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## Corporate Stakeholders On PR Practices: An Opinion Survey

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*Abstract:* This study explores the relationship between corporate stakeholders' experience in public relations (PR) and their perceptions of its role, value, and strategic importance within organizations. Drawing on survey data from stakeholders with varying levels of PR experience, the research examines how experience influences views on PR's position as a strategic management function, ethical considerations, and its integration with marketing. Key findings suggest that stakeholders with greater PR experience are more likely to view PR as essential to strategic decision-making and express concerns about marketing's encroachment on PR's domain. The study also reveals that while trust and ethical perceptions of PR practitioners remain consistent across experience levels, support for PR's leadership in integrated marketing communications (IMC) and its independence as a management function grows with increased experience. Despite these differences, the findings underscore a shared appreciation across all experience levels for PR's role in strategic management and long-term relationship-building.

*Index Terms* – Public Relations, Corporate Stakeholders, PR Experience, Strategic Management, Ethical Communication.

### Introduction

Public relations (PR) is a cornerstone of corporate communication, playing a vital role in building and managing relationships between an organization and its stakeholders. Through strategic communication, PR professionals shape public perception, enhance corporate reputation, and manage crises, all while fostering trust and credibility. Unlike other communication disciplines, PR prioritizes ethical and transparent interactions to cultivate long-term relationships with audiences such as employees, investors, customers, and the media.

At its core, PR transcends mere publicity or media relations, functioning as a strategic management tool that aligns communication strategies with organizational goals. Its responsibilities include reputation management, stakeholder engagement, and navigating complex communication challenges. However, the extent to which PR fulfills its strategic potential often depends on how it is perceived and integrated into corporate structures, particularly by stakeholders with direct or indirect exposure to PR practices.

This study seeks to understand how corporate stakeholders' experience in PR influences their perceptions of its role and value. By examining the perspectives of individuals with varying levels of exposure to PR, the research provides insights into how experience shapes views on PR's strategic importance, ethical foundations, and its relationship with other functions such as marketing.

### **Corporate Stakeholders' Views on PR**

Corporate stakeholders—comprising executives, employees, and external partners—often hold diverse opinions about the role and significance of PR within an organization. For some, PR is a critical strategic function that manages corporate reputation and strengthens stakeholder relationships. For others, it is seen as secondary, primarily focused on media relations or publicity. These differing views are frequently shaped by stakeholders' experience with PR and their understanding of its long-term benefits.

Stakeholders' perceptions are crucial because they directly influence how PR is integrated into broader corporate strategies and the extent to which PR professionals are involved in organizational decision-making. This study examines whether stakeholders' years of experience in PR impact their views on its value and strategic role, with the aim of identifying patterns that could inform better integration of PR into corporate management.

### **Literature Review**

The relationship between professional experience and perceptions of PR is a key area of interest in communication studies. Understanding how experience influences views on PR's strategic importance, ethical responsibilities, and integration with other functions provides valuable insights into the evolving role of PR within organizations.

### **Experience and Strategic Perceptions of PR**

Research consistently shows that experience plays a significant role in shaping how PR professionals perceive their field. Seasoned practitioners are more likely to view PR as integral to strategic management rather than as a tactical tool for publicity or media relations. Grunig and Grunig (2002) argue that experienced PR professionals recognize PR's capacity to align communication strategies with organizational objectives, manage stakeholder relationships, and contribute to high-level decision-making processes.

This understanding is further reflected in experienced practitioners' adoption of the two-way symmetrical communication model (Grunig & Hunt, 1984). This model emphasizes mutual understanding and dialogue between organizations and their publics, promoting ethical and balanced communication practices. While newer practitioners may focus on message dissemination and media relations, experienced professionals often prioritize fostering trust, building relationships, and engaging in meaningful stakeholder dialogue.

## PR and Marketing Integration

Another area where experience influences perception is the relationship between PR and marketing. Experienced practitioners often express concerns about marketing's encroachment on PR's domain, advocating for clearer role differentiation and maintaining PR's independence as a strategic management function. They also tend to support PR's leadership in coordinating integrated marketing communications (IMC), viewing it as a way to ensure that communication strategies remain balanced, ethical, and stakeholder-focused.

### Role Differentiation: PR vs. Marketing

One of the key areas where experience impacts PR professionals' opinions is in differentiating PR from marketing. **Kitchen and Schultz (2001)** argue that PR professionals with more years of experience are better equipped to distinguish PR's unique contributions from those of marketing. Experienced PR practitioners tend to place greater emphasis on long-term relationship-building, reputation management, and crisis communication, while less experienced professionals may view PR as a subsidiary to marketing, with an emphasis on short-term promotional activities. This differentiation is vital in organizations where **marketing encroachment**—the dominance of marketing over PR—can blur the lines between the two disciplines. **Lauzen (1992)** found that PR professionals with more experience are more likely to advocate for PR's independence from marketing, arguing that PR's role in fostering credibility and ethical standards is distinct from the profit-driven focus of marketing. In contrast, newer PR professionals may struggle to assert PR's value as an independent function, often viewing it as complementary to marketing initiatives. As a result, the number of years spent in PR significantly influences perceptions of the field's autonomy and its strategic contributions to the organization.

### Experience and Professional Identity

Experience also plays a role in shaping a PR professional's identity within the organization. Studies by **Dozier (1992)** and **Sha (2011)** suggest that as PR practitioners gain more experience, they are more likely to view themselves as **strategic managers** rather than **communication technicians**. Strategic managers are involved in high-level decision-making processes and help shape organizational policies, while communication technicians are more focused on specific tasks, such as writing press releases or managing social media platforms. **Dozier and Broom (2006)** found that PR professionals with fewer years of experience often view their roles as operational, focusing on tactical PR activities. However, as they gain experience, they are more

likely to transition into roles that influence strategy and policymaking. This shift in role perception underscores how experience shapes opinions on the scope and importance of PR within the corporate structure.

### **Professional Experience and Ethical Perceptions**

The ethical considerations of PR practice are another area where experience plays a pivotal role. Experienced PR professionals tend to place a stronger emphasis on ethics in their work. **Fitzpatrick and Bronstein (2006)** found that PR professionals with more extensive experience are more likely to value transparency, accountability, and ethical decision-making. Their years of experience navigating complex ethical dilemmas and interacting with a wide range of stakeholders contribute to a heightened awareness of the moral responsibilities inherent in PR. In contrast, less experienced professionals may prioritize immediate communication goals, sometimes without fully considering the broader ethical implications. As such, the number of years a professional has spent in PR is closely linked to their ethical perceptions and priorities within the field.

In summary, the literature suggests that years of experience significantly impact how PR professionals view the role and value of public relations. As PR practitioners accumulate more experience, they tend to adopt a more strategic perspective, emphasizing the importance of long-term relationship-building, ethical practices, and PR's distinction from marketing. Experienced professionals are more likely to advocate for PR's independence within organizations and see themselves as strategic managers rather than technicians. Consequently, the number of years spent in PR plays a crucial role in shaping opinions on the field's strategic, ethical, and operational dimensions, as well as its place within corporate structures. This study will find out more if number of years of experience in public relations of public relations professionals affect their opinions on public relations.

### **Aim**

The relationship between corporate stakeholders and public relations (PR) is well-established, with PR playing a significant role in shaping corporate communication strategies. However, it is important to assess whether a corporate stakeholder's level of experience in PR influences their perceptions of the field. The objective of this analysis is to determine if the **years of experience in public relations** of corporate stakeholders have a bearing on their **perceptions of PR** and its role within corporate settings.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The Excellence Theory in public relations highlights how firms can enhance effectiveness via appropriate communication techniques. Grunig and Hunt delineated four types of public relations that characterize the development of PR and its interaction with disciplines such as journalism. The following models are:

- 1. Press Agency/Publicity Model** — Emphasizes propaganda and unilateral communication to get attention.
- 2. Public Information Model** — A unidirectional communication approach that conveys information with enhanced accuracy and objectivity.
- 3. Two-Way Asymmetrical Model** — A form of two-way communication in which the organization seeks to influence the public without altering its own practices.
- 4. Two-Way Symmetrical Model** — A communication approach that promotes reciprocal understanding and dialogue, optimal for cultivating trust and enduring partnerships.

## Methodology

### *Participants*

The participants in this study were corporate stakeholders, selected based on their varying levels of experience in public relations (PR). The largest group consisted of those with **over 15 years of PR experience**, representing **36.5%** of the sample. This was followed by stakeholders with **no experience** in PR, accounting for **23.0%** of respondents. Participants with **6–9 years of experience** made up **14.9%** of the sample, while **those with less than 2 years** of experience comprised **10.8%**. Stakeholders with **2–5 years of experience** accounted for **9.5%**, and those with **10–14 years of experience** represented **5.4%** of the participants. This diverse range of experience levels enabled a comprehensive analysis of the stakeholders' perspectives on public relations across different stages of their careers.

### **Hypotheses**

**Null Hypothesis:** There is no statistically significant relationship between number of years of experience in public relations of corporate professionals and their opinions on public relations.

*Alternative Hypothesis: There is a statistically significant relationship between number of years of experience in public relations of corporate professionals and their opinions on public relations*

### **Data Collection**

Data for the study was collected through the **survey method**, using a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was developed using **Survey Monkey** and initially downloaded as a **PDF**, which was later printed for physical distribution. Additionally, the online version of the questionnaire was distributed via **WhatsApp** to ensure broader reach and convenience for respondents. The researcher also personally distributed and collected the printed questionnaires to enhance response rates. In total, **54 respondents** participated in the survey, and all of the completed questionnaires were fully answered, ensuring that the entire dataset was utilized for the research.

## Survey Instrument

The questionnaire included two sections: **demographic information** and **perception-based statements** related to public relations. The perception-based section featured a series of statements that participants responded to using a **Likert scale** ranging from *Strongly Disagree* to *Strongly Agree*. This scale enabled the quantification of respondents' attitudes and perceptions about the relationship between media professionals and public relations practitioners.

The Likert Scale terms are abbreviated in the tables namely SD- Strongly Agree, D- Agree, SWD- Strongly Disagree, NAD- Neither Agree nor Disagree, SWA- Somewhat Agree, A- Agree, and SA- Strongly Agree.

## Sampling Method

A **purposive sampling** technique was employed to reach the respondents. This method was chosen to target media stakeholders who have relevant experience and insights into the media-PR relationship. By focusing on participants with varying levels of experience in the media industry, the study aimed to capture a broad spectrum of perceptions and provide a robust analysis of how experience influences attitudes toward public relations.

## Data Analysis

**Table 1: Public relations practitioners are people of good sense, good will and good moral character.**

Experience (No. of years in Public Relations) * Public relations practitioners are people of good sense, good will and good moral character.								
	SD	D	SWD	NAD	SWA	A	SA	Total
No experience	1(8.3%)	1(8.3%)	1(8.3%)	3(25.0%)	0(0.0%)	6(50.0%)	0(0.0%)	12(100.0%)
Less than 2 years	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(20.0%)	0(0.0%)	3(60.0%)	1(20.0%)	5(100.0%)
2-5 years	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	2(33.3%)	3(50.0%)	1(16.7%)	0(0.0%)	6(100.0%)
6-9 years	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	2(22.2%)	1(11.1%)	3(33.3%)	3(33.3%)	9(100.0%)
10-14 years	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	2(100.0%)	0(0.0%)	2(100.0%)
15 years and above	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(4.2%)	1(4.2%)	4(16.7%)	12(50.0%)	6(25.0%)	24(100.0%)

Total	1(1.7%)	1(1.7%)	2(3.4%)	9(15.5%)	8(13.8%)	27(46.6%)	10(17.2%)	58(100.0%)
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Pearson Chi-Square	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
	31.019 <sup>a</sup>	30	.414

The table shows that perceptions of PR practitioners being people of good sense, goodwill, and good moral character vary somewhat by years of experience. Those with 6–9 years of experience have a higher proportion of respondents who "strongly agree" (33.3%) compared to other groups, while those with no experience are more likely to be neutral or less decisive. However, the Chi-square test result ( $p = 0.414$ ) suggests that these variations are not statistically significant. In other words, **there is no strong evidence** to suggest that the number of years someone has spent in PR significantly influences their opinion on this matter.

**Table 2: Public relations practitioners are trustworthy.**

Experience (No. of years in Public Relations) * Public relations practitioners are trustworthy.								
	SD	D	SWD	NAD	SWA	A	SA	Total
No experience	1(8.3%)	1(8.3%)	0(0.0%)	5(41.7%)	2(16.7%)	3(25.0%)	0(0.0%)	12(100.0%)
Less than 2years	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	2(40.0%)	0(0.0%)	2(40.0%)	1(20.0%)	5(100.0%)
2-5 years	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(16.7%)	1(16.7%)	3(50.0%)	1(16.7%)	6(100.0%)
6-9 years	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	2(22.2%)	1(11.1%)	4(44.4%)	2(22.2%)	9(100.0%)
10-14 years	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	2(100.0%)	2(100.0%)
15 years and above	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(4.2%)	4(16.7%)	3(12.5%)	8(33.3%)	8(33.3%)	24(100.0%)
Total	1(1.7%)	1(1.7%)	1(1.7%)	14(24.1%)	7(12.1%)	20(34.5%)	14(24.1%)	58(100.0%)

Pearson Chi-Square	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
	23.920 <sup>a</sup>	30	.776

The analysis reveals that perceptions of PR practitioners' trustworthiness vary across experience levels but are not significantly influenced by years of experience. While the "No Experience" group is largely neutral (41.7%), those with less than two years of experience display a generally positive outlook, with 40% agreeing and 20% strongly agreeing. Among the highly experienced group (15+ years), trust is notably high, with 66.6% agreeing or strongly agreeing. Overall, 34.5% of respondents agree, and 24.1% strongly agree that PR practitioners are trustworthy, indicating a positive sentiment. However, the Chi-square test (Pearson Chi-Square value = 23.920,  $p = 0.776$ ) confirms that the relationship between years of experience and perceptions of trustworthiness is not statistically significant, as the p-value exceeds the standard threshold of 0.05. Thus, years of experience in PR do not have a meaningful impact on views about practitioners' trustworthiness.

**Table 3: Public relations makes an organization more effective when it identifies strategic constituencies in the environment and then develops communication programmes to build long-term, trusting relationships with them.**

<b>Experience (No. of years in Public Relations) * Public relations makes an organization more effective when it identifies strategic constituencies in the environment and then develops communication programmes to build long-term, trusting relationships with them.</b>						
	D	NAD	SWA	A	SA	Total
No experience	1(8.3%)	3(25.0%)	2(16.7%)	5(41.7%)	1(8.3%)	12(100.0%)
Less than 2years	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	3(60.0%)	0(0.0%)	2(40.0%)	5(100.0%)
2-5 years	0(0.0%)	1(16.7%)	1(16.7%)	2(33.3%)	2(33.3%)	6(100.0%)
6-9 years	0(0.0%)	2(22.2%)	0(0.0%)	2(22.2%)	5(55.6%)	9(100.0%)
10-14 years	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(50.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(50.0%)	2(100.0%)
15 years and above	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(4.2%)	17(70.8%)	6(25.0%)	24(100.0%)
Total	1(1.7%)	6(10.3%)	8(13.8%)	26(44.8%)	17(29.3%)	58(100.0%)

Pearson Chi-Square	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
	36.170 <sup>a</sup>	20	.015

The data analysis highlights a significant relationship between PR experience and the belief in PR's role in enhancing organizational effectiveness by identifying strategic constituencies and fostering long-term relationships. Among respondents with no PR experience, 41.7% agree with the statement, though 25% remain neutral. Support grows notably with experience; in the "Less than 2 Years" group, 60% somewhat agree, and 40% strongly agree. The trend continues with "2-5 Years" professionals, where 33.3% strongly agree and 16.7% somewhat agree, and it strengthens further among those with "6-9 Years" of experience, with 55.6% strongly agreeing. In the "10-14 Years" group, agreement is evenly split between somewhat and strong agreement, while the "15+ Years" group shows the highest support, with 70.8% agreeing and 25% strongly agreeing. Overall, 44.8% of all respondents agree, and 29.3% strongly agree, with a Chi-Square test (Pearson value = 36.170,  $p = 0.015$ ) confirming a significant relationship. These findings suggest that as professionals gain experience, they increasingly recognize PR's strategic importance in organizational effectiveness.

**Table 4: Participation in strategic management provides the integrating link for public relations in enhancing organizational effectiveness.**

<b>Experience (No. of years in Public Relations) * Participation in strategic management provides the integrating link for public relations in enhancing organizational effectiveness.</b>						
	SD	NAD	SA	A	SA	Total
No experience	1(8.3%)	1(8.3%)	3(25.0%)	4(33.3%)	3(25.0%)	12(100.0%)
Less than 2years	0(0.0%)	1(20.0%)	1(20.0%)	2(40.0%)	1(20.0%)	5(100.0%)
2-5 years	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(16.7%)	3(50.0%)	2(33.3%)	6(100.0%)
6-9 years	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(11.1%)	5(55.6%)	3(33.3%)	9(100.0%)
10-14 years	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(50.0%)	1(50.0%)	2(100.0%)
15 years and above	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	13(54.2%)	11(45.8%)	24(100.0%)

Total	1(1.7%)	2(3.4%)	6(10.3%)	28(48.3%)	21(36.2%)	58(100.0%)
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Pearson Chi-Square	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
	18.353 <sup>a</sup>	20	.564

The analysis reveals that the belief in the role of strategic management participation in enhancing PR effectiveness varies across experience levels, with overall support evident. In the No Experience group, 33.3% agreed, 25% strongly agreed, and 16.6% either disagreed or were neutral, reflecting mixed opinions. The Less than 2 Years group showed a positive but varied sentiment, with 40% agreeing, 20% strongly agreeing, and 20% neutral. Among the 2-5 Years group, 50% agreed and 33.3% strongly agreed, indicating a strong connection between experience and belief in PR's strategic role. This trend persisted with 6-9 Years professionals, where 55.6% agreed and 33.3% strongly agreed. For the 10-14 Years group, responses were evenly split between agreement and strong agreement, while the 15+ Years group showed overwhelming support, with 54.2% agreeing and 45.8% strongly agreeing. Overall, 48.3% of respondents agreed, and 36.2% strongly agreed, with experienced professionals showing stronger support for the strategic management role in PR. However, the Chi-Square test ( $p = 0.564$ ) indicates that differences across experience levels are not statistically significant, suggesting that while seasoned professionals may favor this belief, the trend lacks statistical strength.

**Table 5: To provide its unique contribution, however, public relations must be separate from other management functions.**

<b>Experience (No. of years in Public Relations) * To provide its unique contribution, however, public relations must be separate from other management functions.</b>								
	SD	D	SWD	NAD	SWA	A	SA	Total
No experience	0(0.0%)	1(8.3%)	0(0.0%)	2(16.7%)	2(16.7%)	5(41.7%)	2(16.7%)	12 100.0%
Less than 2years	1(20.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	2(40.0%)	0(0.0%)	2(40.0%)	0(0.0%)	5 100.0%
2-5 years	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(16.7%)	0(0.0%)	1(16.7%)	3(50.0%)	1(16.7%)	6 100.0%
6-9 years	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	9(100.0%)	0(0.0%)	9 100.0%

10-14 years	1(50.0%)	1(50.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	2 100.0%
15 years and above	0(0.0%)	3(12.5%)	2(8.3%)	1(4.2%)	1(4.2%)	10(41.7%)	7(29.2%)	24 100.0%
Total	2(3.4%)	5(8.6%)	3(5.2%)	5(8.6%)	4(6.9%)	29(50.0%)	10(17.2%)	58 100.0%

Pearson Chi-Square	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
	51.187 <sup>a</sup>	30	.009

The results show that 41.7% of respondents agree with the idea of PR being separate, while 16.7% remain neutral. The Less than 2 Years Group shows more divided opinions, with 40% neutral, 40% agreeing, and 20% strongly disagreeing. The 2-5 Years Group has half agreement, while the 6-9 Years Group (100%) agrees. The 10-14 Years Group opposes the separation, while the 15+ Years Group presents a broader range of opinions. The Chi-Square Test results show a statistically significant relationship between PR experience and belief in PR's need to be a separate function. More experienced professionals, especially those with over 6 years of experience, tend to support this view, while less experienced individuals are more neutral or even disagree.

**Table 6: Integrated marketing communication programme should be coordinated through the broader public relations function.**

Experience (No. of years in Public Relations) * Integrated marketing communication programme should be coordinated through the broader public relations function.							
	D	SWD	NAD	SWA	A	SA	Total
No experience	1(8.3%)	1(8.3%)	1(8.3%)	4(33.3%)	4(33.3%)	1(8.3%)	12 100.0%
Less than 2years	1(20.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(20.0%)	2(40.0%)	1(20.0%)	5 100.0%
2-5 years	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(16.7%)	4(66.7%)	1(16.7%)	6 100.0%
6-9 years	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(11.1%)	2(22.2%)	5(55.6%)	1(11.1%)	9 100.0%
10-14 years	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(50.0%)	1(50.0%)	2 100.0%

15 years and above	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(4.2%)	1(4.2%)	20(83.3%)	2(8.3%)	24 100.0%
Total	2(3.4%)	1(1.7%)	3(5.2%)	9(15.5%)	36(62.1%)	7(12.1%)	58 100.0%

Pearson Chi-Square	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
	23.742 <sup>a</sup>	25	.534

The crosstab analysis shows that the majority of respondents (62.1%) agree that IMC programs should be coordinated through PR, with an additional 12.1% strongly agreeing. Support for the coordination of IMC through PR increases with experience, especially in respondents with more than 6 years of PR experience. The Chi-Square test interprets the results as no statistically significant relationship between the number of years of PR experience and the belief that IMC programs should be coordinated through PR. While there are trends in how different experience groups view the role of PR in coordinating IMC, these differences are not statistically significant. In conclusion, the Chi-square test shows that there is no significant relationship between the number of years of experience in PR and agreement with the idea that IMC programs should be coordinated through the broader PR function. Despite this, a majority of respondents, particularly those with more experience, support the coordination of IMC through PR.

**Table 7: PR and Marketing are put under the same umbrella, Marketing dominates PR.**

<b>Experience (No. of years in Public Relations) * PR and Marketing are put under the same umbrella, Marketing dominates PR.</b>							
	D	SWD	NAD	SWA	A	SA	Total
No experience	2(16.7%)	0(0.0%)	2(16.7%)	2(16.7%)	6(50.0%)	0(0.0%)	12(100.0%)
Less than 2years	1(20.0%)	0(0.0%)	2(40.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(20.0%)	1(20.0%)	5(100.0%)
2-5 years	3(50.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(16.7%)	1(16.7%)	1(16.7%)	6(100.0%)
6-9 years	1(11.1%)	0(0.0%)	1(11.1%)	2(22.2%)	5(55.6%)	0(0.0%)	9(100.0%)
10-14 years	1(50.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(50.0%)	0(0.0%)	2(100.0%)
15 years and above	4(16.7%)	2(8.3%)	0(0.0%)	5(20.8%)	9(37.5%)	4(16.7%)	24(100.0%)

Total	12(20.7%)	2(3.4%) )	5(8.6%) )	10(17.2%) )	23(39.7%) )	6(10.3%) )	58(100.0%) )
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Pearson Chi-Square	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
	24.047 <sup>a</sup>	25	.517

The majority of respondents (39.7%) agree with the statement, and 10.3% strongly agree, meaning nearly half (50%) of respondents overall believe Marketing dominates PR when the two are placed under the same umbrella. However, there is still notable disagreement (20.7%) and a smaller proportion (8.6%) remain neutral on the issue. While there are trends in how different experience groups perceive the relationship between PR and Marketing, the differences are not strong enough to be considered statistically significant. In conclusion, the Chi-square test reveals that there is no statistically significant relationship between PR experience and the belief that Marketing dominates PR when the two are placed under the same umbrella. While a significant portion of respondents (50%) agree or strongly agree that Marketing dominates PR, especially in the more experienced groups, these differences in opinion are not strong enough to be considered statistically significant ( $p = 0.517$ ).

**Table 8: Public relations serves as a 'watchdog' on the social responsibility of marketing.**

Experience (No. of years in Public Relations) * Public relations serves as a 'watchdog' on the social responsibility of marketing.							
	D	SWD	NAD	SWA	A	SA	Total
No experience	1(8.3%) )	1(8.3%) )	2(16.7%) )	1(8.3%) )	6(50.0%) )	1(8.3%) )	12(100.0%) )
Less than 2years	1(20.0%) )	0(0.0%) )	1(20.0%) )	1(20.0%) )	2(40.0%) )	0(0.0%) )	5(100.0%) )
2-5 years	0(0.0%) )	0(0.0%) )	0(0.0%) )	3(50.0%) )	3(50.0%) )	0(0.0%) )	6(100.0%) )
6-9 years	1(11.1%) )	1(11.1%) )	2(22.2%) )	0(0.0%) )	5(55.6%) )	0(0.0%) )	9(100.0%) )
10-14 years	0(0.0%) )	0(0.0%) )	0(0.0%) )	0(0.0%) )	2(100.0%) )	0(0.0%) )	2(100.0%) )
15 years and above	3(12.5%) )	1(4.2%) )	2(8.3%) )	7(29.2%) )	9(37.5%) )	2(8.3%) )	24(100.0%) )

Total	6(10.3%)	3(5.2%)	7(12.1%)	12(20.7%)	27(46.6%)	3(5.2%)	58(100.0%)
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Pearson Chi-Square	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
	15.705 <sup>a</sup>	25	.923

The crosstab analysis shows that 50% of respondents agree with the statement, while the rest are distributed across various responses. The majority of respondents (46.6%) agree that PR serves as a watchdog for marketing's social responsibility, with an additional 20.7% somewhat agreeing. This suggests widespread support for the concept, especially among those with more than 6 years of experience. The Chi-Square test interprets the results as follows: Pearson Chi-Square Value (15.705), and a high p-value ( $p = 0.923$ ). The high p-value indicates that any observed differences are likely due to chance. The Chi-square test reveals that there is no significant relationship between PR experience and the belief that PR acts as a watchdog over marketing's social responsibility. Although many respondents, particularly those with 6+ years of experience, agree or somewhat agree with this idea, the lack of statistical significance suggests that variations in opinion across experience levels are not strong enough to be conclusive.

**Table 9: There is an encroachment/‘marketing imperialism’ and ‘encroachment’ on public relations territory. (Marketing taking over Public Relations functions).**

Experience (No. of years in Public Relations) * There is an encroachment/‘marketing imperialism’ and ‘encroachment’ on public relations territory. (Marketing taking over Public Relations functions).								
	SD	D	SWD	NAD	SWA	A	SA	Total
No experience	0(0.0%)	1(8.3%)	0(0.0%)	3(25.0%)	4(33.3%)	4(33.3%)	0(0.0%)	12 100.0%
Less than 2years	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	2(40.0%)	2(40.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(20.0%)	5 100.0%
2-5 years	0(0.0%)	2(33.3%)	0(0.0%)	1(16.7%)	1(16.7%)	2(33.3%)	0(0.0%)	6 100.0%
6-9 years	2(22.2%)	0(0.0%)	1(11.1%)	1(11.1%)	1(11.1%)	4(44.4%)	0(0.0%)	9 100.0%
10-14 years	0(0.0%)	1(50.0%)	1(50.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	2 100.0%

15 years and above	0(0.0%)	3(12.5%)	1(4.2%)	1(4.2%)	3(12.5%)	14(58.3%)	2(8.3%)	24 100.0%
Total	2(3.4%)	7(12.1%)	3(5.2%)	8(13.8%)	11(19.0%)	24(41.4%)	3(5.2%)	58 100.0%

Pearson Chi-Square	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
	45.172 <sup>a</sup>	30	.037

The study analyzed the perceptions of public relations professionals (PR) on the concept of "marketing imperialism." The results showed that a significant proportion of respondents (33.3%) agreed with the idea of marketing taking over PR functions, while a smaller percentage (23.3%) expressed mixed opinions. The majority of respondents (41.4%) agreed, with an additional 19% somewhat agreeing. However, there was some notable disagreement (12.1%) and neutrality (13.8%), especially among those with less than 10 years of PR experience. More experienced PR professionals (15+ years) showed stronger concern about marketing encroachment, with the highest levels of agreement (58.3%). The Chi-Square test revealed a statistically significant relationship between years of experience in PR and beliefs about marketing's encroachment on PR functions. Experienced PR professionals, particularly those with 15+ years of experience, tend to agree more strongly with the idea that marketing is taking over PR functions, while less experienced professionals show more varied opinions, including neutrality and disagreement. The findings suggest that the perception of marketing encroachment on PR functions is influenced by the level of experience in PR professionals.

**Table 10: Strategic management is the key to excellent public relations.**

<b>Experience (No. of years in Public Relations) * Strategic management is the key to excellent public relations.</b>					
	NAD	SA	A	SA	Total
No experience	2(16.7%)	1(8.3%)	7(58.3%)	2(16.7%)	12(100.0%)
Less than 2years	0(0.0%)	2(40.0%)	2(40.0%)	1(20.0%)	5(100.0%)
2-5 years	0(0.0%)	2(33.3%)	3(50.0%)	1(16.7%)	6(100.0%)
6-9 years	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	7(77.8%)	2(22.2%)	9(100.0%)

10-14 years	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(50.0%)	1(50.0%)	2(100.0%)
15 years and above	3(12.5%)	0(0.0%)	12(50.0%)	9(37.5%)	24(100.0%)
Total	5(8.6%)	5(8.6%)	32(55.2%)	16(27.6%)	58(100.0%)

Pearson Chi-Square	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
	19.611 <sup>a</sup>	15	.187

The study analyzed the relationship between years of experience in public relations (PR) and the belief that strategic management is the key to excellent PR. The results showed that 58.3% of respondents agreed with the statement, while 16.7% strongly agreed. The majority of respondents (55.2%) agreed with the statement, with an additional 27.6% strongly agreeing. Support for this statement increased with experience, especially among respondents with more than 6 years of experience. The Chi-Square test interpretation showed no statistically significant relationship between years of experience in PR and the belief that strategic management is the key to excellent PR. The p-value suggests that while there are trends in how different experience levels view this statement, these differences are not statistically significant. The Chi-square test concluded that there is no statistically significant relationship between PR experience and the belief that strategic management is the key to excellent PR. Although the majority of respondents, especially those with more than 6 years of experience, strongly support the idea, the variation in responses across experience levels is not strong enough to be statistically meaningful.

### *Conclusion*

The analysis of public relations (PR) professionals' perceptions across varying levels of experience revealed several important insights about the relationship between PR, strategic management, marketing encroachment, and the ethical role of PR.

One of the key findings is that **experience in PR significantly influences certain perceptions**. For example, more experienced PR professionals (particularly those with 6+ years of experience) tend to believe more strongly in the need for PR to operate independently of other management functions and view **marketing encroachment** as a real concern. This trend was statistically significant ( $p = 0.037$ ), indicating that longer-term PR professionals are more aware of or sensitive to "**marketing imperialism**", where marketing takes over traditional PR functions. These respondents also showed strong support for the idea that **strategic management is essential to PR's success**, although this was not statistically significant ( $p = 0.187$ ), suggesting that the majority of PR professionals, regardless of experience, value strategic management.

While **trustworthiness** and **moral character** of PR practitioners were generally rated positively, there was no statistically significant relationship between experience and these perceptions, suggesting that these are **consistent qualities perceived across all levels of experience** ( $p = 0.776$ ). Similarly, the role of PR as a **watchdog for marketing's social responsibility** was widely supported but did not vary significantly across experience levels ( $p = 0.923$ ).

Another interesting finding was the strong support for the coordination of **integrated marketing communications (IMC) through PR**, especially among more experienced respondents ( $p = 0.534$ ). However, despite the overall agreement on this issue, the results were not statistically significant, indicating that while experience may play a role in shaping views, and it is not a determining factor.

In summary, **experience does influence key perceptions in PR**, particularly in areas related to marketing encroachment and the importance of strategic management. These findings highlight the evolving role of PR professionals and the growing need to clearly define and defend PR's place within organizations, especially as marketing and PR functions increasingly overlap.

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