gouldner 1970). Chriss (1995) also argues that the focus of Goffman's dramaturgy is on micro analyses of face-to-face interactions, without any ties to broader, macro structures. This argument is closely related to another major criticism against Goffman, namely that Goffman neglects the significance of power in human interactions.

Rogers (1977), on the other hand, offers the possibility of exploring the implicit and relatively coherent conceptual scheme of power, influence and control in Goffman's work. Richard Jenkins (2008) also argues that Goffman's sociology offers useful insights into what power is and how it actually works.

Jenkins explores "The Interaction Order" (Goffman 1983) and discusses how some concepts of Goffman might be extended to analytical contexts regarding power, and how Goffman's understanding of power might be helpful in understanding contemporary realities of the early 21st century. Jenkins defines power as the capacity of individuals or groups to achieve their own ends, and contends that it is usually dependent on the resources available (159), and argues that as Goffman's work focuses on how people struggle to keep the social order during face-to-face interactions, it presents a concept of power as a normal matter of everyday interaction that enables and/or prevents capacity (164). Rogers (1977) too, argues that Goffman's work "offers insights into the nature of power as a pervasive fact of people's everyday lives" (88). According to Rogers, through his focus on the key resources of influence of middle-class American society, specific influence strategies in daily interaction, and those phenomena which tend to generate behaviour that supports the interests of the powerful; Goffman projects a specific concept of power (94).

Besides the power related with the individual in everyday interaction, Goffman (1959) also explores teams as groups of performers, working in collaboration to achieve a common objective. In this regard, Goffman refers to two types of power: dramatic and directive dominance (62). Directive dominance is about the performance of a team member who directs and controls the dramatic action, involving tasks such as overseeing any improper behaviour of the team members, and allocating the parts in the performance. Dramatic dominance, on the other hand, is about the performance of the "star" of the team. He positions these as two contrasting types of power, and states that within any given performance where two or more teams are involved, each team can exhibit these two types of power, depending on the situation.

Yet another criticism against Goffman's dramaturgical perspective is that life is different from theater, and that theatrical imagery and language cannot describe or explain human behaviour adequately. In this framework, it has been argued that the theatrical metaphor blurs fundamental distinctions between off and on stage (Wilshire 1982); and that being 'on stage' in a theater is significantly different from being 'off stage' in everyday life (Messinger, et al. 1962; Psathas 1977).

Even though the differences between life and theater as argued by these critics might be true, especially when conventional theater is considered, the focus of dramaturgy, according to Brisset and Edgley (2005), is the dramatic and expressive rituals of life, whether they are theatrical or not (31). In this sense, it is important not to equate all life with theatre, and it is equally important not to separate theater from all life. Goffman has also noted that, "Life may not be an imitation of art, but ordinary conduct, in a sense, in an imitation of the proprieties, a gesture at the exemplary forms, and the primal realization of these ideals belongs more to make-believe than to reality" (1974 562).

In this study, drama is interpreted as a useful metaphor to understand social life and human interaction, but not as an ultimate ontological premise. At the end of *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959), Gofffman summarizes technical, political, structural and cultural perspectives of analysis, positions the dramaturgical approach as a fifth perspective, and demonstrates the points of intersection between the dramaturgical perspective and the other perspectives:

> It seems to me that the dramaturgical approach may constitute a fifth perspective, to be added to the technical, political, structural, and cultural

perspectives. The dramaturgical perspective, like each of the other four, can be employed as an end-point of analysis, as a final way of ordering facts. This would lead us to describe the techniques of impression management employed in a given establishment, the principal problems of impression management in the establishment, and the identity and interrelationships of the several performance teams which operate in the establishment. But, as with the facts utilized in each of the other perspectives, the facts specifically pertaining to impression management also play a part in the matters that are a concern in all the other perspectives. (154)

Goffman's impression management, like the dramaturgical perspective itself, has also been criticized as being artificial and insincere (Argyris & Schön, 1974), since the objective is to create and sustain an illusion. Yet according to Chriss (1995), this is not the case, as Goffman's impression management is about the maintenance of a moral social order, to which both the actors and the audience contribute, to preserve the particular broader context (or the 'frame') that defines their interaction.

Tseëlon (1992) argues that the tradition of impression management scholarship proposes a distinction between the "true" private self and the "false" public self, whereas Goffman proposes a variety of faces in various settings and in front of particular audiences that the individual uses in order to uphold the definition of the situation. The social actor of the impression management approach has a hidden agenda and is in an effort to hide facts about his/her private reality (Chriss 561).

> The Goffmanesque approach views people's presentational behavior as a process of negotiation. It is a game of *representation*. In contrast, the position advanced by impression management researchers views presentational behavior as manipulative. According to this view people present various images of themselves as a strategic move. Unlike Goffman's approach, this 'game' is not an end in itself but a *means to an end* of gaining benefits. It is a game of *misrepresentation*. (Tseëlon 116) (Italics in the original)

Discussing Goffman's view of the self, his "cynical" approach, his epistemology, and his "as-if-ness", Waksler (1989) claims these all challenge and contribute to ways of doing sociology. Waksler relates Goffman's understanding of the self to the works of Cooley and Mead, describing it as "understanding the sociological idea of the self" (3). According to Waksler, the individual's use of other individuals as sources of data for constructing action; the ability of the individual for behavioral variance in order to influence the inferences of others, and the manipulation of "expressions given off" to gain control of resources for influencing the inferences of others, as elaborated by Goffman are of particular importance (4).

The self in Goffman is not a stable state but a dynamic composition of various continuing actions of influencing others and of developing defense mechanisms against the influence of others. Goffman's focus on the self emphasizes how the self is presented in everyday interaction. "Information" in Goffman, is what one learns from others, that one reveals about oneself and also what one conceals about oneself.

4.3.6. Goffman Applied

Attempting to provide a general conceptual framework for services marketing, Grove (1992) presents several key concepts within the framework of Goffman's drama metaphor. Drawing from parallel characteristics of services marketing and drama, such as tactics and strategies involved to create a desirable impression, and emphasis on the management of the expressive behavior of the actors involved, the actors and the audience, the setting, and the performance are examined mainly through Goffman's observations.

Two points Grove makes with respect to critical role of the audience (the customers) during especially the presentation of service by the service's contact personnel (the actors) are noteworthy, in the sense that they can also be applied to the interaction between external PR consultants and their clients. The first point is the unwillingness of the customer to cooperate in the production of the service, disrupting or destroying service experience. The second is the expectation that the customers are obliged to embrace various behavioral rules, such as providing the service personnel with the necessary information to perform their responsibilities properly, and showing tolerance when slight imperfections occur (456).

> In terms of royalty, the service actor learns to avoid any behaviors that might destroy the impression for the audience. Discipline concerns actors' learning their parts thoroughly and avoid unwittingly committing gestures or mistakes, which are potentially disruptive to the desired impressions. Discipline includes keeping one's personal problems away from the front region and exercising self-control in difficult situations. (459)

Stating that dramaturgy can be used to explain behavior in organizational settings, Gardner III (1992) provides explanations for the key components of dramaturgy and then goes on to demonstrate how these components combine to produce certain performances through the employment of impression management strategies, also emphasizing several defensive or face-saving tactics that organizational actors use to repair their damaged images. Gardner claims it is critical for organizational members to recognize various impression management tactics and the motives behind them in order to become more intelligent actors and/or audiences (43).

Referring to Goffman and arguing that much of the behavior in organizational settings can be explained through dramaturgy and/or impression management, Gardner (1992) has provided descriptions for several basic notions such as the "actor", the "audience", the "stage", the "script", the "performance", and the "reviews" that underlie this perspective (35-6). Gardner then has focused on how the combinations of these components interact to produce a specific performance, demonstrating five different types of assertive impression management strategies (ingratiation, self-promotion, intimidation, exemplification, and supplication) (36) through five different scenarios with an organizational setting. Gardner has also included certain face-saving tactics used by the “actors” to repair a damaged image, this time in the political context of the Iran-Contra scandal, positioning the then U.S. President Ronald Reagan as the “actor”, employing face-saving tactics for the United States public, the U.S. Senate and the international community (42).

Aiming to demonstrate the relevance of the concept of Goffman’s impression management for marketing, Grove and Fisk (1996) examine the various elements of the marketing mix. Although impression management is a concept usually discussed in terms of interpersonal exchange, it can also be situated in circumstances where an organized group of individuals work to affect the attitudes and opinions of an audience. Grove and Fisk contend that this is the case in marketing concerns such as positioning a product or planning integrated communications (7). From selection of the brand name to packaging, from design of the logo to selected advertising media, the activity of marketing is able to affect the perceptions of the consumers about a product or a brand.

Clark and Salaman (1996) argue that the art of impression management is at the core of consultancy work, as consultants need to create favorable impressions regarding their credibility and to generate economic gain (19).

> If service characteristics, particularly intangibility, imply that a client will have difficulty in determining the quality of a seller’s service *ex ante* then there is scope for the consultant to construct a reality which persuades clients that they have purchased a valuable and high quality service. Therefore, the key to an understanding of consultancy work and its success is to appreciate that successful consultancy, in its methods at least, recognizes, and indeed stresses, the active management of the client-consultant relationship. (18)

Although the characteristics of service work and their degree of importance for different types of service vary, there are still features that are common to all services: intangibility, interaction, heterogeneity and perishability (19).

Clark and Salaman’s (1998) examination of the management consultancy industry in terms of the dramaturgical metaphor provides us with a series of similarities between management consulting and public relations consulting. As noted by these authors, determining the quality of a management consultancy’s service at the pre-purchase stage is a major problem for clients (20). Likewise, the clients of public relations consultancies, in spite of various pitch procedures, buy a promise about a certain level of quality and expertise. The intangible character of consultancy service, whether it is management or public relations consultancy, also makes it difficult for clients to differentiate between high and low quality agencies, leading them to view consultants and consultancies as substitutable, as the “appearances” of low and high quality suppliers may be similar (21). Therefore, the consultants create impressions of their quality and expertise through the presentation of their qualifications, the quality of data and its analysis, and past credentials as well as the way they dress and talk, their confident attitude, etc.

> Like a bottle of wine, a restaurant meal, or a book, the quality of a management consultancy service is determined during enactment/consumption. This indicates that the outcome of a consultancy service is highly dependent upon the quality of interaction between client and consultant. (22)

Due to the difficulty of identifying the quality of service or the level of expertise prior to purchase, clients of public relations consultancies emphasize previous experiences of the consultancy with other clients. As service is created as a result of the interaction between the client and the PR agency/consultancy, the way this interaction is managed will be vital in creating a valuable experience for the client. As the number of successfully managed interactions increase, the agency will have a set of past credentials that will be presented to prospective clients:

> Management consultancy suppliers are not able to deliver a standardized service. This stems largely from the central role that the client plays in the production and delivery of a consultancy service. Put simply, the interaction between clients and consultants ensures that no two assignments are the same. (23)

Although each client is a new experience, public relations consultancies, like their counterparts in other expert consultancy domains, adjust and customize various parts of their overall expertise in order to provide tailor-made solutions to meet client needs. In this regard, past experiences of consultancies are employed to create and present new combinations and service packages.

Hilgartner (2000) explores the credibility of science advice, using Goffman's metaphor of drama and performance, focusing on three controversial reports by the National Academy of Sciences (NAS). Although NAS is not an official U.S. government agency, its recommendations are highly valued by the public authorities. Hilgartner points out to the ongoing debate on science advice, underlining various challenges by non-governmental groups, which have been questioning the objectivity of its analyses and advice, especially after the 1960s (3-4).

According to Hilgartner, in order to achieve a status of offering authoritative advice, experts have to develop strategies to present themselves in such a way as to create favorable impressions in their audiences. In order to decipher these strategies, Hilgartner adapts Goffman's dramaturgical perspective, analyzing the production, presentation and reception of expert advice through the written reports of NAS. He argues that:

> The first step in bringing a dramaturgical approach to the analysis of scientific writing is to recognize that Goffman's most general observations about performances also

> apply to written documents such as the advisory reports that concern us here. Face-to-face interactions, in which performers rely mainly on speech and the idiom of bodily appearances and gestures to present themselves, differ from texts in many ways, but they share fundamental structural features that arise in all performance. (16)

Hilgartner, through this dramaturgical perspective, demonstrates the techniques of information control used by NAS that aim to produce a sharp separation between the "backstage" (where practices for access to information are regulated and discussions among members take place), and the "front stage" (where the whole team puts on a performance of unity). He also demonstrates that the Academy's "stage management" system does not always function perfectly, and the "performance" is disrupted by both members of the Academy teams resisting to efforts to discipline their actions, and by audiences who deploy various strategies to question and discredit the expert advice of the Academy (146-8).

Russell (2003) uses Goffman's approach to social behavior –the social encounter as role performing- to question and discuss the role of consultants, who have often been criticized for their faddish, empty and duping claims. Russell, situating the problem within client-consultant interaction, argues that this encounter can be understood as a performance where roles of both sides are guided and directed by cues (135).

According to Russell, the behavior expected of consultants, or the behavior consultants think is expected of them, is one of the above-mentioned cues. Referring to Goffman's concept of "maintaining face", Russell demonstrates that both the clients and the consultants express their definitions of the situation during encounters, making claims in the process, and maintaining faces while acting out their roles. In case these claims, based on mutual expectations, prove to be erroneous for the interaction, then there might be "loss of face" (135).

Russell goes on to make use of the components of Goffman's dramaturgy metaphor, such as "performance", "performance teams", "regions", and "region behavior" and claims that consultancy is about generating an impression of a sense of knowing, since the product presented is intangible, making symbols significant for clients (136). Here, it is critical to note that the symbols used by consultants in the creation of an impression of a sense of knowing, conform to the expectations of the clients, since what the clients consider as valuable service largely determines the role behavior of the consultants (138).

Mangham (1978), inspired by Goffman, argues that everyday social interaction is structured around different types of scripts and he proposes three distinct scripts. "Situational scripts" occur when each actor shares and understands what is supposed to take place. "Personal scripts" exist in the mind of their initiators and therefore may not be shared by all present. "Strategic scripts" arise where actors seek to initiate certain behaviors in others with whom they are interacting. According to Mangham, strategic scripts are manipulative in character since the performers (actors) are very much aware of what they are trying to achieve. There is conscious attempt to influence the impressions of others toward a certain direction (34).

Mangham, in his last published article (2005) before passing away, reflects on the use of his and other scholars' ideas of the representatives of symbolic interactionism, including Goffman, whom he places within the symbolic interactionist tradition. Mangham's reflections provide an introspective description of the use of the dramaturgical perspective in social and organizational contexts, especially in relation to the notion of management as performance. Inspired by Kenneth Burke mainly through Goffman's development of Burke's dramaturgy perspective, Mangham has focused on describing the interaction and its related processes, rather than focusing on the explanation of behavior:

> The idea of the world as a stage, of men and women as actors assuming and discarding different roles, and social reality taken to be a drama, has been familiar in literature for hundreds of years. As I have indicated, it is only in the past hundred years or so that social scientists have taken up the analogy and exploited it as a device for describing/analysing social behaviour. For those I mix with, it is a stimulating and useful source of ideas and I have sought to capture some of that excitement in my own writing. In all recourse to metaphor or analogy lies the shock of recognition, but the idea of life as theatre appears to be particularly fecund in that not only is theatre a special kind of activity that consists in composing a plausible semblance of human action as a matter of consequence, but we readily use the terminology of drama and the theatre as a means of understanding human action itself. It has been my great, good fortune to be able to contribute to the literature of this analogy as it has been applied to behaviour in organizations. (956)

Besides the study of Mangham (1978), various other scholars of organizational studies have also focused on situational scripts. The study of Rafaeli and Sutton (1991) is about how positive and negative emotions, or different scripts, of different professions stimulate social influence. Another example is Hochschild’s (1983) study examining corporate scripts that are forced on employees, controlling their dialogues, actions, and performances. Van Maanen and Kunda’s (1989) exploration of Disney’s corporate script, and Boje’s conceptualization of Walt Disney enterprises as a storytelling organization also need mentioning.

McCormick (2007), extending Goffman’s dramaturgy metaphor, and using the primary elements of dramaturgical analysis such as the performance, backstage, teams, audience and stagehands, examines organizational behavior through a case study of conflict and change management in a public institution. According to McCormick, a dramaturgical frame provides a clearer picture in situations like the ones under examination, allowing the depiction of irrational patterns of organizational behavior, such as the struggle of different teams to define the situation, resistance to organizational learning, and the presentation of idealized lines by the management (696-7).

Patriotta and Spedale (2009) have investigated the connection between individual and social sensemaking processes in the context of group- based interaction through an empirical study of face games and sensemaking in a consultancy task force. They draw on Goffman’s theory of face-to-face interaction and his notions of face, face-work and interaction order, and illustrate that repeated face games are involved in the grounding of identity, during which participants try to influence the patterns of interaction while maintaining a coherent self-image. They also found that an “interaction order” is maintained within the group setting through these face games. This application of Goffman’s theory and some of its major concepts is significant for the understanding of consulting practices in terms of how consultants construct face/s and how these affect the practice of consultancy work, especially within a group context.

Erving Goffman and his thought, although in a limited capacity, has been a topic of interest for the public relations scholarship as well. Johannson’s (2009) demonstration of the relevance of Goffman’s concepts of face, impression management and symbolic interaction, with a focus on co-creational communication; Tsetura’s (2010) call for greater engagement with scholars like Goffman; and Fawkes’s (2014) examination of the identity of public relations practitioners through a Goffmanian lens are among the significant studies in this respect. Hallahan’s (1999) study, although not a specific application of Goffman’s ideas, identifies 7 different types of framing suitable for public relations, also referring to Goffman’s frame analysis.

According to Fawkes (2014), Goffman’s ideas could contribute to a better understanding of both the identity of the profession of public relations and of individual public relations practitioners. She suggests that public relations as a commodity created for clients and employers, the question of the legitimacy of PR as a profession and the professional identity of practitioners can be analyzed and understood through Goffman's framework (5).

Fawkes (2014) discusses Goffman's explorations on the construction and maintenance of individual and team performances to elaborate on the professional identity of public relations, both as a field and as an individual practice. Suggesting that the stable self of the past has been replaced by a fragmented and contradictory self, Fawkes underlines the relevance of Goffman's drama metaphor in understanding the different presentations of self in different locations (3). Applied to public relations, Fawkes argues, Goffman's research could provide new perspectives for public relations practitioners who continuously face the task of harmonizing official versions of their role as presented in textbooks with their actual daily professional experiences (5).

Johannson (2007) argues that interpersonal communication theory is a valuable source for public relations in understanding communication with external and internal publics. She suggests that several interaction settings can be analyzed in terms of the joint effort all participants to maintain a working consensus (277). Among other research directions suggested by Johannson are the conscious and the unconscious creation and communication of impressions in different organizational settings, the management of these in the front and the back stages, and the types of impressions perceived by different audiences and publics (278). Johannson furthermore argues that the concepts of Goffman are linked to important notions of public relations and says:

> In conclusion, Goffman's concepts are developed out of empirical settings, and I would like to emphasize that by analyzing at micro-level, the social interaction that continuously shapes relations inside and outside organizations, we will deepen our

understanding of communication processes that have important implications for the relation of publics in public relations. (279)

Basing their study on Goffman's (1974) 'frame analysis'; Froehlich and Burkhard (2005) compare the frames communicated by political actors with the frames the media relate with these actors. The writers aim to answer how political public relations can succeed at conveying certain perspectives to the media, by using the concept of framing. Analysing the meanings and contexts of media coverage and political public relations during the nationwide debate on immigration in Germany between May 2000 and March 2000, the study finds a high correlation between the preferred thematic and position frames of the political actors and the related media coverage. On the other hand, the study also revealed that the media members tended to alter public relations messages that did not have a distinct focus (20-24).

Sallot (2002), arguing that the impression management perspective rooted in Goffman's work is well suited for developing the understanding of public relations (151), problematizes the perceived poor reputation of public relations among the general public, and applies impression management as a theoretical frame to understand the effects of specific aspects of public relations on public attitudes. Sallot's study tested the effects of motives, communication style, and the licensing of PR practitioners on the general reputation of public relations. According to the results of the study, when public relations practitioners were seen as acting with over intentions of self-gain, public relations was less favoured. When the practitioners did not appear to be managing impressions intentionally, public relations was better regarded (156-162).

A recent and interesting application of Goffman's concept of stigma to the "stigma of silence" in public relations is Dimitrov's (2014) study. Examining the concept in the specific context of relations between journalists and public relations practitioners, where public relations practitioners are probably the most visible, Dimitrov discusses the journalists' use of this stigmatized concept to put pressure on sources for information and the responses of public relations. Dimitrov proposes a higher reflexivity for public relations practitioners both in theory and practice, a reflexivity that will lead to a deeper understanding of different connotations of silence. This way, Dimitrov argues, instances of ineffective silence will be reduced and audiences or stakeholders will be given enough silent space for evaluation of organizational communication (13).

4.4. EMPIRICAL APPROACH

This study adopts an interpretive approach and qualitative methodology as the means to explore the study's research question. Interpretive approach and qualitative methodology is employed because it is a most appropriate approach to explore how reality is socially constructed and how experience gains meaning through social construction (Guba & Lincoln 1994). As this study aims to explore and describe the construction and presentation of public relations expertise by the public relations consultants in Turkey, the qualitative methodology has enabled the researcher to emphasize the setting and the participants' frames of reference (Marshall & Rossman 1999). Further, the current state of the relationships between PR consultants and their clients suggests a qualitative approach because it is most suitable for understanding a phenomenon characterized by tensions, controversies and uncertainties (Rubin & Rubin 2005). The qualitative method, therefore, has contributed in providing a thick description of how public relations consultants manage and regulate their relationships with their clients, through the construction, presentation and management of their specific expertise.

4.4.1. Qualitative Methodology

Hatch (2002) summarizes the distinguishing characteristics of qualitative research as follows: the object of study is the real experiences of real people in their naturalistic settings; the researcher seeks to understand the world from the perspectives of those living in it; the researcher is the major data gathering instrument; there is extended first hand engagement; multiple sources of data are used; the data analysis is inductive, findings are grounded in data; and the researcher is the part of the world he/she studies and is able to keep track of his/her influence on a setting (6-11).

These characteristics of qualitative research also demonstrate that this is an appropriate strategy for this study. First of all, the focus of qualitative research rests on the exploration and description of phenomena from the point of view of those who experience them. Secondly, the sample is not chosen randomly, but with the objective of arriving at a full and comprehensive understanding of the phenomena in question. Third, the data is not collected in a controlled manner, the collection of data is natural and enables the recording of the real experiences of the participants. Fourth, the researcher, besides gathering the data, also derives meaning from it. Fifth, the analysis starts with the details and then draws generalizations about the phenomena studied. Last but not the least, the final report of findings is a cohesive narrative, where all elements are part of a whole (Maykut & Morehouse 2001 43-74).

In this study, the construction and presentation of public relations consultancy expertise in Turkey is explored through the analysis of data provided by prominent public relations consultants. In this regard, the sample was chosen through a set of criteria that would enable the provision of appropriate and meaningful data, as will be demonstrated later on. The collection of data, through semi-structured interviews, provided ample room for participants to freely reflect on the phenomenon of PR consultancy expertise. During the analysis of the empirical data, each detail in the reflections of the interviewees was carefully examined, and then was incorporated into meaningful general categories.

Another reason for the adaptation of a qualitative strategy is that it paves the way for understanding the context via the real experiences of people related to the issue under study (Creswell 2013). As stated by Denzin and Lincoln (2003), qualitative methodology is appropriate for investigating the subjective nature of reality, and allows the researcher to place an emphasis on how reality is socially constructed. During this study, the experiences of the participants were analysed with a conscious effort of understanding the context of the external public relations consultancy in Turkey, as this context influences the current status, problems and the challenges of the researched subject.

As mentioned previously, understanding the phenomenon of external public relations consultancy in the Turkish context necessitates the recognition and understanding of the related tensions, controversies, and uncertainties. The controversial and ambiguous character of external public relations consulting in Turkey resonates well with Rubin and Rubin’s (2005) assessment that qualitative strategy is especially appropriate for examining issues surrounded by ambiguities and contradictions. In spite of the positive developments during the last 15 years, external PR consultancy services in Turkey have not been researched extensively. Therefore, the adoption of qualitative methodology supported an in-depth exploration and thick description of how Turkish PR consultants constructed and presented their expertise.

Furthermore, qualitative methodology, due to its focus on the subjective perspectives and experiences of the individuals under study (Van Manen 1984) has equipped the researcher with ways for understanding the sense-making framework of the participants, emerging from their interactions with various stakeholders. This inquiry also overlaps with Goffman’s focus on and exploration of the tools and frames of social interaction. Therefore, qualitative inquiry is an appropriate research tool to explore how external public relations consultants in Turkey understand and experience public relations expertise.

4.4.2. Data Collection

4.4.2.1. Qualitative Interviewing

In this study, in-depth interviewing was used to explore and examine the construction and presentation of external public relations consultancy expertise in Turkey. Qualitative interviewing enables the researcher to understand the deeper meaning underneath the apparent (Rubin & Rubin 2005). In other words, the objective of qualitative interviewing is to peel off the layers of the issue in question. As the layers are peeled off, the researcher gains a deeper understanding of the specific context in which the issue is grounded in, and how the research participants construct reality within this context. Moreover, in depth interviewing reveals the related details and complexities, often neglected in daily practice.

Marshall and Rossman (1999) contend that qualitative interviewing allows for mutual information exchange between the researcher and the participants. It is also considered a continuous process of collecting, organizing and analyzing data (Rubin & Rubin 2005). As the data emerges, the researcher could be directed to modify certain questions or formulate additional ones. In this study, as richer data emerged during the interviewing phase, certain questions were added, which enriched the subject of study.

Rubin & Rubin have also noted several factors relating to the quality of interviews, such as the alertness of the researcher to the ambiguities and contradictions during an interview, and the awareness for underlying implications or nonverbal cues. Such alertness and awareness on the part of the researcher enables the conveyance of appropriate questions at appropriate times.

During the course of the interviews and during the analysis phase, the ethical integrity of the researcher is very important (Potter 1996). A researcher is obliged to respect the participants and should not reveal their identities unless they allow so. Furthermore, the confidentiality of certain information provided by the participants should also be respected. In line with these ethical guidelines, the identities of the participants are not disclosed, and information considered confidential by the participants was treated as supportive background knowledge but was not revealed. Additionally, the direct quotes of participants were reviewed meticulously in order not to provide any hints about their personal identities.

Among the four types of interviews suggested by Rubin & Rubin (2005), topical interview is the most suitable type when the purpose of this study is considered. The topical interview will allow a narrower scope therefore enabling participants to provide a more focused description. As for the structure of the interviews, the semi-structured format, allowing for the suggestion of discussion topics and specific questions by the researcher, has provided data focused on and relevant to the subject matter of inquiry. Accordingly, an interview protocol focusing on the issues or topics to be covered has been prepared to enable the collection of similar type of data from all participants (Daymon & Holloway 2011).

Certain limitations of qualitative interviewing, pointed out by Marshall and Rossman (1999), were taken into account during the interviews. The first consideration was to cooperate with the participants in order to make them comfortable with sharing information. Due to the long-time familiarity of most of the participants with the researcher, they comfortably shared information, being assured that the information shared would not be distorted or manipulated. Furthermore, the detailed explanation of the purpose of the study encouraged the participants to contribute to the study, as all of them stated that the resulting work would contribute to the development of public relations consultancy industry in Turkey.

The second consideration was the need to be cautious against the possible provision of false or exaggerated information by the participants. All the participants understood and shared the need for correct and honest information about the external public relations consulting in Turkey for a comprehensive assessment of the current situation, as they all lived and experienced various challenges of external PR consulting at the personal and professional levels. The in-depth information and individual experience of the researcher regarding the issue was an additional advantage in evaluating the information provided.

4.4.2.2. Sampling and Recruitment

For the recruitment of participants, the criteria listed by Rubin and Rubin (2005) were used as guiding principles. The first of these is that the participant chosen has to have considerable knowledge and experience regarding the subject of study. This is necessary in order for the researcher to collect informed and meaningful data. A second criterion is the voluntary willingness on the part of the participant to offer his/her individual opinions about the subject matter. The third criterion is about the selection of participants: they have to represent a wide range of the qualities of the research issue. In the selection of the participants of this study, all these criteria were met.

The sample of this research consists of the public relations consultants working in the public relations agencies in Turkey. The initial criterion for agency selection was the condition that the agency had been active in the industry for 5 consecutive years. The initial criterion for the selection of consultants was the condition that they had a professional experience of at least 5 years in a public relations agency. The sample group includes the presidents, managing directors and senior consultants of the agencies because they are the decision-makers as regards the construction, presentation and management of the public relations consultancy expertise. In their positions as leaders, these professionals are highly influential in the determining of the content and the structure of consultancy operations. They are also the main influencers and key shapers of the agency-client relationships. For this study, 30 interviews were conducted. 26 of these interviews were carried out with senior level public relations consultants who were also either the owners or the founding partners of prominent Turkish public relations agencies. The remaining 4 interviews were conducted with top-level executives of these agencies. A chart detailing the participants can be found in Appendix 2.

For the recruitment of participants, the researcher used purposeful sampling (Neuman, 2002), relying on her own judgment to select participants who could contribute to the purpose of the study . The recruitment of participants was through the personal and professional network of the researcher. The 25+ years of professional experience of the researcher in the Turkish public relations industry has enabled her with a wide network of colleagues with whom she has constantly communicated, attended lectures and seminars, and also cooperated in several industry events and projects. The wideness and the relevance of this network, further strengthened by mutual understanding and trust between the researcher and the participants enabled a smooth recruitment process.

The participants were initially approached verbally, and were informed about the objectives and the subject of the study. Once they verbally agreed to participate in the research, an e-mail detailing the research question was sent to each participant, also including a request for an appropriate time and place for the interview. The major titles of the interview protocol was also attached, in order to provide participants with the flow of the interview, and give them time for preparation in case they felt the need for it.

4.4.2.3. The Interview Protocol

The interview protocol was based on the objective of exploring and describing the construction and presentation of external public relations consultancy expertise in Turkey through Erving Goffman's dramaturgical perspective. Several scholars have stated that open-ended questions are most suitable to explore issues in communication discipline (Rubin & Rubin 2005; Lindlof & Taylor 2002), as they enable the researcher to understand the subject matter from the viewpoints of the participants, and to adapt the interview questions according to information provided by them.

The interview protocol for this research had six sections. The first section (Questions 1-7) included questions about the profile of the participants and their PR agencies. The questions in the second section (Questions 8-21) enabled participants to reflect on the nature of their individual expertise in public relations, as well as to assess the expertise of their agencies. To this objective, the questions in this section explored how Turkish public relations consultants defined and presented themselves; and how they related experience, power, trust, and reputation with individual, agency and industry expertise. Through these questions, the researcher aimed to gain a detailed insight of the participants' understanding of public relations expertise both at the individual and agency levels, including their depiction of specific problems and challenges related to the issue of PR expertise in Turkey.

The questions in the third section (Questions 22-30) asked participants to evaluate the points of views of their clients regarding various aspects of external public relations consulting in Turkey. Towards this objective, the participants were requested to formulate typical client expectations from public relations agencies; to assess the clients' level of understanding and appreciation of public relations consultancy expertise; to provide information on how clients chose to work with particular public relations agencies; and to reflect upon the relationship between independent counsel and client confidentiality. The questions both in the second and the third sections provided data for the depiction of different types of consultants as "performers", and for the exploration of how consultants defined and presented themselves to their clients.

The fourth section included detailed questions (Questions 31-55) about the working practices of Turkish public relations consultants. The consultants were asked to provide details on subjects such as their typical working day; their handling and preparation of new employees; preparation of their agency for new business pitches; their treatment of clients inside the agency and inside industry gatherings; and their in-house rituals. The empirical data emerging from the questions in this section was used in analyzing the "back stage" performance of public relations consultants, positioning the PR agency as a " rehearsal" venue. These questions also enabled the researcher to provide a comprehensive description of the "secrets of trade", as well as "team performances" of both the PR agencies and the industry.

The objective of the questions in the fifth section (Questions 56-62) was to understand the physical features of the Turkish public relations agencies, through the investigation of subjects such as their geographical location, the decoration of their offices, and the physical appearance of the agency staff. Through this understanding, the researcher was able to provide a detailed description of the "front stage" where the "performance" took place, and to discuss how Turkish public relations consultants defined and constructed their "front". The questions in the sixth section (Questions 63-67) aimed to provide further data regarding the performance of the consultants in the "front stage", asking them to elaborate on the nature of services they provide for their clients, and the challenges they face during the realization of their work.

For the Interview Protocol, please see Appendix 1.

Pretest

As stated by Berg (1998), once the interview protocol has been developed by the researcher, it has to be pretested. Accordingly, the interview protocol for this research has was pretested through two steps. First of all, the protocol was examined by an academician with an extensive knowledge and experience in research methods in social sciences. At this stage, the questions were checked as regards their wording, possible biases, and sequencing. The academician also checked whether all the questions necessary to support the research question were included. Following the input of the academician, the order of some questions were changed, certain questions were replaced under more appropriate sections, and some questions with repetitive content were deleted.

Secondly, two experienced public relations consultants examined the interview protocol. Their familiarity with the subject matter of the study enabled them to check whether the language used in the questions would be meaningful for participants, and whether there were any uncovered issues regarding the construction and presentation of external public relations consultancy expertise. As a result of this review, three more questions were added to the protocol, and one question was placed under a different section. Both reviewers stated that the interview protocol would motivate the participants to provide input.

4.4.2.4. Interview Procedure

Before beginning each interview, the subject matter and the objectives of the study were summarized briefly, and the consent of participants for audio-taping of the interview was taken. Furthermore, it was stated that they could ask for corrections or alterations of their comments during the interview, and also ask for further clarification of the questions. Due to the open-ended nature of the interview questions, the researcher made sure that the participants felt at ease to provide comments as detailed as they wished, and to elaborate on additional issues they thought were relevant. When the interviews ended, the participant were asked whether they had any additional comments to make.

All the participants agreed to have the interviews audio-taped, and all interviews were audio-taped by Samsung Galaxy Note5 smart mobile phone. The interviews took place between the dates of December 2014 and December 2015. They lasted an average of 2 hours, and were conducted at locations chosen by the participants. During each interview, the researcher took written notes of significant and/or interesting concepts and terms used by participants. Furthermore, following each interview, the written notes were reassessed the same or the next day, in order to capture the essence of data provided by the participants (Daymon & Holloway 2011). The researcher also wrote down her own additional observations regarding both the interviewee and the interview. The audio-taped interviews were then transcribed. The transcription was completed by the researcher, between the dates of January 2016 and April 2016.

4.4.3. Validity

The issue of validity in qualitative research has been discussed extensively by several scholars, usually with the objective of defending the credibility of qualitative scholarly work. The literature on the issue includes suggestions for direct application of validity from quantitative research, radical questioning of validity itself, or development of separate criteria of validity for qualitative research (Kuzmanić 2009 40). This rich literature includes various terms for validity, such as authenticity, goodness, verisimilitude, adequacy, trustworthiness, plausibility, and credibility. Furthermore, the literature encompasses different typologies of validity like “five types of Maxwell, four frames of Lather, and four positions of Schwandt” (Creswell & Miller 2000 124).

Among these perspectives, the approach of Kvale (1994a; 1994b) was inspiring for the researcher for two reasons. Firstly, Kvale specifically focuses on interviewing in qualitative research, making his approach adaptable for this research that uses in-depth interviewing for collecting empirical data. Secondly, he emphasizes the relationship between philosophical understandings of truth and concepts of validity, and contends that there are multiple ways of knowing. Furthermore, although he opposes the notion of an objective universal truth, he underlines the significance of local and personal forms of truth (Kuzmanić 2009). In this respect, the approach of the researcher to the issue was to understand validation as good craftsmanship in research (Kvale 1994a 168-9).

As explicated by Kvale (1994b 3-12), the quality and the validity of the research was ensured through all the phases, including the credibility of the researcher and the participants. First of all; the long time experience of the researcher as a professional public relations consultant and an academic public relations lecturer qualifies her as a credible individual for the purposes of this research. The efforts of the researcher in contributing to the enhancement of the public relations consultancy industry in Turkey, including her active role in the foundation of the Turkish public relations industry association, further contributes to this credibility. As explained above, the participants recruited for this research are all reputable and credible public relations consultants of the Turkish public relations industry.

Secondly, the researcher checked with academic colleagues and colleagues from the Turkish public relations industry, whether Erving Goffman's dramaturgical approach would constitute an appropriate framework for a deep understanding of the public relations consultancy expertise. Once this theoretical framework was verified as appropriate, the researcher carried out an extensive review of recent literature on Goffman's adaptation to consultancy literature. As the literature on Goffman's adaptation to public relations was quite limited, the review was extended to literature on management consulting. In order to provide a more comprehensive theoretical background, the researcher also reviewed and summarized the literature on expertise in general, and public relations expertise in particular; and the literature on external public relations consulting.

The design of the interview protocol was also checked and evaluated over and over again. The times and the venues of the interviews were organized to allow enough time and space for the participants. Following the completion of each interview, the interviews were transcribed as quickly as possible, in order to be able to go over the statements made and to question whether or not all points were sufficiently covered. During this validation process, the researcher went back to some participants and double-checked with them parts of their statements that were somewhat unclear, this way making sure that the data would be healthy and transparent.

During the interpretation phase, the researcher made a special effort to consider and be aware of her biases regarding several issues that surround external public relations consulting in Turkey. This enabled the researcher to focus on the meanings yielded through participants' perspectives, describing and interpreting them accordingly. The researcher also compared and contrasted individual accounts of the participants, to depict similarities and differences in their perspectives, in order to make room for detailed and comprehensive information surrounding the research question. As a result, the validation was built into the research process, with necessary checks at each phase.

4.4.4. Reflexivity

Reflexivity refers to continual internal dialogue and critical self-evaluation of the researcher's position, as well as to the recognition of the potential effects of this position on both the process and the outcome of the research (Berger 2015 2). When speaking of the position of the researcher, his/her political views, background, experience, and biases are at stake (Daymon & Holloway 2011 9). This position may have certain impacts on the research. The first major impact is on the access of the researcher to the field. If the participants perceive the researcher as someone who can empathize with their situation, their willingness to share information may increase. The second impact is on the relationship between the researcher and the researched. The participants may be more willing to share their views with a researcher with whom they feel comfortable; due to the age, experience, familiarity, credibility, etc. of the researcher. Thirdly, the worldview and the background of the researcher affects the way he/she uses language, addresses questions, and interprets the findings (Berger 2015 2).

When a researcher is embedded in a research site, he/she may be perceived as a 'stranger' even if he/she is familiar to that site and to the participants, due to his/her position as a researcher. Furthermore, as the researcher is engaged in two worlds simultaneously (an outsider involved in research and an insider participating in the social world of the participants), he/she moves between familiarity and strangeness, which may have effects on the collection and interpretation of data. Yet, as Daymon and Holloway contend, the awareness about this simultaneous involvement and estrangement, if acknowledged openly, may enrich the research process (2011 9).

In order for a researcher to demonstrate self-reflexivity, Potter (1996) suggests three ways: detailing the research process, explaining the research methodology, and making a conscious effort to exhibit biases. Since the details of the research process and methodology were provided earlier on in this chapter, here I will elaborate on various subjects that have the potential of leading to biases, namely my educational, professional and academic background and experience, and my engagement with the research issue and the participants.

After obtaining my B.A. in English Language and Literature, my career path was moulded with communications-related work. It was the late 1980s, when very few public relations agencies existed and the communication departments in organizations of all sorts were just emerging in Turkey. During that period, among other things, I had the chance to build an in-house public relations department for a reputable holding company from scratch; to edit several catalogues for art exhibitions and collections; to work for Istanbul Foundation of Culture and Arts [4] (IKSV, the organizer of Istanbul International Arts Festival); to manage a medium-sized advertising agency; and to support the communication team of Cem Boyner's New Democracy Movement[5]. In 1997, I founded my own public relations consulting agency, BG Consultants (www.bgiletisim.com), which still provides public relations counsel to reputable Turkish and international companies. Deciding that the young team of BG Consultants was talented and experienced enough to sustain the agency operation, I started working as a full-time lecturer in the Public Relations Program of Istanbul Bilgi University (www.bilgi.edu.tr) in 2013 (in which I had been lecturing on public relations as a part-time instructor since 1989) , completede my M.A., and started the PhD Program in Communication Sciences at the same institution.

During my professional life, I had the chance to equip myself with the formal body of knowledge in communication and public relations, and to actually experience the establishment of the public relations profession in Turkey. I explored the formal public

[4] İKSV- (Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts) is a non-profit cultural institution. Since 1973, the Foundation continues its efforts to enrich Istanbul's cultural and artistic life. İKSV regularly organises the Istanbul Festivals of Music, Film, Theatre and Jazz, the Istanbul Biennial, the Istanbul Design Biennial, Leyla Gencer Voice Competition, autumn film week Filmekimi and realises one-off events throughout the year.

[5] YDH- (New Democracy Movement) is a political party founded by businessman Cem Boyner in 1994. The party promoted values such as open society, diversity, free market, and freedom of expression. Following a defeat in 1995 Turkish General Election, the party was closed by Cem Boyner.

relations literature, both to adapt it to the professional sphere, and to be able to present correct and up-to-date information to my students. My growing network both in the client and the consultancy side enabled me to engage in discussions on how organizations and public relations consultancy agencies could partner in the best possible manner to achieve communication objectives. Furthermore, I continuously discussed and debated with my colleagues in the agency industry on how to improve our services and how to enhance the reputation of our industry. These discussions led me to become one of the founders of the Turkish public relations industry association IDA, and also to work as a board member at Turkish Public Relations Association TUHID. Upon transferring to the academic side, I felt the need to contribute to the public relations academy and the industry in Turkey by understanding how public relations consultants in Turkey construct and present their expertise.

My discussions with colleagues in the industry centered on the nature and scope of PR consultancy services; the interaction of public relations expertise with other fields of expertise in communications; the concepts used to denote external public relations consulting; the need to increase awareness about public relations consultancy services in both the existing and the potential purchasers; and the need to enrich formal public relations education in Turkey in order to support the need of the industry for qualified human resources. In the course of these discussions, I chose to focus on understanding the nature and scope of public relations consultancy services, as I believed that a full assessment as such would enable both the consultancies and the clients to take steps for improving several shortcomings and difficulties that stood in the way of a mutually beneficial relationship. This is why I endeavoured to understand how external public relations consultancy expertise was constructed and presented, from the perspective of the public relations consultants.

My familiarity with the public relations consultants and the consultancy industry in Turkey had the possibility of blinding me to significant information about the construction and presentation of external public relations expertise in Turkey, directing me to project my own biases or assumptions to the issue. According to Gearing (2004), bracketing is a “scientific process in which a researcher suspends or holds in abeyance his or her presuppositions, biases, assumptions, theories, or previous experiences to see and describe the phenomenon’ (1430). As noted by Creswell and Miller (2000), I have acknowledged my biases and beliefs early in the research process and bracketed these as my work progressed, focusing on understanding how the issue perceived and interpreted by the external consultants themselves. This way, I was able to reflect the perspective of the participants. On the other hand, my previous knowledge and experience on external public relations consulting also provided me with a useful pre-understanding of the issues at stake, and facilitated my access to the field.

4.4.5. Analysis and Interpretation

The organization and presentation of data gathered during this research was initially inspired by the three steps proposed by Wolcott (1994): description, analysis and interpretation. According to Wolcott, these three steps are the building blocks of qualitative research, and although presented separately to facilitate a better understanding, they are in fact intertwined, and do not always represent a linear process. During the analysis of data, all three exist simultaneously. Description refers to the data collected, either through direct observation or through the accounts of the participants. Analysis is the identification of the essential features depicted from description. Finally, interpretation is about figuring out what these essential features mean in reference to an existing or an emerging theory (9-11). Put in other words, this process is about identifying key categories that emerge from the data in relation to the research question, the “coding” of data according to these categories in order to formulate related concepts, and the demonstration of associations and relationships between the various concepts to present a coherent “story”.

Qualitative Content Analysis

In qualitative content analysis, codes provide a classification system that facilitates the organization of data, therefore supporting the interpretation. Furthermore, codes enable the researcher with an analytical picture of the data that might not easily observable in transcript form (Forman & Damschroder 2007, 48). In most cases, there are primary or parent codes, with related sub-codes or child codes that are listed under the primary ones (53). In this research the coding of the textual data (interview transcripts) was inspired by Weber (1990), namely defining the coding categories, testing the coding on a sample of text, revising the categories if necessary, and coding of all the text.

Forman and Damschroder (2007) contend that during qualitative content analysis, a researcher can use either deductive or inductive codes. While the inductive codes come from the data itself, deductive codes exist a priori and are constructed from theoretical frameworks (48). As noted by Daymon and Holloway (2011), if a researcher wishes to adapt the ideas or thinking of another author into another context, he/she may explicitly present the themes or categories to be considered at the outset of the analysis process (303). Yet, there are various studies that employ a combination of both approaches: while deductive codes are used as a means of ‘entering’ the data, an inductive approach is used to identify new codes (Forman and Damschroder 2007 48). Since the aim of this research is to understand the construction and the presentation of external public relations consultancy expertise in Turkey in terms of the dramaturgical metaphor developed by Erving Goffman (1959), the core concepts of Goffman’s approach were deductively assigned as categories for the coding of the interview transcriptions. As will be elaborated in the following pages, new codes were also identified inductively.

Accordingly, the following categories and subcategories were defined: Actors, Roles (Expert Advisor, Service Specialist, Facilitator); Backstage (Secrets, Routines, Rituals); Front Stage (Scripts, Settings, Performances), Teams and Team Performance (Colleagues, Performing Team, Spectator Team, Team Directors), and Impression Management. The following table demonstrates the primary categories and subcategories, along with how the researcher has defined these Goffmanian categories in the context of external public relations consultancy expertise:

CATEGORIES AND SUBCATEGORIES	**DEFINITION**
(Subcategories are given in italics)	
Actor/s (Performers)	Individual communication consultants and/or consultancy agencies
Role/s	Different roles attributed to communication consultants & different roles consultants attribute to themselves
Expert Advisor	Generally, the founding partners, the presidents, the CEOs of consultancy agencies. Sometimes, the senior professionals like the Managing Director, Team Director, etc. employed by consultancy agencies
Service Specialist	Various specialists in the Communication Consultancy agency team
Facilitator	The consultants acting as facilitators between the in-house communication departments and the C-suite of client

	organizations
Back Stage	The preparation for the presentation of public relations consultancy expertise
Secrets	The secrets of trade in communication consulting
Routines	Regular activities of communication consultancies for managing and sustaining their front stage performances
Rituals	Regular activities of communication consultancies for enhancing motivation and belonging
Front Stage	The actual presentation of individual consultant and/or consultancy expertise
Script/s	Verbal and behavioral guidelines of communication consultancy practice
Setting/s	Communication consultancy agency premises + Venues for meetings, events, etc.
Performance/s	The activities of the communication consultants in the presence of clients and/or other stakeholders
Teams & Team Performance	Communication consultancy teams and their performances as experts
Colleagues	Other individual consultants and communication consultancy agencies in the industry
Performing Team	Communication consultancy industry
Spectator Team	The clients of communication consultants
Team Directors	The founders or the president of the communication consultancy agencies

Impression Management	Expressions and techniques used by communication consultants to present their expertise

The first step was to read through all the interview transcriptions carefully. During this process, the notes taken down during the interviews - (which were word-processed beforehand)- were matched (by cutting and pasting) with the corresponding parts of the transcriptions. This way, the accounts of the participants were enriched, underlined, emphasized, and highlighted through the notes taken by the researcher. Following this, the transcripts were read once more, and this time the parts relevant to the predefined categories provided above were marked with colours assigned for each. Human coding was preferred for two reasons: First, the interview transcriptions had several parts that were meaningful only in the context of Turkish public relations consultancy industry, and these meanings could only have been depicted through the experience and knowledge of the researcher about this context. Secondly, human coding was more suitable for attributing meaning to various potential ambiguities in the accounts of the participants (Bucy 2014 275).

Special attention was paid to parts that were not clear, ambiguous or that lacked a single definition in order to avoid mistakes in categorization (Cavanagh 1997). Finally, separate documents were created for each predefined category. The three examples below demonstrate the organization of these separate documents:

ROLES	
"When we initially introduce our agency to a client; our presentation is full of concepts like 'strategic communication planning', 'public relations expertise', etc. When the	(Founding Partner)

presentation is over and the client asks the names of prominent journalists whom we know personally, we are instantly reduced to press agents.”	
“While how we define our roles is important, how our stakeholders, especially our clients define our roles within the framework of the services we provide is equally important. Well, there are discrepancies between the two.”	(President)

FRONT STAGE	
“The physical decoration of the PR agency is perceived as an identity manifestation, and our clients comment on it.”	(Owner and President)
“The physical premises of the agency is a reflection of its culture. When you have a big and a functional table in the meeting room, it represents a culture of harmonious team work. If the agency is decorated in an extravagant manner, the clients think you are spending their money for luxury.”	(Founding Partner and President)

TEAM DIRECTOR	
“For the clients, the identity of the agency founder/owner is usually very important. Even if they do not continuously interact with the agency founder, they are relieved to think that he/she is overseeing things behind the stage.”	(Founder and Partner)
“The right chemistry between the agency president and the top executive of the client helps the agency in landing new business. I’m not speaking of just a personal chemistry here. The client looks for the right chemistry in shared values and in	(Managing Partner)

perspective.	

This way, the collected data was systematically organized, by breaking the transcripts and the notes taken during the interviews into manageable categories and subcategories (Forman and Damschroder 48).

4.4.6. Ethical Considerations

The research reported in this study was conducted in line with Istanbul Bilgi University's Human Studies Ethics Board. The application for this research was forwarded in December 2014, and formal approval was received.

Participation in the research was voluntary. Prior to the interviews, all the participants were informed in detail about the scope of the study. The live recording of each interview was started after the consent of the participants, and they were furthermore informed that they could change any part of the interview, or that they could withdraw from the study altogether if they wished. In line with the demand of all participants, their identities were kept confidential, and only their official titles were used to designate them.

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS

5.1. INTRODUCTION

This is the analysis chapter of the study. In this chapter, the "actors" of the analysis are the senior public relations consultants in Turkey, and the platform on which they perform is the Turkish public relations consultancy industry.

In order to address the research question posed earlier, the analysis draws on Erving Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical perspective. In developing his perspective, Goffman uses the metaphor of theatre and views the social encounters as "performances". In the context of this analysis, "performance" refers to the activities of the communication consultants ("the performing team") before their clients ("the spectator team").

According to Goffman, the social actors interpret or define each other's actions, in this sense, they are not mere observers who react, but actively engage in the "definition of the situation" (1959 13). In the context of the provision of public relations services, the assessment of these services by the clients in specific directions have the potential of influencing the attitudes of the communication consultants. Interpreting the assessment of their clients, the communication consultants in turn, engage in the endeavour of managing the impressions of their clients in favour of the services they provide. In this regard, the analysis will discuss, through the accounts of the participating consultants, the dramaturgical performance of external communication consultants, with a specific focus on the definition of their roles and the scripts they use as guidelines of the performance.

The analysis will also shed light on the backstage activities of communication consultants, in the absence of their clients. The analysis of the backstage will include focal points such as the secrets of trade of individual consultants and consultancies, the inside secrets of the industry, and the industry wide common routines and rituals. It must be noted, as will be explained in the analysis, the division between the front and the backstage does not usually designate separate physical areas, but is used for analytical purposes.

5.2. ACTORS

The individual public relations consultants and the public relations agencies in Turkey are the actors of this analysis. Prior to demonstrating and discussing how they construct and present their expertise, these actors will be introduced briefly. Unfortunately, as stated elsewhere, up-to-date data such as the total number of public relations agencies in Turkey, the total number of their employees, and the total turnover of the industry is unfortunately not available. Currently, the trade association İDA, although not fully satisfactory as regards detailed data, is the only source that can be referred to. However, it should be reminded that İDA collects data from its members on a voluntary basis, and not all members report figures such as their turnover, the average monthly fee they bill, etc.

According to World PR Report 2015, which includes input from the Turkish trade association, İDA has 25 member agencies. As of the writing of this dissertation, however, the number of İDA member agencies had increased to 28 (http://www.ida.org.tr/?page_id=57). İDA estimates that its members represent 50 % of the total public relations consultancy market in Turkey. The most recent data has again been collected by İDA in 2015, through the voluntary reporting of 21 of its members. The researcher has accessed this data due to İDA membership of the public relations agency, of which she is the founder.

Looking at this data, we see that the total turnover reported is nearly 40 million US Dollars. Considering the turnover of non-reporting members, the total turnover of İDA member consultancies can be estimated to be more than 60 million US Dollars, as also stated officially by İDA. İDA also projects that its member agencies provide consultancy services to more than 500 leading companies and brands of Turkey (http://www.ida.org.tr/?page_id=374). The voluntary reporting of 21 İDA member agencies also reveals that although the total turnover of these agencies grew by 2 % and the total consultancy revenue grew by 3 % compared to 2014 on a Turkish Lira basis, these figures decreased by 18 % and 15 % respectively on a US Dollar base.

The Turkish public relations consultancy industry has an history of a little more than 40 years, as the first ever Turkish PR agency was founded in 1974 (Peltekoğlu and Saydam 2008). The founders of the very first agencies could be considered the pioneers of public relations practice, or the first generation of communication consultants in Turkey. The dominant majority of credible public relations agencies have an average past history of 20 years. The second generation of public relations consultants, most of whom are presented as the doyen/ns or connoisseurs of the industry today, are between the ages of 45 and 65 (Şahin 2016). Some common weaknesses of these second generation agencies are that they were founded by entrepreneurs who could not provide a significant initial capital, they operate with low profitability, their founders still play a dominant role in the sustainability and marketing of their operations due to weaknesses in human resources, and most of them are not institutionalized as regards their organizational structures (İlhan 2012).

The majority of the third generation Turkish public relations agencies were founded during the first half of the 2000s. The founders included public relations practitioners leaving the second generation agencies to build their own shops, and journalists leaving their publications (or being laid off). Although the term led to some controversy in the industry, it is now common practice to label them as such. These agencies preferred to position themselves as “communication partners” rather than “consultants” and argued that in addition to traditional public relations services offered by second generation agencies, they were structuring their agencies to also provide internal communication, and social media management and monitoring (*Marketing Türkiye* 2012). The third generation agencies criticized their predecessors for their pessimism about the state of the consultancy industry; for not clearly defining the roles of their employees vis-a-vis the clients; and for their slow pace in adapting to changes in the profession and the industry.

However, these agencies could not clearly define their genuine offer - as the services they proposed to offer were already provided by all second generation agencies-, but concentrated on the mistakes of the second generation. The so-called “third generation spirit” could not be elaborated further, and the common ground was the shortcoming of the second generation agencies and the consultancy industry, rather than a new model to overcome several difficulties the industry faced. (İlhan October 2013). Moreover, the small size of the public relations consultancy market as shown through total turnover and revenues above, which is reflected in insufficient investment in agency human resources, was another motivation for the entrepreneurs of the third generation. On top of all this, there were clients who wanted better service for a cheaper price, encouraging young PR practitioners to set up their own agencies that would provide ‘special and exclusive’ services for them (Saydam June 2010).

The lack of data regarding the Turkish public relations agencies is also true for the human resources side. İDA estimates that its member agencies employ around 800 public relations practitioners, while the total employment provided by the industry is not known. According to the results of the 2009 *Research on Perception of Communication Consultancy Services*, conducted through the joint sponsorship of TÜHİD and İDA; IDA member public relations agencies employed an average of 18 practitioners, 74 % of which were female and % 26 were male. According to the results, while 73 % of agency practitioners were university graduates, 17 % of them had either an MA or a PhD, and 58 % of the agency employees were reported to be between the ages of 26 and 35. The voluntary data provided by 21 IDA members in 2015 demonstrates that the average number of practitioners employed by IDA member public relations agencies increased to 34 in 2014, but yet declined to 25 in 2015.

Although the workforce in the public relations agencies is well educated, the ability to attract and retain the necessary talent remains as one of the most important challenges of the Turkish public relations industry:

> The public relations industry is losing its talented employees to the client side. The clients are able to build strong in-house communication departments, recruiting the necessary talent from the PR agencies. This is possible because the fees received by the agencies are very low, making it impossible for them to pay decent fees to their employees. This is why the agencies cannot compete with the clients as regards employee salaries. (Saydam May 2010).

This challenge is not unique to the Turkish public relations industry. The results of the *World PR Report 2015* show that both agency and corporate executives cite the ability to attract and retain talent as the greatest challenge facing the global PR industry. The report also reveals that, in a similar manner, PR agencies are one of the most important sources for transferring talent to the in-house communication departments. *The European Communication Monitor 2015* (Zerfass et al. 2015), conducted among PR professionals from 20 countries including Turkey, underlines the same problem. When asked about the three most important reasons for conflict with public relations agencies or consultants, the in-house communicators in Turkey cite “lack of knowledge of the client’s business and processes” and “use of junior staff instead of experienced consultants” as the two most important reasons.

This brief introduction of the actors of the public relations consultancy scene has provided some figures and findings, along with certain problematic issues. Yet, as these actors are not simply categories based on specific classifications or passive recipients, but active participants who process these figures and findings, and design strategies in dealing with various other actors and institutions, the following sections will elaborate on such processes and strategies.

5.3. ROLES

Consultant, Expert or Specialist?

> When practicing public relations in a PR agency in Turkey, one is faced with several different concepts for defining the actual work. Are you an expert, a consultant, or a specialist? There is a lot of confusion; both at the industry and the client side. Terms and concepts are not clear. (President and Founder)

As this PR Agency President & Founder expresses, the concepts and the related terms to define these concepts regarding the roles assigned to individuals working at public relations agencies in Turkey are usually not well-defined. Most of the time, the terms "consultant", "expert", and "specialist" are used interchangeably, both at the PR industry and the client level, leading to a lack of consensus. The confusion and ambiguity is actually rooted in different perspectives of several stakeholders on what public relations business actually deals with. Changes in business functions, the unfavourable image of certain public relations activities, the desire of the public relations industry to distance itself from the negative connotations of the term 'public relations' or 'PR', and the insufficiency of business organizations in understanding what public relations is about, have all contributed to this confusion (Hutton et al. 2001).

The participating consultants in this study have all emphasized the unclarity in defining and describing their roles as public relations practitioners, and have expressed several explanations for the confusion:

> What we call ourselves is oftentimes shaped by what we are actually doing, and what we do is usually determined by what the client organization demands from us. In other words, how the clients perceive public relations and how they define their specific public relations needs shapes our identity. (PR Agency Founding President)

> The confusion in terms of defining concepts of our profession is significant. One of the contributing reasons is the clients' lack of knowledge about what public relations is all about. The public relations industry itself also contributes to the confusion. Today, there are practitioners who call themselves 'communication consultants', 'perception managers', 'strategic communication consultants', etc. Furthermore, there are public relations agencies that offer only media or event management services, and surprisingly they call themselves 'strategic communicators'. (PR Agency President)

> When explaining what we do, and who we are, we are confronted by lots of different concepts and terms. As a general trend today, I observe that most of our colleagues in the public relations consultancy industry prefer to call themselves 'communication consultants' and not "public relations consultants'. I believe this is a result of outside factors; the term 'communication consultant' is perceived as more credible by the clients or the media. It is also used to prevent certain misconceptions about the term 'public relations'. (PR Agency Founder).

In spite of their emphasis on the state of confusion regarding the role of public relations consultants, all the participants interviewed said they would define and present their individual roles as "communication consultants". Beyond the credibility and prestige attributed to this definition; the rationale behind this choice was that communication consulting pointed at the ability to think and analyze strategically, at a significant and in-depth experience in the public relations industry, and at the power to counsel organizations. This is echoed in the following two accounts of a PR Agency Founder and a PR Agency President:

> I think the best definition I would use for my role is 'communication consultant'. I would use this for myself, as well as several of my colleagues in the industry, to imply an ability to strategically analyze the problems of client organizations. If one does not have the necessary intellectual and professional capacity for strategic insight, then I would call that individual an operational public relations practitioner. A consultant can propose solutions to communication problems, whereas an operational practitioner can only execute strategic plans. (PR Agency Founder)

> I would definitely define myself as a 'communication consultant'. A communication consultant has a broader perspective and his/her insights are not limited by public relations only. You need a broader knowledge base from other disciplines such as psychology, sociology, history, etc. There is also the dimension of significant experience, as experience brings depth and the ability to learn from past experience. (PR Agency President)

These accounts resonate with the proposal that public relations is a strategic management function, responsible for planning, implementing and evaluating the organizational communication towards the achievement of business objectives (Grunig 1992; Heath 2002). Additionally, these role assessments are inspired by the corporate communication perspective described as a vision that integrates all communication functions of an organization into a strategic whole (Cheney & Christensen 2001); and the presentation of 'strategic communication' as an emerging paradigm, the essence of which is again strategic goal orientation (Hallahan, et al. 2007).

Also traceable in these accounts is the perception that 'public relations' or 'PR' is somewhat a more limited concept, understood as only a part of external communication, such as media relations, special events, and the like. The accounts can also be interpreted as being parallel to at least two of the four dimensions or roles of public relations formulated as a result of the Delphi study about European PR; namely the managerial and the operational dimensions (Verčič, et al. 2001).The remaining two, reflective and educational dimensions are not emphasized.

So, why do the majority of consultants participating in this study define their role as communication consultants? First of all, the name given to the profession and the practice in Turkey is 'Halkla Iliskiler', and while "Iliski" means 'relation', 'Halk' does not denote a specific 'public' in the public relations sense, but means 'the general public' (Özden & Saran 2004). This has led to the perception that public relations people are either responsible for 'guest/customer relations' of enterprises, or they run the show in events and celebrations. The second reason consultants in Turkey have distanced themselves from the term 'public relations' is the negative connotation of the term among journalists.

Furthermore, in identifying their roles as 'communication consultants', the participants echo a similar trend internationally, conveying the message that their services go beyond traditional public relations, and that they are not just in the business of 'PR'. The majority of the participant public relations consultants in this study represent the second generation of industry entrepreneurs who have started founding their PR agencies the 1980's (Bıçakcı & Hürmeriç 2013). Different from the first generation consultants who started their career in communication functions of private sector companies, the second generation dominantly showcases consultants who were ex journalists, advertising agency creatives, and publishers. Being so, they transferred their individual intellectual capital, as well as that of their previous industries to the public relations industry. These consultants were also aware of the international developments in the industry, and therefore reacted in a similar manner. Bıçakçı and Hürmeriç (2013) report that at the beginning of 1990's, 'Public Relations' started to be seen as ethically unsuitable, narrow-scoped and insufficient for strategy development.

As a Founder and Partner of a PR Agency explains:

> With the introduction of the concept of 'strategic communication' to the Turkish PR sector in 1997, through the leadership of Ali Saydam and Salim Kadıbeşegil, we began to talk about evaluation and measurement of our services. We also started discussing standards of quality in public relations services, and the steps of strategic communication, along with other novelties in the international PR industry. That was sort of a turning point, after which we started calling ourselves 'communication consultants' and began to describe our business as 'communication consulting'.

Yet, Paul Holmes (2012), the founder of the Holmes Report, claims that this means losing touch with the roots of the public relations industry, the founders of which defined public relations as a form of social science. Holmes further contends that 'communications' is only one aspect of the broader role public relations people can and should embrace:

> Bernays defined public relations as a form of social science. Page was insistent that "public perception of an organization is determined 90 percent by what it does and 10 percent by what it says"- a clear challenge to those who see PR as synonymous with communication. (2012)

Although consultants participating in this study did not challenge the term "communication consultant" as such, they were aware of the discrepancy between the role they defined for themselves and the role attributed to them by external stakeholders:

> At the end of the day, no matter what we call ourselves, it comes down to how much media coverage we have earned for our client. It is true that we talk a lot about strategy

> during client meetings, but in daily practice, the agency team is evaluated by the media outcome that is generated. (PR Agency President)

> At present, the expectancy of the majority of clients from PR agencies is wide and positive media coverage. If we do not admit this openly, we will not be in a position to change this situation. The added value of communication consulting is oftentimes reduced to strong and effective media relations. This is related to shortcomings both at the client and the agency side. (PR Agency Founder and President)

These accounts demonstrate that the business of public relations in Turkey is still perceived somewhat as synonymous with publicity in general and with media relations in particular. Yet, providing earned media coverage for clients, perhaps a differentiation point of public relations from other communication businesses - especially advertising-, has now become less attractive with the impact of digital and social media. As digital and social media grew, organizations realized that they had to engage in authentic dialogue with their stakeholders rather than just transmitting their messages through earned media coverage, and the new channels provided organizations with an opportunity to create content in a wide variety of forms ranging from corporate blogs to mobile apps (Wright & Hinson 2008).

However, when asked if they received respect in their roles as communication consultants, almost all the participants said their clients regarded them as authorities especially during crises and during assignments of issues management:

> Respect comes with authority, I mean how much you are listened to, and how much the client is ready to act in the way you propose. When there is a real crisis and when the client really has to do something to overcome that crisis, there and then we are the boss. At such times, the clients are very keen to hear your advice. (Founding Partner and President)

> At times of crises, we are considered the authority. Why? Because we don't just bring in our experience, but also the depth that comes with it. Furthermore, when there are political issues to be addressed, we are respected in our capacity as consultants. (Owner and Chairperson)

> In the Turkish PR industry, the communication consultant, individually, is credible and respected, especially if the client has defined its communication objectives clearly and knows how to make use of consultant's insight. Such clients regard us as an authority. This is mostly visible in times of crises, yet if the client is able to understand the added value we provide, then respect comes at all times. (Owner and President)

The expert advisor role taken on by the participant consultants has another extension that needs a mention, namely the role of "facilitator". The "communication facilitator" role has been conceptualized by Broom and Smith (1979) as part of a four-role typology of public relations practitioners, and has been described as a being chiefly concerned for the quality and quantity of information flow between management and publics. As such, this is a role attributed to in-house communication practitioners. As a role taken on by external communication consultants, the "facilitator" role described by consultants participating in this study is conceptualized rather differently:

> In a way, in the communications framework, we are also organizing the internal relations of our clients. In many instances, we act as facilitators between the in-house communication departments and the top management. This usually takes the form of translating the business objectives of the top-management into communication objectives, to ensure clearer lines of action for in-house departments. (Founding Partner and President)

> In many cases, the top management of the client organization would be reluctant or hesitant to actively participate in communication schemes, and the in-house department falls short in convincing them to do so. At such times, our

> in-house colleagues would ask us for support, and as outsiders with expert authority, we are more successful in persuading the top managers. (Managing Partner)

In line with the above accounts, other participants also mentioned this facilitation role, providing several examples in practice. These include easing dialogue between the in-house practitioners and their managers especially during crises; providing communication mechanisms for organization-wide discussion of certain issues; and acting as moderators during times of change implementation. The facilitation role has also been emphasized by the Turkish communication consultants elsewhere. Turhan (May 2014) contends that the account teams of public relations agencies have become extensions of in-house communication departments, and when the in-house departments have difficulties in having top management acceptance of their ideas, they need the support of the external consultants. As such, this role is somewhat closer to the conceptualization of the "problem-solving process facilitator" by Broom and Smith (1979). Although attributed to in-house practitioners again, this role is focused on problem solving activities and the inclusion of the senior management in public relations activities.

Including the extension of the facilitation role, the following common themes in the accounts of the participant consultants emerged as attributions of expert advisor role. Example quotes for each attribution are also provided.

- Proven experience:

> Clients communicate among themselves, especially those in the same business industry. If you have a record of past success, you are regarded as an expert.

- Ability to stimulate and activate the potential of clients:

> When a consultant has an insight, he/she can see the communication potential embedded in the business of the client. This is not simply about being informed of client business, but about the ability to see through its various layers.

- Competence in managing issues and crises:

> The present world we live in is highly fragile as regards potential crises. In such an environment, an expert communicator is someone who can keep cool and provide counsel for long-term sustainability and credibility of clients' businesses.

In relation to these attributions, what are the characteristics of the communication consultancy expertise and the expert knowledge constructed and presented by the external communication consultants in Turkey? The accounts of the participants in this context revealed two common themes. The first theme that emerged was that of the significance of past expertise:

> Our counselling role in various areas necessitates that we go back to our previous experience in similar industries and situations. This is especially obvious during crises. The accumulated past experience provides insight as to the appropriate strategies and the related tactics. This, I believe is an important differentiating factor in the ability to provide strategic advice. (Owner and Chairperson)

> Our agency has solid expertise in specific industries. Over the years, we have accumulated a valuable experience in providing communication solutions to specific problems of these businesses. Although each problem is unique, the experience provides us with essential reflections. (Owner and Partner)

These and similar accounts of other participants underlining the value of referring back to past experience can be traced in Schön's (1987) emphasis on referring to practical experience, and Bereiter and Scardamalia's (1993) expert who is in a continuous reflection about both his/her past experience and the body of knowledge that this experience has been derived from. The participants' focus on past experience also confirm Fincham et al.'s (2008) demonstration of management consultancy firms' extraction of sectoral knowledge through client interaction and then formalizing it as collective expert knowledge of the consultancy.

The second common theme on the nature of communication consultancy expertise and the nature of expert knowledge claimed, was that of the ability to extract the relevant information out of the present vast pool of information. The following two accounts demonstrate the importance of this ability for the participants:

> The load of information available in the world is beyond imagination, and everyday this load in increasing rapidly. When there is a communication problem or when there is a need to present a compact information about an issue relevant to a client; we have an eye for credible, up-to-date, and appropriate information. I think this is one of the most important features of our expertise. (Agency President)

> Our work also involves the preparation and presentation of information to the clients on specific issues or situations. For example, when a political crisis breaks up, we quickly prepare an executive summary which includes the background of the problem, the actors involved, and the possible outcomes. In such situations, the ability to dig up the valid and reliable information requires expertise. (Founder and Partner)

The ability to extract the necessary information and the competence in presenting it in a compact and understandable manner can be situated parallel to Stehr's (1992) emphasis on the immense growth in knowledge which corresponds to the rise of knowledge-based work and related occupations. This is also reflected in Evers and Menkhoff's (2204) assessment of the strategic importance of experts and consultants in the new knowledge economy.

Goffman defines role, as "the typical response of individuals in a particular position" (1963 93), making a distinction between the actual performance of an individual and the role. The accounts of the participants resonate with this distinction. The consultants interviewed, while they emphasize their actual performance and the expert advisor recognition that comes with it, are also aware of the overall role born out of being perceived as providers of earned media. As such, perhaps the roles of individual consultants, the role of their PR agencies, and the roles of agency employees should also be differentiated. As one of the participants stated:

> We all jumped on the 'communication consultancy' bandwagon. Personally, I have very demanding criteria to position one of my employees as a 'consultant'. If I remember right, we have positioned only one of our colleagues as such in the history of of our agency. (Owner and President)

The need to differentiate between the roles of senior consultants, who at present are the owners and managers of second generation PR agencies and their employees has also been underlined by some of the senior consultants elsewhere. Describing 'communication consultancy' as a "mystification", İlhan (December 2013) says to label the services of the PR agencies as such has been a mistake and contends that it has led to confusion in terms of industry roles. In the same manner and in a more recent account, Saydam (January 2016) argues as follows:

> No matter how insistently PR agencies call themselves 'communication consultancy' agencies, and no matter how often they announce their new account landings as being chosen "solution partners'; 90 % of their clients perceive them as 'press agents', measuring their success by the earned media coverage they provide.

The gap between the roles attributed to senior consultants and the practitioners employed by their agencies is obvious. As mentioned earlier, while the founders of the PR agencies, individually, are well equipped to meet the strategic communication needs of their clients, the shortcomings in the formation of their employees create problems in the overall client perception. As the *Research on Perception of Communication Consultancy Services* (2014), jointly sponsored by İDA, TÜHİD and KİD showed, the client side thought the PR agencies had to develop their "strategic communication" and "issues management" competencies. Furthermore, they pointed out to difficulties such as "lack of information about specific client industries" and "insufficient level of creativity" when working with PR agencies.

So, what about the roles the participants attribute to the practitioners employed by their agencies? The accounts of the participants demonstrate that the practitioners in public relations agencies are described by several role typologies formulated by scholarly literature (Broom & Smith 1979; Broom & Dozier 1986; De Santo & Moss 2005). The participants see the practitioners at the start of their careers as technicians that provide several services that the clients need, and state that they do not take part in decision making as regards the communication strategies of the clients. As they spend time in the agency and progress in their careers, these technicians are gradually promoted to various 'specialist' roles, supporting the client teams:

> When and if a young practitioner in our agency develops herself/himself in accordance with specific client needs, then he/she is not a mere technician anymore. Such practitioners are positioned in account teams as specialists, contributing to the team in various ways such as research, daily operations management, event management, copy writing, etc. (Managing Partner)

Although there are promotional opportunities as such for practitioners employed by PR agencies, a considerable percentage of these individuals are either transferred to competitor agencies with higher salary offers, or they are recruited by the in-house communication departments of clients, as their seniority and experience grow. This is due to the previously mentioned difficulties in investing in human resources development as a result of the insufficient investment capital in the industry. As such, the embracement of the "communication consultant" role as a whole, describing both the individual senior consultants and their teams, becomes problematic.

Among other alternatives to approach this problematic, Röttger and Preusse's (2013) systematization of different roles of public relations consultants could be discussed as an alternative positioning. Elaborating on the different ways through which external public relations consulting is interpreted by both the client organizations and the consultants; Röttger and Preusse define two role dimensions. The first role dimension is expert consulting versus process consulting as two typical forms in practice, where the expert consultants apply their knowledge and propose solutions to communication problems and the process consultants provide the necessary know-how for the structuring of the problem solving process. The second role dimension is conceptual consulting versus implementation-oriented consulting, where the conceptual consultants focus on questions regarding the strategy /management of communications and the implementation oriented consultants provide advice for the planning and implementation of communication actions (112-13).

Goffman (1963) emphasizes three points for role embracement. First, is the attachment to the role (either admitted or expressed). The second point is the demonstration of the necessary qualifications and capacities for performing the role; and the third point is an active engagement or involvement (106). Seen from this perspective, especially the relative lack of necessary qualifications on the part of PR agency employees, along with human resources issues affecting their engagement/involvement negatively, leads to discrepancies in public relations consultancy roles as a whole.

What follows from this discussion on roles, then, is a possible identity crisis, borne out of conflicting prescriptions of public relations roles, problems in acquiring the consultant/consultancy identity, or the loss of credible roles. The emergence of new technologies and the digital media add different layers to this crisis (von Platen 2016).The strategies of consultants and their teams in coping with this crisis will be discussed in the following sections.

5.4. BACKSTAGE

In Goffman's (1959) dramaturgy, the backstage is defined as a place where impressions are constructed openly, because this is a region where the audience is not present, or is not supposed to be so. As such, the backstage is a place where performers can step out of their front-stage characters, relax and prepare for their next performance. Furthermore, as the actors are not in the presence of the audience, they can express their "true" feelings about their performance/s our audience/s while at the backstage (69- 82).

In this section, the backstage setting of external communication consultancy performance in Turkey is conceptualized as the activities of the communication consultants in the absence of their clients, and two of these that have significant impact on the consultancy performance will be discussed: secrets of the trade, and the consultancy rituals and routines. The rituals and routines mainly take place, and the secrets are constructed and "kept" in the physical setting which is commonly referred to as the "agency office". As will be discussed in the following sections, this physical space is not solely a guarded backstage, because it can be visited by the clients and other stakeholders. As Goffman (1959) argues:

> However, while there is a tendency for a region to become identified as the front or back region of a performance with which it is associated, still there are many regions which function at one time and in one sense as a front region and at another time and in another sense as a back region.[...] In general, then, we must keep in mind that when we speak of front and back regions we speak from the reference point of a particular performance, and we speak of the function that the place happens to serve at that time for the given performance. (77)

Moreover, with the rise of new communication technologies and the development of new forms of partnering, many services, including those of communication consulting, are no longer " 'desk' bound and the distinction between front and back stage becomes multidimensional, virtual and in a state of flux" (Lowe, et al. 423).

5.4.1. Secrets

Goffman (1959) contends that the overall objective of a team is to sustain the definition of the situation fostered by it. To this end, while some facts are over-communicated, others are under-communicated. The "information control" executed by a team in this regard includes certain secrets that must be kept, so that the performance of the team will not be threatened. Of the three types of secrets identified by Goffman, namely the "dark", the "strategic" and the "inside" secrets (87); the strategic secrets and the inside secrets will be discussed in the context of the external communication consultancy in Turkey. During the interviews, the consultants participating in this study, naturally, provided information pertaining to the categories and nature of these, and not to the very secrets themselves.

The first two common types of strategic secrets described by the participants were those relating to their commercial business and those relating to the presentation and execution of consultancy expertise:

> I don't know if it is proper to call them 'secrets' in the real sense of the concept, but yes, I would say we have strategic secrets as an agency. Some of these are specific for specific clients, and some are general for the totality of the business. Client specific secrets are generally about how the account team has to perform, considering certain special needs or sensitivities of the client. Among the second type, I can give examples such as the long-term business development strategies of our consultancy, or innovative presentation techniques and skills. (General Manager)

> Well, yes we do have strategic secrets. Some are about our plans for the future of course. Some others are individual, like my 'secrets of the trade' as an

> expert. These individual secrets come in handy especially during the first hours of serious crises situations when more or less everybody is immobilized for a period of time. (Owner and President)

> I think my personal secrets of trade are mostly about saying the right thing, at the right time, to the right person. Well, when I do it, it is not a secret anymore, naturally. What I'm talking about here is not a single behaviour, but a repertoire acquired as a result of long time experience in the industry. One meets all sorts of different kinds of clients, employees, situations; and so you develop a rich set of such reflexes. (Founder and Partner)

> For our agency, strategic secrets -apart from those of the future plans for the business- are mostly about how to impress and maintain the existing and the potential clients. There would be a main strategy for each client type, and the tactics are born out this strategy. The tactics are visible like how you act, what kind of material you present, etc. But the strategies remain in the know of the agency management and the senior consultants of the account team. (Owner and Honorary President)

When talking about strategic secrets, many interviewees talked about the future plans for their business. The statements demonstrate the already underlined fact that the dominant majority of consultants participating in this study have two major hats; that of the communication consultant, and that of the entrepreneur as the founders. In the first hat, they control, coordinate, and develop the the services of the consultancy. Wearing the second hat, they have to coordinate administrative issues as well as designing future strategies for the sustainability of their businesses. As also noted by Goffman (1959):

> Secondly, there are what might be called 'strategic' secrets. These pertain to intentions and capacities of a team which it conceals from its audience in order

> to prevent them from adapting effectively to the state of affairs the team is planning to bring about. Strategic secrets are the ones that businesses and armies employ in designing future actions against the opposition. (87)

The second type of strategic secrets the consultants talked about were about different features of consultancy expertise. Some of these were representative of the individual “secrets of the trade” of these experienced consultants, while the others were mainly about client management. As shown by Pieczka (2006a), in communication consulting, the management of relationships with clients is considered as part of professional expertise. Since the maintenance of positive agency- client relationships is vital for the survival of the consultancy business, this expertise is also a competitive advantage, hence considered a strategic secret.

Besides these two types of strategic secrets, some participants also mentioned “fee negotiation” strategies and “media pitching” strategies as “secrets of the trade” as well. As assessed by Allchurch (2016) , the survival of the public relations/communication consultancy industry depends on, among other things, maintaining profit margins, therefore agencies have to negotiate service fees to ensure this. Whereas the traditional agency model in Europe and the USA is charging by the hour, the consultancies in Turkey generally charge a monthly fee for agreed services, in cases of annual contracts. Moreover, the results of a study by PRCA UK, reported by White (2002), overservicing – providing more service than budgeted for – is widespread among agencies in the UK; which is also true for agencies in Turkey. Given the difficulties for evaluation and measurement of consultancy output and for monetizing services classified as “creative”, negotiating for a fair fee certainly requires skill, which can be considered competitive.

The over-emphasized nature of earned media coverage, as discussed in the section on consultant roles, necessitates that agencies develop and implement successful strategies for pitching the stories of their clients to the media. In Sallot's study (2006), journalists estimated that an average of 47% of news coverage results from contact with public relations professionals, yet the journalists complained about the lack of news sense, local angle, timeliness, and objectivity of public relations professionals . Waters, Tindall & Morton (2010) also found that an increased amount of media professionals have been seeking out public relations professionals for news content. The assessment of media pitching as a strategic trade secret is understandable in this context.

The "inside" secrets, in Goffman's dramaturgy are the ones, the possession of which "marks an individual as being a member of a group and helps the group feel separate and different from those individuals who are not 'in the know'" (88). In the context of this study, such secrets can be examined as those shared among communication consultants who are colleagues. The backstage for this examination is conceptualized as either the coming together of communication consultants in industry platforms, or in informal social occasions. Goffman assesses that as they put on the same performance, the colleagues in a specific community or profession develop knowledge about the difficulties and points of view of each other, therefore sharing a "community of fate" (102).

As demonstrated in the above paragraphs, competing for similar audiences, the participants keep certain strategic secrets from their colleagues. On the other hand, because they know and experience more or less the same experiences while performing to their clients, there are also things they cannot "hide". Especially when they are not in the presence of clients but in the presence of their colleagues, they can relax and engage in "colleague solidarity" (Goffman 1959 102).

> During our formal meetings organized by the Industry Association, we do talk about our experiences with clients, negative or positive, but the name of the client is not pronounced. In this way, we can use the experience of another

> colleague for benchmarking, or for concentrating on what we have to improve as an industry. (Founder and Chairperson)

> Sharing our experiences about client expectations is very useful. The gatherings of the industry association, or informal gatherings among colleagues are insightful in the sense that they enrich our understanding of client trends. Sometimes we are inspired, and sometimes we are concerned and seek for solutions. (Owner)

> When we come together as colleagues, we share our experiences, both positive and negative. Hearing similar experiences of your colleagues, in a sense, is relieving. You understand that you are not the only one having difficulties. On the other hand, the commonality of certain negative experiences demonstrate that there are quite a number of controversial practices that have come to be regarded as normal, which is a matter of concern. (Owner and President)

These examples show that the main subject matter shared among colleagues in the backstage of the communication consultancy industry in Turkey is about client experiences. This is not surprising as clients are the stakeholder which has the most important impact on the communication consultancy business. As this shared information accumulates over time, we may talk about a set of hints and cues as an "inside toolkit" for improving client management. Another subject brought up in this context was human resources management. Many participants thought sharing difficulties and challenges in human resources management was very common in collegial gatherings.

However, talking about inside secrets, almost half of the participants said the level of sharing information of all sorts was very low among colleagues. One participant said;

> In our industry, the owners of consultancy agencies think, if they voiced a difficulty they experienced, they would seem vulnerable and weak. Some other think, if they discuss client management issues, or issues about new business pitches with their colleagues, they would be giving away competitive information. Most communication consultancy agencies are closed boxes in this sense. (General Manager)

Nevertheless, still some other accounts in this regard showed that sharing of secrets regarding difficulties in various areas was more common in one to one interactions between colleagues. "If a colleague of mine calls, asking for my advice for a new business pitch which is in an industry I am experienced in, I would gladly provide information, for example, on all challenges of the industry," a participant said. Another participant said, "I would rather share certain information or secrets with a few of my colleagues whom I really trust, but with all colleagues in an industry platform".

The hesitant attitude of the participating consultants on sharing inside secrets among their colleagues can be explained by Goffman's (1959) assessment that there is always a compromise between the formal and informal styles in reference to the backstage behaviour or activity (79). As expressed by one of the participants, "a client that has left might one day come back again, and the same is true for an employee", putting a restraint on the type of information to be disclosed or shared among colleagues in the backstage. Furthermore, as Goffman says, "there are often moments backstage when the performers will have to sustain one another's morale and maintain the impression that the show that has just been presented did not go over so badly". This is demonstrated in the following account of a participant:

> Sharing of negative experiences regarding our work or our industry demoralizes all of us. This is true for both the industry gatherings and for informal gatherings among consultancy agency employees. In our agency, we do not prefer that our employees criticize clients among themselves all the

time. With experienced staff, this might not cause a problem, but especially for young recruits, it is so demoralizing. (President of the Executive Committee)

5.4.2. Routines and Rituals

Going back to the communication consultancy agency as the backstage of rituals and routines, it would be useful to underline that the agency office functions both as a front and a backstage. As will be demonstrated later on, the consultancy agency office as a front stage serves as a means of expression of the identity of the consultancy while the clients are visiting. At the same time, it serves as a backstage for relaxation, as well as for preparation. As contended by Goffman (1959), "Here, the team can run through its performance, checking for offending expressions when no one is present to be affronted by them; here poor members of the team, who are expressively inept, can be schooled or dropped down from the performance" (70).

The organizational literature has focused on rituals and routines and has demonstrated that they are used to accomplish several organizational objectives, including but not limited to stimulating innovation, shaping identities, influencing responses to environmental changes, and reducing uncertainty (Koschmann & McDonald 2015 1-28) . Our interest here is understanding how the rituals and routines of the consultancy agency backstage, as well as serving various organizational objectives, support the maintenance of the impression at the front stage of the communication consultancy industry. In this regard, the roles of the owners and founders of the communication consultancy agencies as creators of routines and rituals (Pettigrew 1979) will also be demonstrated.

> When a new colleague joins our agency, it is always announced to all the staff. There is an orientation program, and we expect it to be completed in two

> weeks. First of all, the new recruit is informed about the clients and about how things work as regards client management. Then we have a session in which either myself or another founding partner provides information about our values and culture. (President of the Executive Committee)

> The first day a new colleague joins us is spent by going through all the clients and the operations of the agency in general. Then he/she immediately starts working in the related department. We follow her/him and if we see that the chemistry in that specific team is not right, we make a change. The most important component of our orientation is that experienced members of the staff brief the newcomers on our specific manners, that is our company culture. There, the focus is on underlining the importance of empathy and active listening. (Owner and President)

> We have formal procedures for the orientation of new recruits, through which we provide information about the particulars of the business. Besides these, myself or other senior colleagues brief the newcomer about the culture of the agency. We make sure to underline the need to understand the business of the client, to strip off the ego, and to work with a service focus. (Owner and President)

> There is a highly structured, one month long orientation process in the agency. During this period, we tell the new recruit who we are and what are the components of our culture. Then we introduce our organizational structure and working system, along with procedures such as meetings, reporting, etc. (Founding Partner and Chairperson)

In line with the accounts above, all the participating consultants said they had set routines for the orientation of new agency recruits. The issue most underlined was the effort to familiarize the new colleagues with the company culture. The examination of the accounts reveals that specific components of culture common to the majority of the agencies are "responsibility to understand the client business", "reliability", "service focus", "proactive engagement", "respect for client confidentiality", and "timely delivery". The emphasis on these and similar items show that the participating consultants believe in the significance of projecting a reputable profile. This confirms Pieczka's (2006b) assessment that the client-consultancy relationship "becomes not just a question of earning a fee from the particular account, but of longer term reputation building" (309).

Other common consultancy agency routines expressed by the participants were weekly meeting during which client teams reported on ongoing business, and new business opportunities were discussed. Most of the participants said they also had monthly executive meetings where they handled administrative and financial issues, as well as evaluating the overall client management strategies. Some others mentioned monthly meetings with directors of client teams to assess whether the teams were running smoothly, whether there were any shortcomings as regards human resources, and whether any of the clients gave signals of dissatisfaction. Also among the routines expressed by participants were end-of year evaluation and strategy meetings (usually held in an outside location), and beginning-of-year "kickstart" meetings. Some participants further mentioned meetings to which key-note speakers were invited, among their routine practices with the objective of enhancing the capabilities of the agency staff.

The importance of regularly monitoring the client satisfaction was expressed by all participants, along with the cues signalling the possibility of the client leaving the agency.

> We hold periodical meetings with the clients for mutual evaluation. These help us in catching early signals of dissatisfaction. There are other cues and hints of course. If there is a major staff change in the in-house department, we watch more closely, because when that happens, the team feels like it is a new client.

> If the change is in the top management of the in-house department, the chemistry is sometimes disrupted. (Founding Partner and Chairperson)

> In Turkey, the clients sometimes express their dissatisfaction indirectly, through mobbing. The attitudes to the agency team can get impolite, the tone of the e-mails turn rude, etc. When we see such behaviour, the management of our agency steps in and intervenes, calling for a meeting. (General Manager)

> The signals of client dissatisfaction are relatively rude language in correspondence, cessation of certain demands and going silent, and usually ungrounded implications about the shortcomings of the agency team with reference to certain projects. I would prefer clients expressed their dissatisfaction directly and timely, and we have mechanisms for that. (Founder and Partner)

The intangible character of advisory services in general and communication consultancy services in particular makes their evaluation difficult. It can be argued that the difficulties in the measurement of evaluation of communication consultancy services in the Turkish context that will be discussed in the following sections, focuses the client attention on the personal qualities of the agency team. Furthermore, Momparler et al. (2015) contend that, apart from the qualities of the consulting firm, the personal qualities of the consultancy team, such as the ability to adapt expertise to specific projects, to connect with the interests of the client, responsiveness, reliability, and empathy are significant in client satisfaction. Hays and Hill (2001) also emphasize that the staff who is providing the service is essential in the customer perception of the service. Therefore, it is not surprising that the signals of client dissatisfaction are first conveyed through the agency staff who are carrying out the work, although there are formal routines such as mutual evaluation meetings, to discuss the issue.

Apart from these routinized meetings and gatherings, the accounts of the participants revealed that most communication consultancy agencies had rituals. These include celebration of staff birthdays, monthly dinners for client teams with the participation of the top management, welcome and farewell luncheons, New Year parties, and group holidays during summer. An interesting finding is that with the exception of a few, most participants said they did not celebrate new business, only announced the landing of a new account via e-mail to all the staff. “We do not have an habit of celebrating the new business. I don’t know why, but I presume we do not see it as something to be celebrated. We just announce to all agency staff that we have landed a new account, that’s all”, an Agency President said.

In Scholes et al.’s (2002) proposal of the “cultural web” of organisations, routines and rituals are among the seven interlinked key elements that result in a set of behaviours, which in turn serve as a guide in determining the appropriate or the inappropriate ways of organizational behaviour. Scholes et al. also contend that routines and rituals are mostly established by leaders of organizations in accordance with a central paradigm of commonly held beliefs and values. Gagliardi’s (1986) argument on organizational culture includes the industry driven assumptions which lead to value systems that are consistent with these assumptions. Gordon (1991), arguing in the same line proposes three classes of industry variables that have the potential for creating industry-driven cultural elements: competitive environment, customer requirements, and societal expectations.

Viewed in this context, the different accounts of the participants on backstage routines and rituals of the communication consultancy reflect a more or less uniform picture across the industry. The routine practices and the rituals of individual consultancies are almost identical. This is a reflection of the uniformity of the expectations and requirements of the clients that purchase the services of these consultancies. Gordon (1991) also mentions other organizational values that are not directly related to basic industry assumptions, but emerge as a result of the founder's background. In this regard, the uniformity of routines and rituals is also the result of the similar backgrounds and worldviews of the founders and leaders of consultancy agencies participating in this study.

L'Etang (2012) talks about the different occupational cultures of public relations practice, such as "consultancy culture" or "in-house culture"; further mentioning more specific cultures such as "the occupational culture" of an individual consultancy (167). Due to shortcomings in institutionalization of individual communication consultancies in the industry, it is rather difficult to speak of genuine consultancy cultures in Turkey, although the accounts of the participants include efforts and the related difficulties in this direction:

> Ever since I have founded this consultancy, I have desired to develop a specific '.... culture', demonstrating how we behave to our clients, and to our employees..including even the way we dress. Overall, a reflection of all our core values in several practices we engage in. Do I consider myself successful in this regard? Well, not completely. The realities of the industry and the competition has driven us to more standardized ways of doing things. (Owner and President)

> When I think about the specific routines and rituals in our agency, I believe, to a certain degree, I can speak of a ".... culture". As soon as an outsider enters our office, there are observable features such as the innovative and creative decoration, or the way the staff greets you, etc. These are further reflected in the service practice. Still, because the staff turnover is higher than it should be, there are intervals, the tradition is interrupted, we have to start all over again with new recruits. (Owner and President)

In spite of the existence of such efforts, the level of institutionalization of the majority of communication consultancy agencies in Turkey is perceived as low. The situation on the client side may not be so different. Üsdiken and Öktem (2008) found that in the major business groups of Turkey, most of which went public in the last two decades, the top level managers and board members are still family members, with few independent members on the board of directors. Üsdiken and Öktem's empirical research further showed that the family members left their board seats to independent members only in case of legal constraints or when a part of the shares were sold to foreign or domestic partners. Moreover, the strategic decisions were made at the holding (family) level and were dictated to affiliated firms.

This relatively low level of institutionalization in both the Turkish business world and the communication consultancy industry overlap to constitute barriers to the development of genuine organizational cultures of institutional character. Instead, both the commercial businesses and the communication consultancy business, are to a large extent, dependent on family members and/or owners/founders for sustainability of operations. The international public relations consultancy companies cited in the global PR agency ranking in the Global Communications Report (2016) include, among others, Edelman, Weber Shandwick, FleishmanHillard, Ketchum, and Hill & Knowlton Strategies in the top ten. Although most of these global communication consultancies are still recognized by the names of their founders, they have standard services and procedures that are applicable in various individual markets in a global scale. Evaluated within this landscape, the communication consultancy industry in Turkey faces a considerable challenge of institutionalization.

5.5. FRONT STAGE

Goffman (1959) points out that when social actors are in a role, they put serious effort into staying in that role while 'performing' in the front stage. According to Goffman, the front stage is where the performances take place. As such, it includes several physical signs as well as manners (14-5). In the context of this study, front stage includes the scripts used by external communication consultants in identifying and describing themselves as well as their industry; and the actual presentation of external communication consultancy work. The actual presentation is realized in specific settings such as the PR agency premises, and other venues for meetings, events, etc. During the course of this actual presentation, the performance of external communication consultancy teams (performing teams) is of significance for the clients (the major spectator team), for other related stakeholders such as media members (other spectator teams), and for the overall impression management of the communication consultancy industry.

In the following sections, the accounts of the participating consultants will be discussed to understand how the social front -or the front stage- of external communication consulting has been institutionalized in Turkey and how this stage is a "collective representation" (Goffman 1959) of the industry.

5.5.1. Scripts

In dealing with the complexities and problems of both defining their roles and their profession, Turkish public relations consultants make use of 'scripts' in establishing their individual roles as consultants, as well as the role of the public relations consultancy business. The scripts identified in the accounts of the participant consultants are significant in the sense that they serve as verbal and behavioral guidelines for the practice; they provide legitimacy and credibility for public relations consultancy expertise mainly through value advocacy and differentiation; they position situations and stakeholders; and they support professional solidarity.

Script of "strategic communication" and "strategic counselling"

The first type of script identified is that of the common reference to concepts and phrases of "strategic", "strategic communication", and "strategic counselling"; along with the emphasis on interaction with the "top management" or the "C-suite" of clients. Many times during the interviews, the individual participants responded to questions by similar terms used by other participants.

> As external communication consultants, we provide our clients with the added-value of specific experience and expertise that they do not possess, pointing out to their problems and activating their organizational potential for solutions. When you activate such a potential, you are also opening up a future vision, and this is what strategic consulting is about. (Founding Partner and President)

> The services demanded from our agencies represent a wide variety, ranging from organizing a press conference to developing a CSR project; from writing a press release to editing a CEO speech. Yet, in the end, the most valuable consultancy service is issues management, which is directly linked to strategic counselling. (Managing Partner)

> At times, it becomes difficult for the clients to give up their comfort zone. When this comfort zone threatens organizational sustainability, and when we are able to demonstrate it from a communications point of view, then the client organization shows willingness to take new steps. In order to mobilize the client as such, we use our strategic approach. In other words, we are able to predict the possible negative consequences of certain positions in the future. (Founder and President)

The examples above, along with the repetition of similar concepts and terms in all other participant accounts show that these are common lines of argument in relation to the desired perception of communication consultancy business. As contended by Hallahan et al.

(2007), the effect of the replacement of the popular concept of "integrated communication" of the 1990s by "strategic communication", is also observable in the Turkish context.

According to the participants of this study, an essential component of the "strategic communication" concept is having access to and working with the top management (or the C-suite) of the client. Being able to negotiate and/or work directly with the top management of client organizations is positioned as a significant contributor to the success of communication programs and campaigns:

> If the client does not perceive communication as a strategic management function, the PR agency works mainly with the in-house communication department. The tendency of the in-house departments, most of the time, is to get fast operational results in order to secure its staff and budget. In such cases, the agency-client cooperation is not very fruitful. (Founding Partner and President)

> All through my professional life, I had the chance to communicate and work directly with the 'bosses'. Was this important? Very much so. If you can access the very top manager and tell him/her what you are thinking about a certain communication problem, there is usually a mutual understanding. But when the in-house department acts as a messenger between the management and the PR agency, problems arise. Most of the time, the in-house department cannot be as bold as the external consultant and cannot vocalize the real problem. We as the external consultants, have less to lose, compared to our colleagues who are being paid by their managements. (Owner and Honorary President)

Besides for claiming an identity and a position for public relations consulting, the common reference to these concepts and terms also provide guidelines for the practical implementation of consultancy services. Some examples in this line include the process through which PR agencies prepare for pitches, and the tools they use in their services.

When preparing for a pitch, the essential initial component is research about the position and needs of the potential client. This way, we assess the current situation, and building up our strategy upon this base, we then formulate the objectives, and detail the stakeholders and specific tactics for outreach to these. In all our presentation, we take special care in including the critical success factors, so that we would be able to demonstrate our strategic input. (Owner)

Whether it is a new business pitch, or a campaign/project presentation for an existing client, our starting point is some sort of a SWOT analysis, through which we understand and show (to the client) where things stand, to start with. If this is depicted in a full and transparent manner, the following objectives, strategy and related tactics are almost always more plausible. (Founder and President)

Presentations we prepare for new business pitches are quite similar to those we prepare for single projects or overall communication plans. We believe that a sound research to assess the current situation is very important, if this done thoroughly, already the hints for communication objectives, related stakeholders, the strategy and the tactics are inherent in this assessment. (Managing Director)

The general tendency of the participants to select certain words and phrases centering around the concept of "strategic communication" when establishing the identity of their practice reflects the research tradition initiated by J.E. Grunig, which conceptualizes public relations as a strategic management function rather than as a publicity and media relations function. As widely recognized, this modernist tradition has its origins in the development of the situational theory of publics in the late 1960s, followed by The Excellence study that began in 1985 (Grunig J.E. 1992). Over the years, several scholars contributed to this research tradition, with the major proposal that public relations professionals should participate in strategic decision making mechanisms and processes.

Furthermore, the common conceptualization of public relations tools (research, objective setting, stakeholder listing, strategy design, implementation tactics, and evaluation criteria) as a series of steps to be completed in providing strategic communication counsel, has the nature of a professional script, in a way assisting the members of the consultancy industry in knowing how to act when tackling with communication problems.

Scripts of "service quality" and "service standards"

The second type of script identifiable in the accounts of the participants is the frequent referral to the terms of "service quality" and "service standards". The participants, when talking about different topics including but not limited to the credibility of the communication consultancy industry, competition, and human resources, use these terms repeatedly:

> Is the communication consultant credible? I would say so. But perhaps more on the level of individual senior consultants. If we talk about the credibility of the PR agencies, that is another story. There are many so-called PR agencies, set up only to provide media services, and they call themselves 'communication consultancies" as well, the concept has become somewhat obsolete. This is because there are no established standards of service. (Consultant and Group Director)

> In our industry, we have small shops that are specialized in media services, or event management services. These, although labelled as 'PR Agencies' cannot provide the service quality that strategic communication requires. They are not experienced enough, they do not have the necessary talent. In the short term, certain clients prefer these shops due to their lower fees. But when there is a problem, a crisis for example, things get real difficult. (Consultant)

> It is very easy to enter the communication consultancy industry in Turkey. If you want to open a media relations bureau, you don't need much capital. You can set up such a shop and you can easily call it a 'communication consultancy agency'. Most of the time, you will not be questioned about the quality of your services. Why? Because people think PR is easy and can be done by anyone. (President)

> Today, everyone calls themselves 'consultants'. There are no rules or standards. (Owner and President)

> When small shops that label themselves as 'communication consultancies' offer cheaper fees to the clients, this may seem profitable for organizations; but what about the human resources? With such low fees, it is impossible to hire and retain the talent necessary for providing a quality service. (Managing Partner)

The frequent mention of quality standards in communication consultancy service, as a script, seems to establish a group membership and allows the value of the group to be voiced. This script then, also represents confirmation of belonging to a group of credible PR agencies who share a common marketing promise: provision of services of high quality. However, this group is not always defined by membership to the industry association IDA, but is rather characterized by features such as the history of the consultancy, and the experience and expertise of the consultancy founder. Even for IDA member participants, there are concerns about the client perception of industry association membership:

> The clients do not perceive IDA membership as a guarantee for service quality. There is perhaps a perception of a capacity as regards the provision of necessary services. (Founding Partner and President)

> IDA membership does not provide a perception of distinguishment. Why? Because the industry has not yet been able to present it as a significant component of its marketing mix. (Owner and President)

> Well, whether IDA membership contributes to the perception of service quality is actually dependent on other qualities of specific consultancy agencies. In order for IDA membership to serve as a facilitator in new business development, we need more industry collaboration and solidarity. (President, Executive Committee)

In line with the examples above, other participants have also assessed that although the industry association İDA is a necessary component for the professionalization of communication consultancy business, there are yet steps to be taken in order for it to be representative of high quality service. As emphasized by Abbott (1998) and Evetts (2003)

, the legitimacy of the projected identity through the representation of a profession by a professional association can only be confirmed through continuous efforts and negotiations. Furthermore, as also underlined by participants of this study, while there are tasks that need to be undertaken by İDA, the successful completion of these depend highly on the contribution of individual members. At present, although the communication consultancy industry in Turkey is partially organized, it is obvious that the the standards of quality service have not been strongly established. Therefore, it is predictable that individuals and/or PR agencies can style themselves as experts and “be penalized by nothing stronger than sniggers” (Goffman 1959 39-40).

At this point a brief mention of the Communication Management Standard (CMS) is necessary. Developed by the Public Relations Consultants Association UK in 1997, CMS has later been licensed to ICCO for adoption and use by other affiliated professional associations at the global level. One of these associations, the Turkish professional industry association IDA, has made CMS certification -to be updated every two years- mandatory for its members. CMS has been updated twice in 2005 (CMS II) and in 2012 (CMS III). As of the writing of this dissertation, 15 out of 28 IDA members have CMS III certification. CMS is promoted as a proof of a well-run PR consultancy business, and a demonstration of commitment to employee development and excellent PR service (http://www.ida.org.tr/?page_id=132).

Scripts of the scope and the tools of consulting

A third script identified in the accounts of the participants is the common conceptual frame concerning the scope and the tools of communication consultancy services. The concepts and terms in the three examples below, were repeatedly featured in the majority of participant accounts:

> Strategic communication consulting is mainly about relationship management. We are responsible for designing sound organizational strategies for stakeholder outreach and interaction. Within this wide frame, we make different plans for reputation management, issues management, media relations, marketing/brand communication etc. With some clients, we provide services in all of these areas, whereas a client might just need issues management. (Owner)

> Our services cover a wide area. Most of our clients want our agency to serve in areas as diverse as employee communications and crisis communication, or brand communication and corporate communication, for example. This means that we have to have the knowledge and skills needed for almost all services that fall under 'public relations' in the classical sense, or 'communication consulting' in the fashionable sense. I would say, nowadays, almost all clients talk about 'reputation management' as well. (Founder and Chairperson)

> Although media relations services are demanded dominantly, there are many clients who would ask for our services in reputation management, issues management, marketing communication, crisis management and communication, etc. This means that the consultancy agency has to be equipped in a wide range of areas and has to demonstrate skillful management in these areas. (General Manager)

The scope of the services scripted is observed to be in the tradition of an instrumental approach, where there is a toolkit of ideas and tactics such as reputation management, stakeholder outreach, issues management, and crisis communication and management (Pieczka 2006a). A quick perusal of the web sites of global PR consultancy networks reveals that the same script is also valid at the international level. Many of these global consultancy networks, under the links entitled "expertise" or "services", list tools like corporate communications, media relations (http://worldcomgroup.com/our-expertise); financial communications, crisis&litigation communications (http://www.apcoworldwide.com/our-work/services); media and influencer relations, consumer brand marketing (http://www.grayling.com/global/services); branded entertainment, reputation & trust management (http://www.edelman.com/what-we-do/expertise/). However, it should be noted that the branding of these tools is richer and the tools themselves are more varied, in comparison to those of their Turkish counterparts. Moreover, these global networks also promote additional tools that are originally developed by their own resources and genuine expertise, such as the Content Compass of Fleishman-Hillard (http://fleishmanhillard.com/products/content-compass/) or the Relevance Fingerprint of Golin (http://golin.com/pr/#row--4-tabs-3). These additional tools are signs that this script is undergoing a change.

The change in the script of communication consultancy tools is also observable, though in a limited capacity, in the accounts of Turkish consultants. Some consultants underlined the need to include specific services such as “change management”and “CEO mentoring”. Most participants emphasized the impact of new technologies and the need to revolutionize the consultancy service tool pack, but alternative scripts were not specified.

Scripts on difficulties of evaluation and measurement

Difficulties in demonstrating the worth and the contribution of public relations for organizations and the response of the public relations industry and scholarship in the face of these difficulties, has a long history. This history has been detailed by numerous scholars, the works of Watson (2012) and Likely and Watson (2013) representing two current updates. With recent milestones in public relations measurement and evaluation, such as the establishment of The Coalition for Public Relations Research Standards in 2011, the release of ‘Proposed Interim Standards for Metrics in Traditional Media Analysis’ by this Coalition in 2012, the establishment of the Social Media Measurement Standards Conclave in 2012, and the release of three documents for social media measurement standards at the 4th European Summit on Measurement in Dublin also in 2012 (MacNamara 2014); public relations professionals and the public relations industry has achieved certain advancements in this respect.

Yet, both the in-house public relations practitioners and the external consultants are still concerned that they still cannot demonstrate the value of PR convincingly. This is reflected in the accounts of the participants of this study as well:

> When we are able to demonstrate the added-value of our services, then the client is more respectful of our expertise. Otherwise, our input remains rhetorical. Unfortunately, we are still not able to scientifically demonstrate the

> contribution of communication consultancy work to the clients' businesses. (President of the Executive Committee)

> We have problems in showing the contribution of our work. When there isn't an actual "product", it is hard to demonstrate the worth of our expertise. I think this is why media relations is now dominating the services spectrum. We have to find ways of packaging our many services as tangible products. (Founder and Partner)

> In the concrete demonstration of the value of our services, we have difficulties. This must be expected, because the results of our work are observable in the middle, or in the long term; most of the time, there is no quick result. Although this is now changing due to social media, we still have a long way to go. (Managing Partner)

All the 30 external communication consultants participating in this study, with the exception of only two, emphasized the insufficiency of the industry in measuring and evaluating the impact of their services on the client businesses. In the majority of such accounts, there were no concrete suggestions for developing the industry in this direction, but a few participants suggested that the industry association could undertake the preparation of guidelines for demonstrating the worth of communication consulting. The participants stated that lack of client budget was the major cause for the insufficiency of measurement and evaluation of communication efforts.

This is also illustrated in the study of Ertem (2014), where the Turkish public relations agencies participating in the study, even though all of them underlined the importance of evaluation, cited media monitoring, calculation of advertising value equivalent and media outreach as the only concrete methods of measurement they employed. The participant agencies in Ertem's study listed lack of client budget and low degree of client commitment to research as the major obstacles in this direction. In fact, the international picture is not very different. MacNamara (2014) argues that the public relations industry has not succeeded in proposing credible and reliable measurement and evaluation; and lists the reluctance on the part of the practitioners in adopting tested theories and models, the lack of engagement of the industry with academic researchers, the preoccupation with finding a magical formula, and the commercial formulas promoted by suppliers as the main reasons (15).

This script, focusing on the inability to demonstrate the contribution of communication consultancy services to the businesses served, is considered as the main driver of client focus on media relations, where the output is tangible and 'measurable':

> The detailed media analysis reports are the major tool in our industry for demonstrating the results of our work. We are all complaining that our business is perceived as mere media relations. Well, if we cannot convince the clients to spare budget for objective research that will exhibit our contribution towards the achievement of their business objectives, then the only criterion left is the amount of earned media, and our only tangible service is media relations. (General Manager)

> What is interesting is, the clients that demand advertising value equivalent of earned media are the global companies. I believe this is so, because there aren't any objective international standards for measurement. Therefore, the client needs a concrete benchmark to compare the effectiveness of communication efforts across many countries in which it operates. (Owner)

> In all new business presentations and in all communication plans of existing clients, there is a section detailing how the results of communication efforts will be evaluated. At that point, the client seems very enthusiastic about it. In

practice though, the clients ask for media coverage reports, or in some cases, advertising value equivalents. (President)

As outlined by Kivito and Puttman (2007), Goffman argues that individuals learn how to respond to particular situations, and these typical responses are “scripts”. Scripts are convenient in the sense that they provide individuals with a repertoire which assists them in negotiating common situations. According to Goffman (1959), scripts are verbal communications, including rhetorical skills, which are like directions that guide the dialogue, scenes, personas of the actors, and the whole performance. A script can also be understood as a set of expectations of different situations that are constructed as a result of accumulated experiences of individuals. When individuals face new and unfamiliar experiences, new scripts that will serve as guides are built (Gardner 1992).

Although many scripts are acted out automatically, not all scripted behaviour is of automatic character. The repeated experience of similar situations provides cues for scripted communication or behaviour, resulting in the “acting out” of the expected (Goffman 1959). In the scripts of the Turkish communication consultants detailed above, we can observe that these consultants have developed specific responses in the setting of the external communication consultancy industry. It is argued that they are aware of the verbal expressions and behaviours that are required in various specific situations within this setting.

5.5.2. Settings

In Goffman’s dramaturgy, the term “setting” refers to furniture, decoration, and the physical layout of a particular physical scenery, used as a part of front stage performance (1959 13). Similar to the actual stage of a theatrical production where scenery, lighting, and props are used to influence the perceptions of the audience; the setting of a particular service could be utilized to affect the impressions of its customers. The setting is important in positioning a service for attracting a specific clientele, as well as in informing the current and the potential customers about the nature of that service (Grove & Fisk 1992).

In the context of this study, the main setting is the public relations consultancy office, or the PR agency office. The front stage performances of communication consultants are acted out not only at agency premises but include physical settings such as the client office, and venues for special events and organizations. However, as the agency offices represent the only settings that can be controlled and designed purposefully by the communication consultants, they are the subject of analysis in this section.

> The decoration of the PR agency is perceived as part the identity of the consultancy. Our clients make comments in this way. In our office, we display our awards in various sections. We also made an effort to decorate the agency with genuine works of art, the most interesting of which is displayed in the meeting room, along with its story. (Founding Partner and President)

> In Turkish, we say, ‘The lion is distinguished by its den’. The first impressions are important. Our decoration reflects the culture of our agency. It is not extravagant, but it is functional with items such as a big working table in the meeting room, and a flat screen for presentations. Our awards and certificates are displayed as well. (Owner and Chairperson)

These two examples from the accounts of the participants demonstrate that the consultants see the physical decor as a part of their identity, and arrange it accordingly to reflect their genuine culture. In most of the accounts the decor is designed to create a specific perception in the clients.

> We are not like advertising agencies. Their offices are decorated in order to convey a message of 'creativity', whereas we as communication consultants focus on comfort and casual-chic, because we want to impress the clients with our strategies. Our office, therefore is simple but elegant. (General Manager)

> We have decorated our office with bright colours, because the main focus of our services is marketing communication solutions. Through these colours, we wanted to display the energy and livelihood of the marketing scene, where everything is so dynamic. (Founder and President)

Yet, a few participants have stated that the physical decor is mostly for the comfort of the employees and emphasized that the clients are not visiting the agency as much as they used to in the past. "In the past, the client teams used to visit the PR agency premises as part of their agency selection processes. Now, it is not very much common practice," said one participant. Another participant suggested that due to increasing difficulties in Istanbul traffic, the clients preferred to invite the consultants to their own offices.

An interesting function of the consultancy agency offices for the clients, as depicted in participant accounts, was that of a 'refuge area'. "Our clients try to organize agency meetings in afternoon hours, so they wouldn't have to return to their offices after the meetings. For them, our office is like a relaxation area," one consultant said. "I can see that our colleagues in in-house departments are so overwhelmed by the high tempo of their offices that visiting us in our office is a way to get out that exhaustion," another participant reflected.

As for the geographical location of the agency offices, most consultants agreed that the clients preferred locations that were prestigious, central and therefore easy to access.

> It is important that our office is located in a prestigious neighbourhood. When we meet a potential client for the first time and they ask us where our office is,

> you can tell by the expression on their face that they approve of the neighbourhood. Being close to the city centre, such locations are preferred by the clients due to their easy access as well,

An Agency President said, underlining that the consultancies considered the geographical locations of their offices as part of their impression management strategies as well.

5.5.3. Performances

In the Goffmanian sense, during a performance, the individual is transformed into a stage performer (Goffman 1976 124); and performs in accordance with the qualities attributed to his/her role, in order to preserve a self-image (Goffman 1963 87). Furthermore, it is often the case that the objective of the performance is mainly the expression of the characteristics of the task that is performed and not the individual characteristics of the performer:

> Thus one finds that service personnel, whether in profession, bureaucracy, business, or craft, enliven their manner with movements which express proficiency and integrity, but, whatever this manner conveys about them, often its major purpose is to establish a favorable definition of their service or product. (Goffman 1969 47).

The new business pitch

The performances of communication consultants during new business pitch processes is of primary interest at this point, because during this specific performance, a considerable effort is displayed for creating a favourable definition of the communication consultancy services. The pitch process can be understood similar to Goffman’s (1959) assessment of the significance of the job interview:

> It is apparent that care will be great in situations where important consequences for the performer will occur as a result of his conduct. The job-interview is a clear example Often the interviewer will have to make decisions of far-reaching importance for the interviewee on the sole basis of information gained

> from the interviewee's interview-performance. The interviewee is likely to feel , and with some justice, that his every action will be taken as highly symbolical, and he will therefore give much preparation and thought to his performance.(144)

Although several participants of this study think pitch processes initiated by client organizations as a method of agency selection are problematic in certain aspects, their accounts show that they consider such processes important in demonstrating their potential contribution to client businesses:

> Pitch processes organized by the clients may not be the best way to appoint a communication consultancy agency. Especially, the composition of the decision making teams is problematic, as client employees who do not have enough knowledge about our business are also included. Yet, there seems to be no better way, so are in a position to do our best in order to demonstrate the capabilities of our agency. (Founder and Partner)

> The clients are now including their procurement staff and sometimes their legal staff in decision making teams during PR agency pitches. Well, the individuals in these positions usually cannot differentiate between advertising and public relations, and they tend to bargain with us in the same manner they bargain with advertising agencies, regarding the fees for our services. We know this, and we prepare for presentations accordingly, emphasizing the positive impact of our services on the business of the potential client. (Founder and Agency President)

> During the new business pitch process, we are usually aware of the difficulties and problems we will face during the presentation of our offer. There is now an accumulated experience in our industry regarding these problems, and we make use of it during the preparation phase, taking the necessary technical precautions. But our main focus is always the formulation of the genuine

approach to the communication problem of the prospective client. (Owner and President)

So, how do Turkish communication consultants perform during new business pitches in order to express both the distinguishing features of their agencies' in particular and those of their profession in general? The first common understanding depicted in participant accounts is that delivering the presentation prepared for the pitch is actually a "show" that needs professional direction. In line with this understanding, the participants used terms such as "art of persuasion", "engaging the audience", and "charisma of the agency team" when referring to presentations for new business.

> All presentations to the client are like shows, but the presentation for new business in a show in the real sense of the concept. The ideas in the presentation are certainly important, but at the end of the day, whether we are able to impress the prospective clients with these ideas is more important. There, you need to put on a good show. (General Manager)

> In our agency, when we present for a potential client, we focus on leaving a mark. That's why in new business pitches we see to it that at least one senior agency partner is included and he/she makes the presentation. The team members that have contributed to the presentation are also present, because we want the potential client to understand the effort put into the presentation and because we want to demonstrate that we have taken their brief seriously. (Managing Director)

> In new business presentations, we have a team which has been prepared to answer the question of 'why should we choose you?'. Besides effectively communicating our strategy, we work on the art of persuasion to show our commitment and passion. If the presenting team is perceived as charismatic by the client, the persuasion process is positively affected. This is why the

> presence of senior advisors during presentations is important. (Founding Partner and Chairperson)

Several other participant accounts regarding new business pitches underline the importance of creating ‘Wow!” moments during the presentation; while some others emphasize that presentations for new business should be framed as performances. Another important factor during new business presentations was stated as expression the tailor-made nature of the profession:

> During the pitch process, the clients sit through several agency presentations, all of which may look more or less the same. There is the actual presentation, which may display somewhat similar features to competitor presentations categorically, but the way it is presented has to convey the message that it is unique in the sense of reflecting the specific communication problem and our approach for its solution. (General Manager)

This account is parallel to what Goffman (1959) suggests as the idealization of the image and the product. In expanding this idealization, Goffman provides two illustrations. The first is the fostering of the impression that the present performance is at least the most essential one; and the second is that the “performers tend to foster the impression that their current performance of their routine and their relationship to their current audience have something special and unique about them” (31).

Another common argument that emerged was the interpretation of new business pitch as a testing ground to find out whether there was a ‘chemistry’ between the agency and the potential client. “The contents of the new business presentation is important, no one can deny it. However, it seems more important that the presenting team projects a feeling of shared perspective..a chemistry,” one participant commented. “We put in a significant effort to understand the client's business and situation; but the point is to be able to transform this effort to a chemistry between the client and our agency," another participant said. This emphasis upon chemistry is in line with Pieczka's (2006b) assessments that client attention has moved beyond the presentation to its feel, and that chemistry plays a crucial role in selling public relations services. Pieczka also underlines that chemistry "functions as a guarantee that an appropriate service will be obtained" (306). Bourland's (1993) identification of issues relating to chemistry between clients and agency teams as one of the foundations for agency-client conflict also points at the significance of chemistry.

Other performances

Besides the performances of communication consultants and the communication consultancy agencies during new business pitches, other performances can also contribute to the expression of the communication consultancy expertise. According to the participant accounts, these are listed as "participating in industry meetings, conferences, seminars, and ceremonies", "participating in networking events", "contributing to the industry through personal blogs", "participating in award schemes", and "part-time teaching at communication faculties". However, the majority of the participants contended that the industry as a whole had shortcomings in this respect.

> It is important to be present at industry gatherings. Through such presence, we demonstrate our commitment to the further development of our industry. But when there are only a few senior consultants present at an industry event, for example in a professional conference organized by industry associations, there is a feeling that individual actors do not care much about the overall impression of the consultancy business. (Consultant and Group Director)

> As an industry, we are not very good at writing for our own public relations. There are only a handful of communication consultants who regularly write in

trade publications, and there a few personal blogs at PR agency web sites. There is only one award scheme initiated by the industry, and you see that there are many consultancy agencies who do not participate in it. (Managing Director)

We do not have an industry publication, which I believe is a very important shortcoming. Yet, in this age of social media, one expects that the senior consultants would have a rich array of possible platforms to promote both their individual work and the success stories of the industry. Unfortunately, for the majority of us, the only medium is the agency web site, and even that is used in a very limited way. (Founding Partner and President)

Goffman (1959) contends that the dramatization of one’s work could constitute a problem in many cases. As communication consultancy services involve a considerable amount of intangible “products” such as image, reputation, credibility, favourable opinion, etc.; it is difficult enough for individual consultancy agencies to engage in performances for demonstrating the amount of time and energy put into the delivery of specific services that result in such “products”. The dramatization of one’s work, according to Goffman (1959) is a communication effort for which a significant amount of energy has to be utilized. Moreover, this communicative activity, in the cases of many professions, requires different attributes from the work to be dramatized. If this is the case, one would expect that communication consultants, who claim expertise in the art of communication, would have no trouble in the dramatization of their work. In the Turkish context, the fierce character of the competition in a relatively underdeveloped communication consultancy market, and the problems about talent explained previously, necessitate that the top level executives (senior consultants) have to spare a lot of time for the day-to-day management of operations. Under such circumstances, the senior representatives of the industry have little or no time left for their own "PR" and that of the industry.

5.5.4. Teams and Team Performance

Turkish Communication Consultancy Industry as the Performing Team

When elaborating on performances, Goffman (1959) makes a distinction between "colleagues" and "team members":

> Colleagues may be defined as persons who present the same routine to the same kind of audience but who do not participate together, as team-mates do, at the same time and place before the same particular audience. Colleagues, as it is said, share a community of fate. In having to put on the same kind of performance, they come to know each other's difficulties and points of view; whatever their tongues, they come to speak the same social language. (102)

Within the framework of this study, a straightforward application of Goffman would be to explore the individual communication consultancy agencies as teams, and the other consultants and consultancies in the industry as colleagues. However, as Goffman (1959) contends, certain colleague groupings are of corporate character, and the members of such groups are closely identified in the eyes of the others. Accordingly, the good reputation of a single practitioner depends on the good conduct of others; and the scandal caused by one member leads to an overall reputation loss:

> As cause and effect of such identification we often find that the members of the grouping are formally organized into a single collectivity which is allowed to represent the professional interests of the grouping and allowed to discipline any member who threatens to discredit the definition of the situation fostered by the other members. Obviously, colleagues of this kind constitute a kind of team, a team that differs from ordinary teams in that the members of its audience are not in immediate face-to-face contact with one another and must

> communicate their responses to one another at a time when the shows they have seen are no longer before them. (106)

Building on the above reasoning, and the related accounts of the participants, the performance of the communication consultancy agencies in Turkey will be analyzed as a team performance. However, it must be noted that not all communication consultancy agencies in Turkey are members of the industry association İDA, and this is also true for the participants of this study. Furthermore, likewise its counterparts at the international scale, the Turkish industry association does not have an official power to enforce its professional and ethical codes on the industry as a whole. The analysis, therefore, will consider these reservations.

First of all, it has to be noted that the participating consultants believe that cooperation of the communication consultancy industry as a team is very important, and as members of the industry team, their relationships with their colleagues and with other consultancy agencies are significant for a "satisfactory overall effect" (Goffman 1959 47) that the industry wants to create. When answering questions about the perception and the credibility of communication consultants, the participants underline that if and when a communication consultant or an agency engages in controversial conduct, it endangers the credibility of the profession and its services:

> There is a perception that anyone can do public relations, that everyone is a public relations expert. While disciplines such as law, finance, and human resources are able to demonstrate their expertise, we are not successful in this respect. Although the discipline of public relations has depths such as psychology, economy, anthropology, political science, sociology, and research; we cannot present these as distinctive components of our expertise. I believe an important obstacle in this respect is the acceptance, on the part of various consultancy agencies, to define media relations capabilities as their major strength. (Owner and President)

> Our industry needs to develop its agreement as to the scope and nature of communication consultancy work. When the motivation of clients is mainly ensuring earned media coverage, the consultancy agencies, instead of managing client expectations in line with other capabilities of communication consulting, try to display their expertise in media relations in order to land accounts. (Owner and Chairperson)

> I believe every consultant in our industry has been questioned by a client about the number of influential journalists he/she knows and about whether this network could be utilized towards favourable media coverage for client messages. I also believe, in spite of the common complaint in this direction, each and everyone of us have provided evidence as to the strength of his/her consultancy agency in media relations. (General Manager)

It is known that knowledge of media relations and a media relations network is among the core competencies clients demand when hiring public relations consultancies (Fawkes & Tench 2005). Yet, as noted by Waddington (2016), media relations is only one form influencer relations communications consultancies build and develop in creating a favourable opinion for their clients. When communication consultancy work is perceived mainly as ensuring favourable media coverage, and when even credible consultancy agencies let themselves to be positioned as such due to various reasons, as stated by the participants of this study; the reliance of the team members (individual consultancies) on the appropriate conduct of the other members is breached.

The inter-dependence of the communication consultancies as members of the communication consultancy industry team is assessed by the accounts of the participants in other issues as well. The accounts show that the consultants underline the importance of industry-wide cooperation on issues such as adherence to ethical professional standards, promoting formal research as an essential part of evaluation of industry services, developing realistic and applicable industry standards for evaluation and measurement, and implementing on-going education schemes for practitioners in order to develop human resources. When the communication consultancy agencies fall short in acting like a team on such issues, they face difficulties as individual team members. Furthermore, although the industry association İDA and the Turkish Public Relations Association TÜHID have a set of membership criteria to ensure team quality; some non-member individuals and/or agencies acting as communication consultants/consultancies and displaying inappropriate conduct or lack of expertise, are nevertheless “members” of the large team of communication consultancy industry:

> A teammate is someone whose dramaturgical cooperation one is dependent upon in fostering a given definition of the situation; if such a person comes to be beyond the pale of informal sanctions and insists on giving the show away or forcing it to take a particular turn, it is because he is part of the team that he can cause this kind of trouble. (Goffman 1959 51)

An important aspect of team cooperation is the ability to avoid public disagreement among the members of the team. The accounts of the participants on the industry association IDA reflect that taking a public stand on issues regarding the overall credibility of the industry is regarded as quite important:

> When a trade publication directs a question to me or to my agency about the general issues of the public relations industry in Turkey, I usually speak with my colleagues who are members of IDA. I want to know whether they have been forwarded the same questions or not, and if this is the case, we try to build a framework of principles in answering the question. This way, we are able to voice the standards of the industry stronger. (Agency President)

> In the past, we have had various occasions where communication consultants provided contradictory views on issues of interest to our industry. It was quite embarrassing, to tell the truth. Nowadays, we usually discuss such issues between IDA members, and sometimes even with our colleagues who are not IDA members. I don’t mean to say that we all have to think and act in the same manner. What I’m saying is that we have to speak the same language when it

> comes to ethical practice of public relations or to quality standards in consultancy services. (President)
>
> When a client of ours demands a service which we think does not fall in our service scope, we plainly tell the client that we would not be able to do it. Then, after a while, the client comes back to us with an example of a service provision by another consultancy agency to another client, which is exactly what we had not accepted to do. Actually, this is quite embarrassing. Cooperating on taking a common stand against such demands is very important. One might think to reject to provide an improper service might cost us the client..on the contrary, I believe it would enhance our credibility in the eyes of the client. If there is a common stand, of course.. (Consultant)

The role of professional associations in contributing to the management of expectations of users of public relations has also been underlined in public relations literature. A comprehensive example is the study by Lages and Simkin (2003), where the researchers have found that industry standards, trade body contribution, importance of

qualifications, quality of PR graduates, and competition were the main concerns of both the academicians and the practitioners.

Senior consultants as team directors

Just as the division of labour within individual communication consultancy agencies, we can talk about a division of labour in the industry conceptualized as a team. This division of labour, when operated smoothly, can contribute to an overall satisfactory effect regarding the industry. When a team performance is concerned, there is usually an individual who directs and controls the actions of the team in the realization of “dramatic action” (Goffman 1959 60). In the context of this study, we can talk about several “team directors” as “directing” the the team of external communication consultants. As expressed earlier in the section on roles, these directors are the senior consultants of present day industry, who are also the founders, owners, -and in most cases the directors/ managing directors of credible public relations and communication consultancy industries.

A recent list compiled by a trade publication, entitled “The 15 Doyens who have Pioneered the Public Relations Industry” (Şahin 2016) features 13 consultants from the second generation, and two consultants from the founding, or the first generation. 12 out of the 13 second generation consultants are among the participants of this study. Therefore, examining the common routines of these individuals through their accounts will provide details of practice for the description of the direction role they undertake. While engaging in this examination, it has to be noted that, parallel to Goffman’s assessment that the director sometimes also plays an actual part in the “show” that he/she directs (Goffman 1959 60); these “directors” are also engaged in the actual day-to-day performance of communication consulting work.

> A typical day for me includes monitoring of the news about client industries and the news about the public relations industry; participating in a consultancy change management meeting, and one or two meetings related to client affairs. I make a point in attending industry meetings whenever they are programmed. (Founding Partner and President)

> I would usually attend an average of three meetings a day, and one of them is the weekly agency meeting to wrap up the ongoing business. Each day, I spend approximately two hours to follow up the media agenda on related industries, and also on our own industry. I also engage actively in creative brainstorming meetings of agency teams. (Owner and President)

> Every day, I am actively engaged in content creation, both for agency business and for my personal blog where I write mainly about the state of the communication consultancy industry. Other than that, I daily monitor all the news, national and international. On average, I attend five or six meetings a week, mostly with the top management of clients. Control of the cash-flow is also my responsibility. (Owner and President)

> My typical routine includes the monitoring of the news and especially the economic agenda. I would almost always directly or indirectly be involved with problems of major client accounts. I also interact with client teams for their reports or possible changes in the division of labour within teams. Besides, I interact with top managers of clients, either on the phone or face-to-face; and of course I monitor the financial status of the agency. (President)

Other participant accounts include similar tasks, with additional mentions of "speaking at an industry platform", "joining a university course as a guest speaker", "writing for a trade journal", and "attending a ceremony where a client will be awarded". These accounts show that these consultants are actively involved in both directing and performing at the same time. In their capacity as the directors of their own consultancy agencies, they are involved in problem solving, duty allocation, and directly contributing to client tasks. At the same time, through follow-up, commentary, and direct participation; they are involved in managing the impression of the communication consultancy industry.

According to Goffman (1959), "Further, if the audience appreciates that the performance has a director, they are likely to hold him more responsible than other performers for the success of the performance" (61-2). This perceived responsibility of these consultants (both as directors of their own teams and of the consultancy industry team) has several consequences; described in the following ways by the participants:

- "The personal charisma of the agency president is important for the clients in selecting a communication consultancy agency";
- "The character of the founder is important for the consultancy agency, because it is usually a major criterion for the clients is assessing whether there is a chemistry involved";
- "The references collected by prospective clients about a communication consultancy are mainly about the owner of the agency, about his/her experience and insight";

- “The character and the stance of the founding president of the communication consultancy are the determinants of quality”;
- “Clients look at who the owner of the agency is when evaluating alternatives”;
- “In 99 % of the cases, the client assesses the presence of a chemistry through the personality and experience of the agency owner”.

Clients as the spectator team

In his elaborations on teamwork, Goffman (1959) describes two main teams: “the performing team”, and “the spectator team”:

> If we treat an interaction as a dialogue between two teams, it will sometimes be convenient to call one team the performers and to call the other team the audience or the observers, neglecting momentarily that the audience, too, will be presenting a team-performance. (58)

As this study is concerned with the views, perceptions and performances of external communication consultants in Turkey; the clients of these consultants will be positioned as the spectator team and the discussion will focus on how the consultants perceive them. It has to be noted that the communication consultants, while they are performing in the frontstage, have a number of other “spectators”, such as the media members, the NGOs, the consumers, and various other constituents of the general public. However, in the context of the construction and presentation of external communication consultancy expertise, present and potential clients are obviously the stakeholder with the greatest impact.

Gabbott and Hogg (1996), in their examination of the purchase of public relations services have identified three main clusters of purchasers. The first cluster, the “supplementary buyers”, are those who use public relations as a supplementary service in addition to existing in-house expertise. The second cluster, the “outsourcing buyers”, are those who do not employ an in-house specialist staff. The third cluster, the “implementing buyers”, are those who prefer to use public relations services to carry-out the already-decided organizational communication strategies.

According to the results of the *Research on Perception of Communication Consultancy Services* (2014), in which the participants were the in-house communication managers of client companies; nearly 93 % of the purchasers of external communication consultancy services had an in-house communication department; therefore representing the third cluster identified by Gabbott and Hogg (1996). In answer to the external communication consultancy services that were outsourced, the top five services listed by the participants were “media relations”, “digital and social media communication”, “events management”, “crisis communication”, and “issues management”; which suggests that these purchasers are both “implementing” and “outsourcing”. This is supported by the rating of qualities of external consultants such as “strategic thinking”, “ problem solving”, and “creativity” as being very significant.

The participants of this study also provided information about how they classified the buyers of external communication consultancy services in Turkey:

> We can identify three groups of clients. The first group includes companies which can define their expectations from external communication consulting, and which respect our expertise not only during crises but also during the normal flow of business. The second group does not have the organizational systems to utilize the added-value of external consulting. The expectancy of the third group is mere publicity and ensuring media coverage. (Owner and President)

> There are different types of clients. First of all, there are the organizations that see external communication consultancy services as contributing to their business objectives. With such clients, we communicate systematically with the top management. There are other organizations that do not see communication as a strategic management function. When such organizations become our

> clients, the agency team works with the in-house team. (Founding Partner and President)

> If the management positions communication as a strategic function, they would choose an external communication consultant who would provide insight and future vision. If communication is seen as publicity, the media relations capabilities of the external communication consultants have priority in purchase decisions. (Founder and Chairperson)

In the classification of clients, we again see that “communication as a strategic management function” is the dominant paradigm according to the participants of this study, although some participant accounts include remarks which recognize that this paradigm is undergoing a rapid change due to developments in communication technologies and the emerging new platforms.

In the section on roles of external communication consultants, the perceptions of the participants on the in-house departments of clients were discussed briefly. Here, the discussion will be expanded for a more detailed understanding of how the participant consultants position in-house communication departments as spectators of their consulting performance. First, three quotes from participants are provided as examples:

> The defining behavioural tendency of the in-house communication departments of clients is to achieve fast daily results, in order to secure their own staff and budget. They position the external consultant as an extension of their department. When this is the case, it becomes difficult to speak of a positive cooperation, because when the external agency is positioned as a mere implementer, the agency team gets drowned in daily work, not being able to find the time and energy for strategic input. (Founding Partner and President)

> I see a serious problem at the level of the in-house communication departments. They want to secure their own professional success via the external communication consultancy. Yet if they concentrated on how to better perform in their capacity as corporate communicators, rather than prioritizing

> the importance of their positions, things could be different. (Owner and Chairperson)

> The quality of human resources in the in-house communication departments has been improved a lot over the last ten years. We have in-house colleagues with very impressive CVs. The problem is, they have shortcomings in positioning the external consultancy properly. Most of them see the external agency as extra arms to complete their own work. This is a real problem. (Founder and Partner)

The responses of in-house communicators participating in the *Research on Perception of Communication Consultancy Services* (2014) include comments that overlap with the perceptions of the external consultants participating in this study. In the 2014 research; while the top three expectations of in-house communicators from the external communication consultancies were listed as “strategic thinking”, “proactive approach”, and “knowledge about the business and the industry”; a group of other expectations included items such as “feeling as part of the in-house department”, “the ability to execute daily tasks while we focus on our business”, “ensuring the placement of press releases in targeted media with the desired content”. However, another group of responses included features such as “suggesting different projects and challenging old ideas”, “developing new strategies and projects in line with the needs of business”, and “providing specific communication solutions for organizational issues”.

Seen this way, it can be argued that the in-house communication departments of clients, although they are aware of the strategic nature of external communication consulting, are oftentimes pressurized to demonstrate solid and quick results by their managements, while lacking the necessary budgets or top management support. In the same research, the participants reported that they had difficulties in convincing the top management in the allocation of necessary communication budgets, in demonstrating the measurable character of value of communication, and on the enlargement of the in-house department.

5.6. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The projected and/or attributed roles, and the front and back stage activities of the individual communication consultants and their consultancy businesses were analyzed, based on the empirical data provided by the communication consultants participating in this study. The communication consultancy industry in Turkey was conceptualized as a team of performers who collaborate to manage the impressions of their stakeholders, and the strengths and the weaknesses of this team was discussed.

The discrepancies between the roles projected by the consultants and the roles attributed to them by their clients demonstrated an identity crisis, further strengthened by the gap between the levels of expertise of the "expert advisors" (founders and owners of consultancy agencies) and "service specialists" (employees of consultancy agencies). However, as demonstrated by the following participant account, the long-term sustainability of the "expert advisor" role is also challenged:

> The clients want young and dynamic communication consultants who are informed of the new communication trends and technologies, and who can come with creative solutions that are in harmony with these trends and technologies. But at the same time, they want wise and grey-haired consultants to guide them out of crises and to provide them with insight. They want consultants who combine these two roles. (Managing Partner)

In the context of the roles of the communication consultants; difficulties and/or barriers in merging the individual talents and intellectual capacities of the individual consultants with the overall impression of their consultancy agencies are apparent. Viewed from the perspective of impression management (Goffman 1959), communication consultants were well aware of the perceptions of their clients in this regard, and they expressed the need to change or revise these perceptions towards a more reputable expert image.

The themes emerging from the discussion of the backstage of communication consulting were that the secrets of the backstage described as strategic ones, related to the commercial future of the consultancies and to the ways of presenting and executing the consultancy expertise. Strategies involved in negotiating consultancy fees and in winning earned media coverage for clients, were also considered as strategic secrets of communication consulting. Inside secrets of the communication consultancy industry as a team were heavily focused on client experiences and human resources challenges. Participant accounts on this issue demonstrated a low level of sharing among colleagues regarding shortcomings and/or difficulties experienced by individual consultants or consultancies. However, as colleagues who are presenting more or less the same routine to more or less a same audience, the participants, through their accounts in this context demonstrated that they were aware of the difficulties of each other, therefore “sharing a community of fate” (Goffman 1959 102).

The accounts of the participants about backstage routines and rituals of the communication consultancy provided a uniform photograph, with almost identical routines and rituals across the industry. The identical character of backstage routines and rituals reflected the basic assumptions of both the clients and the consultants about the nature and structure of communication consultancy services. Furthermore, the similarities in the backgrounds and worldviews of the senior consultants who are the owners of second generation communication consultancies were seen to produce similar routines and rituals. In this regard, it can be argued that the consultancies need to address the growing importance of organizational culture and identity in gaining competitive advantage (Schultz & Ervolder 1998 38). Within this framework, the consultancies can also specialize in different areas of public relations, converting specific expertise as such into differentiating service packs; and can also work on differentiating the service processes. Such efforts of differentiation to gain competitive advantage are likely to produce different routines and rituals.

The front stage scripts depicted from the accounts of the participants yielded four major verbal and behavioral guidelines of the communication consultancy business in Turkey. First of all, the repeated experience of public relations being perceived or presented as mere publicity or media relations led to the the emphasis of the term “strategic communication” when describing the nature of the services and the business. Secondly, the common practice of experiencing difficulties in direct access to the top managements of client organizations led to the repeated underlining of the need to have regular access to the C-suite of clients. This access was positioned as an essential component of strategic communication. A third guideline was related to the scope and the tools of communication consultancy services. As a result of similarities in the structuring and the mindset of client expectations; the scope and the tools of these services was scripted in the tradition of an instrumental approach, although there were cues that the routines inherent in this script would undergo a change in the near future. Fourth, continuing barriers and obstacles in the way of measurement and evaluation of communication consultancy contribution to business was scripted in line with the global script. This script was built on a rhetoric of complaint and concrete suggestions for overcoming the problem were rare.

The discussion on the front stage performance of the communication consultancy industry in Turkey revealed that the industry had shortcomings in the the dramatization of the communication consultancy expertise. According to the participants, the consequences of this were the inability to transform the communication consultancy expertise into solid success stories; the lack of skills in presenting the solid experience of individual consultants and the agencies as markers of expertise; the lack of mechanisms (such as publications, award schemes, academic research) to share industry success stories; and the emergence of the "Agency President" as the major marketing tool.

Within the context of the front stage performance, the communication consultancy industry was conceptualized as a team, involved in the overall impression management of the industry. It was demonstrated that in spite of various shortcomings, the participating consultants were aware of the need of cooperation among team members for securing the credibility and the reputation of the communication consulting industry. Accordingly, the inter-dependence of the team members on the "good conduct and behaviour" (Goffman 1959) of each other was emphasized.

How the clients, as the performing team were perceived by the communication consultants was also discussed. It was observed in the accounts of the participants of this study that they exhibited a continuous effort to influence both the top managements and the in-house departments of their clients, to engage in processes that would confirm their external strategic role; although at the same time, they pointed out to their own shortcomings in this regard. The issues underlined by participants in this context included "the need to increase the level of expertise of external agency staff", "the necessity for developing presentation and persuasion skills of client teams", and "developing closer ties with public relations scholars to produce new insights".

Chapter 6

CONCLUSION

6.1. INTRODUCTION

The objective of this chapter is to consolidate the answers to the research question. In doing this, the findings of this study will, whenever possible, be situated in the contemporary scholarly and industrial discussions and issues, so as to provide a macro context. The chapter will also include a discussion of the various limitations of this study, therefore pointing at future needs for enhanced research on the subject matter.

The discussions generated through the accounts of the study participants centered around understanding the impressions generated by individual consultants during their performances, and how these impressions were managed front stage and backstage (Johansson 2007).

6.2. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Participants of the study all defined their individual roles as "communication consultants", and refrained from using "public relations" in their individual as well as institutional titles. This trend, which is also observable at the international level, is a result of the problematic nature of the vulnerable public image and the status of the occupation. In the Turkish context, the roles of individual communication consultants were further challenged as a result of the gap between their level of expertise and those of their staff.

The "communication consultant" role was further connected to the "strategic" nature of consultancy expertise, and to the significance of the external consultant's access to the C-Suite of clients, based on the argument that communication is a management function.

The effects of the current (or dominant) definition (or conceptualization) of public relations as a management function is also reflected in the overwhelming majority of theory development and research interest with an applied and corporate focus. This emphasis reveals the premise that public relations is seen primarily as a practice for organizations operating in the capitalist marketplace. Thus, public relations is conceptualized as a commercial management function. Critical scholars such as Holtzhausen (2002), Botan (1992) and Pieczka (1996) have also concluded that much theory building had been driven by the need to prove the efficacy of public relations in supporting organizational goals, segmenting publics according to these goals and identifying practitioner roles and voicing the need to be part of the "dominant coalition" in organizations.

The "models" and practitioner "roles" described by the public relations scholarship provide further evidence for this functionalist paradigm, as well as highlighting the linear conceptualization of the public relations process. These models and roles are also linked to the concept of "dominant coalition", which is almost always structurally embedded in the functionalist paradigm. The four models of public relations practice, developed by Grunig and Hunt (1984), namely the *press agentry/publicity model, the public information model, the two-way asymmetrical model, and the two-way symmetrical model* reflect a perception of the history of the field in four major, linear steps. These models also focus on the central role of the organization as the "sender" of the communication messages, again situated within the linear conceptualization of the communication process (sender-message-channel-receiver-feedback).

Of the four roles described for public relations practitioners by Dozier (1992) (*expert prescriber, communication facilitator, problem-solving facilitator and communication* *technician*), the expert advisor role as an attribute preferred by the participants, assuming the ability to provide “strategic advice” to the management of the organization, once more highlights the boundaries of the paradigm. As the working models and practitioner roles for public relations define the organization (or the corporation) as the major site of public relations practice, the discipline and the practice is understood and decoded as an “organizational” function. Following this positioning, the operational-technical roles of practitioners (such as tactical execution) and the strategic roles of advisors (such as developing policies or managing issues) are also negotiated within the boundaries of the organizational context. In this context, the “dominant coalition”, as the powerful group of organizational executors who make the strategic choices and allocate the resources, has a significant influence upon the public relations practices as well. Therefore, the reasoning follows, public relations practitioners (advisors/experts) must be part of this coalition in order to influence organizational choices, ideology and practices (Daughterty 2001).

The working models and practitioner roles defined as such also imply (or assume) that there exists the possibility of symmetry between organizations and their publics, organizations are willing to listen and respond to the concern and interests of these publics, and public relations practitioners are inclined to emphasize the interests of the publics against those of the organization. Furthermore, as Holtzhausen (2000) rightly argues, this rhetoric of “symmetry” allows the more powerful organization to assimilate the voices of its less powerful publics.

Approaches such as positioning public relations practitioners as “change managers” (Cutlip, et al. 1982) or conceptualizing public relations as “relationship management” (Ledingham & Bruning 1998) further assume the superiority of the point of view of the organization over possible alternative perspectives. Specialist working areas of public relations practice, such as media relations, crisis management or issues management, then, are also constructed as to provide a strategic approach (of the organization) to various publics. Even the growing importance and significance of digital media is evaluated through its potential for relationship building for the organization.

Described within the functionalist management paradigm, public relations practitioners identify strategic publics, developing and implementing programs that will ensure the long-term effectiveness of the organization (Dozier & Ehling 1992). As Holtzhausen (2002) underlines, approached this way, public relations practices follow certain roles as normative, given and absolute, leading to concepts such as “strategic message design” and “stakeholder management”, as well as to the notion that there is a set of strategies and tactics that are effective and efficient for organizational purposes.

According to the accounts of the participants, the majority of work carried out by the communication consultancies in Turkey can be grouped as follows: Designing communication strategies and plans; implementing communication programs, media monitoring, pitching stories to the media, and providing strategic insight. Of these, providing strategic insight, especially during crises, was evaluated as a task during which the credibility of the consultants was rated as high by the clients. Strategic insight also included the ability to understand the client and its business, in order to depict and suggest potential communication moves for the client. Furthermore, this understanding was reported as being essential also for the day-to-day handling of client demands. This is echoed in Czerniawska’s (2016) assessment of the types of specialist knowledge particularly valued by clients, as “industry specific knowledge” and “opportunity specific knowledge” (17). Moreover, one of the major considerations of organization when hiring the services of communication consultancy agencies, as argued by Wilcox and Cameron (2009), is their ability in understanding the client’s business and industry.

The significance of understanding the businesses of the clients was also demonstrated in the emphasis upon performances during new business pitches, where, according to the participants, the way this understanding was presented was as important as the actual content. At the same time, the accounts of the participants emphasized the presentation quality of various communications and documents sent to the clients, as these constituted tangible records in a service which is mostly regarded as intangible, and also proved to the clients that the consultancy was committed to detail and precision.

Solid and proven experience of the consultants was mentioned as an essential component of expertise in all participant accounts. The past performances of consultants in various other settings to different clients served as references for future new business, as the stories of successful expert performances were told among the clients. Past experience also served as a repository out of which the consultants were able to dig out proven formats and road maps for specific communication problems. The knowledge on client's business and industry is important in this context also, as enables the consultants to draw on experiences and language held in common with the client (Fincham et al. 2008),

Another attribute for expertise was reported as literacy in reading and interpreting the macro environment. This was reflected in the accounts of the participants on their typical daily routines, during which all of them spared time to monitor the media. The expertise as such is demonstrated in processing the media for information relevant to the clients. This attribute can be situated in von Platen's (2013) theoretical model which conceptualizes the function and skills of the communication consultant in terms of "translation". As a translator between the organization and the society, "the consultant translates societal changes, sectorial demands and popular communication ideals to the client organization" (156). In this regard, the consultants support the clients in framing and interpreting what is going on outside the organization through their focus on certain issues, and their ability to translate them into appropriate strategies.

In the accounts about the roles ascribed to communication consultants, a gap was identified between the senior consultants and their employees, as a result of which the senior consultants performed as expert advisors, and their employees performed as public relations specialists. It is argued that as a result of consultancy practice as such, the expertise communicated to the clients is the expertise of the senior consultant, who is usually the founder and/or the owner of the consultancy, but not that of the consultancy as a whole. This assessment also explains why the major marketing tool of communication consultancy agencies in Turkey is the senior consultant, who is the founder and the owner (of at least the majority of shares) of the consultancy.

This gap is mainly the result of the industry in retaining talent that results in high turnover, and which is also an important problem for all communication consultancies worldwide. Human capital is an essential competitive advantage in service based industries, and of the biggest recruitment challenges when seeking staff with experience is the limited pool (McKenna 2006). The public relations industry suffers from a continuous shortage of good people (Croft 2006), the reasons for which include hiring practices, lack of recognition, managerial style, and better private sector packages and incentives. The different ways of operating of in-house communication departments and consultancy agencies is another reason for agency staff to prefer the organizational side; because while there are job-descriptions with set specifications in in-house roles, the agency roles are more flexible and reactive due to the client-driven nature of the operation. Alternative solutions discussed in the industry include investing in younger graduates for entry-level jobs, creating positions for new competencies demanded by the digital revolution, and enlarging the potential talent pool by recruiting from diverse disciplines (Delpero 2014).

The low level of institutionalization in the communication consultancy agencies in Turkey can also be explained by the difficulties in retaining talent. Reflected also in standardized routines and rituals in all the consultancy agencies, problems of institutionalization result in the lack of genuine and individual agency cultures. The motivational aspect of genuine organizational cultures for especially the millennials is underlined in Meng and Berger’s (2016) survey. Meng and Berger’s study revealed that one area of engagement for millennial employees was the crucial importance of organizational culture, and a primary reason for joining and remaining with an organization. The participants of the study called for improved internal communications, better and more frequent managerial communications, more recognition for contributions, more training and development, greater shared power, and more mentoring.

Although the participant accounts revealed a low level of sharing among industry colleagues regarding shortcomings and/or difficulties experienced by individual consultants or consultancies; the participants also demonstrated that they were “sharing a community of fate” (Goffman 1959 102). It is argued that the conceptualization of the communication consultancy industry as a team can be utilized to enhance the credibility and the reputation of the industry. As a discord among members of a team could result in overall client dissatisfaction, resulting in reputation loss and in low economic performance of the industry as a whole. Therefore, it is of vital importance that the communication consultancy industry, as a team, should invest more in relationship maintenance activities supported by increased service quality and by increased impression management through innovative marketing of their services.

Considered within the dramaturgy of service encounters (Grove and Fisk 1992), paying informed attention to daily interactions between team members, between the senior consultants and their employees, and between the industry and its clients emerges as a necessity for the long term sustainability of the industry. Furthermore, more thought has to be given to the clients' read and interpretations of the industry, to understand how to respond to their actions, rules and processes.

As assessed by Jasanoff (2003), while experts in a particular area of practice are best equipped to spot the weaknesses of claims within their field, they may have barriers in looking outside the frames of their discourse. If these barriers can be overcome through the inclusion of diverse points of view, certain industrial assumptions can be questioned. This study has revealed that the Turkish communication consultants are intellectually capable of doing this. In this respect, Jasanoff's emphasis on enhancing the experts' political power to define the issues and select the very terms of deliberation is well placed.

According to the results of the Edelman Trust Barometer (2106), an online survey carried out in 28 countries (including Turkey) among the informed public (at least a college education; 500 respondents in U.S. and China; 200 in all other countries) and the general online population (1,150 respondents per country), a significant trust gap has emerged between elite and mass populations. This global survey asks respondents to rate their trust to do what is right, in the four institutions, namely the government, business, non-governmental organizations and the media. The survey revealed that while the trust is rising in the elite or "informed public" group, the trust levels in the mass population have fallen down. Richard Edelman, President and CEO of Edelman interprets the results as follows:

> From the economics of inequality, described by Thomas Pikkety in his best-seller, Capital in the Twenty-First Century, we now observe the inequality of trust around the world. I would posit that there is a "grand illusion" at play- a lingering notion that elites continue to lead and the masses will follow. This historic model of influence was predicated on the belief that elites have access to superior information, their interests are interconnected with those of the broader public, and becoming "an elite" was open to all those who work hard. Rising income inequality, high profile revelations of greed

and misbehaviour and the democratization of media have flipped the classic pyramid of influence. The trust of the mass population can no longer be taken for granted, and any continuation of the “grand illusion” is dangerous for leaders in today’s world.

The results of this very recent survey are interesting for and related to the findings of this study, as one of the major objectives of communication consultancy industry, and the individual consultants and consultancies, is the building of trust between the organizations they represent and the stakeholders of these organizations. Therefore, how communication consultancy expertise is constructed and presented becomes very important as regards the very content of this expertise in today’s rapidly changing global landscape.

The content of communication consultancy expertise, as the content of expertise in various other fields, needs to be renewed to capture the new dynamics of globalism and the market economy, these two constituting the foundations on which the clients of this expertise operate. Mason (2015) argues that information, rationalized by mainstream economics, is corroding capitalism and that the niches of the market system are beginning to move to a different rhythm, often as a result of the shattering of the old structures in the post-2008 crisis. The challenge of the communication consultancy expertise globally, as well as in Turkey, is to interpret these changes and contribute to the body of knowledge of public relations.

6.3. LIMITATIONS AND POTENTIALS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

In this study, communication consultancy expertise has been discussed as something that is performed in a social setting, with limited focus on the communication consultants. On the other hand, there are several other actors that are involved in the construction of this expertise, namely the client organizations, formal educators, journalists, and non-governmental organizations. In this regard, the study is limited regarding an insight of how these other actors view the practices and performances of the communication consultants.

Therefore, further studies on communication consultancy expertise in Turkey could focus on understanding how the actions and perceptions of related actors can be assessed.

Another limitation of the study is that the macro context of external public relations consulting in Turkey has not been examined, because the intentional focus of the study was the techniques and the major problems of impression management in the external communication consultancy industry in Turkey, discussed through the genuine experiences and accounts of the communication consultants at the micro level. The impact of specific social, economic and cultural factors on the development and the current practices of the communication consultancy industry is obvious, and deserve to be studied both by the scholars and the practitioners in Turkey.

Future research can also investigate the blurring lines between communication consultancy expertise and other disciplines such as advertising, marketing, and digital technologies expertise, in the Turkish setting. Emerging topics such as public diplomacy, community engagement, brand journalism, and future PR agency structuring could also be researched through industry-academy collaboration.

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Appendix 1 - INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Participant Profile

1. Position in the agency
2. Professional experience (years spent in the sector)
3. Age
4. Gender

Agency Profile

5. Independent/Affiliate/Global Network Agency
6. Number of full time staff
7. Size (# of staff: small, medium, large)

Public Relations Expertise

8. Would you consider yourself a public relations specialist or a communication consultant?
9. Are you specialized in a specific area of public relations?
10. Is your agency specialized in a specific area of public relations?
11. Would you say there are objective standards of competence for public relations? Do you think CMS provides such standards?
12. How would you describe experience in public relations consulting?
13. Do you think a public relations/communication consultant is powerful? How is this power displayed and/or contested?
14. Would you say being a public relations/communication consultant is reputable? Why/Why not?
15. Do you think PR consultants engage in concealed practices that are incompatible with the impression of public relations expertise?
16. Do you think PR consultants misrepresent their work vis-à-vis the clients, especially when they are trying to “land” that account? (Overpromising, unethical practices, etc..)
17. Would you say a global PR network or an affiliate is better equipped than to a local independent consultancy when expertise is considered?
18. Would you say being a member of the industry association has a positive effect on your (your agency’s reputation as an expert?
19. Would you say the ethical/professional codes of industry have a positive effect on your/your agency’s reputation as an expert?
20. How would you evaluate the level of expertise in the Turkish public relations

consultancy sector?

21. Do you think your clients trust you? How do you assess this?

External Public Relations Consultancy and Clients

22. What are your responsibilities as an external consultant?
23. What are the typical client expectations from an external public relations consultancy?
24. Do you think your clients fully know and understand how they can make use of external public relations consultancy?
25. In your view, what are the most important criteria for clients when they choose/appoint an external public relations consultant?
26. Do you think external public relations consultancy is as reputable as other consultancy areas (such as management consultancy, legal counsel, etc)?
27. How important is the founder/president of an external public relations consultancy for the clients?
28. Do you think pitching is the best way for clients to decide which external public relations agency to appoint?
29. Do your clients entrust their "secrets" in you? Would you say there are always limitations?
30. Would you say the more "secrets" you learn, the more you have to compromise the ethical standards of your profession and your independence as an external consultant?

Working Practices: / Backstage

31. Can you describe your typical working day?
32. Do you have an orientation program for new employees? What are the components of the program?
33. Do you have a special in-house client management training?
34. When do you think a junior practitioner is ready to interact with the clients?
35. Do you have colleagues who never interact face-to-face with clients? Why?
36. Do you have periodical in-house meetings? Could you describe what happens in these meetings?
37. How does your consultancy prepare for a pitch?
38. How do you feel when you are successful / unsuccessful in a pitch?
39. Do you celebrate each new business? How?
40. What are the signals that tell you that a client is unhappy? What do you do when you detect these?
41. What do you do when a team member acts in an improper way during a client interaction?
42. Prior to client presentations, meetings, etc, do you ensure team agreement on certain points/ issues, etc?
43. Who is the "director" during presentations? How is the job of this director defined?

44. Who is the "director" in charge of client relations in the office? How is the job of this director defined?
45. What do you think are the general shortcomings of clients in their relationships with their external public relations consultants?
46. Do you share positive + negative client experiences within the agency? At what levels?
47. Do you share your negative client experiences with your colleagues in other agencies?
48. When you share negative client experiences with competitor colleagues, are you relieved? In what way?
49. Would you say this relief serves to protect the status quo and to postpone tackling with serious problems?
50. Are there certain expressions that you use among your colleagues at the agency (or among colleagues in different settings) when referring to clients and client experiences?
51. Would you say your colleagues from competitor agencies express their true feelings or recount their true experiences with clients? Would they intentionally omit certain parts?
52. Do you have specific strategic secrets in relation to expert role? Are they individual or team secrets?
53. Would you (or did you ever) "plant" members of your team to act as if they were neutral third parties during press conferences, events, etc?
54. If a PR consultant decided to "go native", what sorts of secrets would she/he expose?
55. Would you say the industry association (IDA) acts like a collective identification of the profession? Why or why not?

<u>Setting/ Front/ Front Stage</u>

56. Do you think the geographical location of a public relations agency affects the perceptions of clients?
57. What about the physical setting/decoration of the agency? Do you think it is important for clients, for employees?
58. Do you have a special meeting room for holding client meetings? Could you describe the facilities in the room? What were your concerns when decorating the room?
59. Do you have a dress code for employees? Is it in writing?
60. Do you have a dress code for client meetings, events, etc? .
61. Do you have special cues or signals that you use to warn/direct team members during client interaction?
62. Are there certain typical expressions that clients use to give signals about specific feelings and judgments?

<u>Dramatic Realization:</u>

63. Are you able to demonstrate everything that is actually done for a client?
64. What are the invisible components of work done for clients? What about their invisible costs?
65. Do you feel obliged to attend certain social events or to be seen “around? Are there “proper performances” for a PR consultant/expert? (Which of your activities would you consider as “show”?)
66. Would you say you conceal certain personal choices while interacting with your clients? (-Preferences of food, political views, family background, etc)
67. Do you think there is an “ideal PR consultant” type? /”Agency type?” - Do you/would you employ certain people only on the basis of such typology? What about the “female PR practitioner in mini-skirts”?

Appendix 2 - PARTICIPANT PROFILES

Current Position	Education	Former Occupation
Owner & Honorary President	High School	Corporate Communicator
Owner & Chairperson	BA Journalism (Radio&TV)	Corporate Communicator
Founding Partner & Chairperson	BA Engineering	Advertising- Copy writer
Founding Partner & President	BA Economics	Journalism
Founder & Chairperson	BA Public Relations	Corporate Communicator
Founding Partner & President	BA Public Relations	Corporate Communicator
President - Executive Committee	BA Business Administration	Advertising- Account Management
Owner & President	BA Business Administration MBA Business Economics	NGO Communicator
Owner & President	BA Social Anthropology	Journalism
Managing Partner	BA Political Science	Marketing Research
Owner & President	BA International Relations	Corporate Communicator
Owner & Partner	BA Sociology	PR Agency Account Executive
Founder & Partner	BA International Relations	Corporate Finance
President	Sociology BA; PR & Advertising MA; PR & Advertising PhD	PR Agency Account Executive
Managing Partner	BA Economics	Journalism
General Manager	BA Communication	PR Agency Account Executive
General Manager	BA Communication	Journalism

Founder & Agency President	BA Journalism	Journalism
Agency President	BA Literature	Journalism
Owner	BA Communication	PR Agency Account Executive
General Manager	BA Business Administration ; MA Marcom & PR	PR Agency Account Executive
General Manager	BA Business Administration	PR Agency Account Executive
Consultant & Group Director	BA Translation & Interpretation	PR Agency Account Executive
Consultant	BA Economics	Marketing
Current Position	**Education**	**Former Occupation**
General Manager	BA International Relations	Journalism
Owner & President	BA Communication	Marketing
General Manager	BA Business Administration	Corporate Communicator
Owner	BA International Relations	Corporate Communicator
Managing Partner	BA Journalism	Journalism
Founder & Chair Person	BA International Relations	Marketing

ETİK KURUL DEĞERLENDİRME SONUCU/RESULT OF EVALUATION BY THE ETHICS COMMITTEE

(Bu bölüm İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurul tarafından doldurulacaktır /This section to be completed by the Committee on Ethics in research on Humans)

Başvuru Sahibi / Applicant: Barika Göncü

Proje Başlığı / Project Title: Türkiye'de İletişim Danışmanlığı Uzmanlığının İnşası ve Yönetimi

Proje No. / Project Number: 2015-30813-044

1.	Herhangi bir değişikliğe gerek yoktur / There is no need for revision	XX
2.	Ret/ Application Rejected Reddin gerekçesi / Reason for Rejection	

Değerlendirme Tarihi / Date of Evaluation: 12 Mayıs 2015

Kurul Başkanı / Committee Chair

Yrd. Doç Dr. Itır Erhart

Üye / Committee Member

Prof. Dr. Aslı Tunç

Üye / Committee Member

Prof. Dr. Hale Bolak

Üye / Committee Member

Prof. Dr. Turgut Tarhanlı

Üye / Committee Member

Doç. Dr. Koray Akay

Üye / Committee Member

Yrd. Doç Dr. Uğur Kevenk

Üye / Committee Member

Doç Dr. Ayhan Özgür Toy