

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

School of Journalism.

An assessment of the level of recognition of public relations profession in Kenya: A trend analysis of PR and communication job opportunities and understanding of PR mandate in two Kenyan Newspapers.

By JOSEPH MAKARA
KAMOTHO

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
EAST AFRICANA COLLECTION

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Research project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement of the degree of Master of Arts in Communications Studies.

Supervisor: Mr. Peter Oriare.

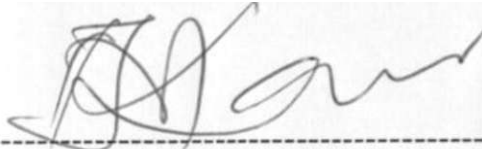
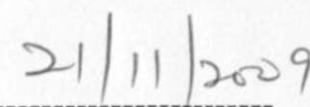
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DECLARATION

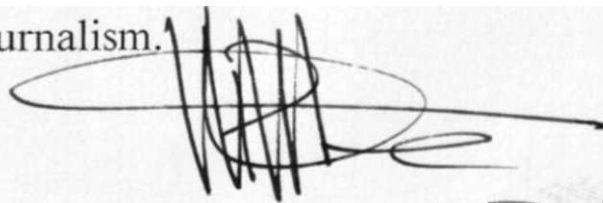
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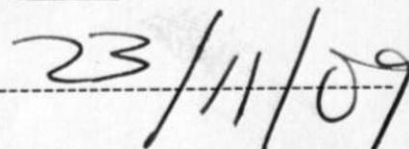
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The project has been submitted for examination with my approval as University Supervisor.

Mr. Peter Oriare.

Lecturer,

School of Journalism. 

Date 

DEDICATION

Dedicated to my two children Faith Njeri and Joy Wangui as their sight has always warmed up my heart.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This project is a product of very wide consultation, interaction and discourse that involved many people.

I would like to acknowledge the almighty God for giving me mental and physical strength to be able to piece together this project.

I feel greatly indebted to my supervisor Mr. Peter Oriare whose insightful counsel and guidance helped me to think outside the box. I am therefore very thankful to him especially for his assistance in the formulation of this project and subsequent framing and sharpening of all facets of the exercise.

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Finally my parents General Kamwamba Mitaruni and Mary Wangui Kamotho who gave me priceless counsel about life.

ABSTRACT

This study was carried out to establish the level of recognition of public relations profession by attempting to understand the mindset of the employers. This was done by measuring the ideal terms of reference for public relations profession against the terms of reference requested for by employers in job advertisements.

In the process of investigating recognition levels the study illuminated a trend analysis of the PR job opportunities visa vis Accounting Job opportunities.

The study which took a content analysis research model investigated the two major Newspapers in Kenya namely The Nation and The Standard. The two newspapers were chosen because of their wide circulation and their known popularity with the corporate and government in respect to job advertisements.

Specifically the study aimed at establishing the amount of PR job opportunities available in the Kenyan job market and the understanding of the corporate and other employers of the ideal terms of reference for PR profession.

The study assumed that the perceived low recognition level of PR profession in the work place emanated from poor understanding of the PR profession functions and mandate by current and potential employers.

The study took a view that PR profession is critical in the success of any corporate organization and owing to the changing trends in the economic, political and social fronts it is imperative to put instruments in place to allow PR profession to assert itself. This will be beneficial to the employers and the practitioners.

Finally the study has attempted to give recommendations of the best way forward in respect to demystifying the profession through sustained sensitization and deliberate communication to the corporate and government agencies for enhanced acceptance and recognition of the profession.

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ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS

PRSK- Public Relations Society of Kenya

TOR - Terms of Reference

PR- Public Relations

IPRA- International Public Relations Association

UN- United Nations

EAPRA-East African Public Relations

FAPRA-Federation of Public Relations Association

SWOT- Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

PRISA- Public Relations Institute of South Africa

PROs- Public Relations officers

VP- Vice President

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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Public relations in Kenya has not been well mainstreamed in both public and private sectors, reason being that some organizations lack interest in the practitioners and therefore do not employ Public Relations personnel. Some only rush to public relations consultancies for damage control when they are in deep image crisis.

Lack of appreciation of the role public relations play as a management tool has taken toll on the profession and this has caused it to take a rather peripheral position compared to other older professions like law, medicine and accounting and nursing.

Joseph T. Nolan one of the world's foremost public relations practitioners asked whether public relations will ever attain the same stature as the professions of law and accounting said "if public relations keeps working at its accreditation procedure improving it as it goes along and does a better job of policing it ranks it could very well eventually achieve a place alongside accounting, law, and other professions. This would be an important development, but its importance should not be exaggerated. The only way to get this kind of stature is to merit it and that must be done day by day" (Seitel 1995).

¹ Seitel Fraser P. The Practice of Public Relations, New Jersey. 1995 Page 23.

Public relation is an emerging profession. Unlike the more established professions, public relation does not yet require a prescribed educational, preparation, government sanctioned qualifying exams and peer review to assure competent and ethical practice. Nor do its practitioner's operate in clearly defined roles recognized widely as essential for the common good¹ (Cutlip et al 1994).

Communication is an integral part of management as the principles of management of organizing, coordination and planning cannot be actualized without communication therefore the lack of appreciation of Public Relation by some organization remains a paradox.

This lack of appreciation has led to the declining public relations job opportunities while universities, colleges and other tertiary institutions continue to offload hundreds of public relations trained personnel.

The trend in the world today owing to New World order, modernization and technological advances has created immensely wonderful and receptive environment for the public relations profession but this has not translated to the same on the ground.

Conflicts and competing political ideas that have been phenomenal in the world today also create opportunities for the profession, but part the reason why the profession is still performing dismally is yet to be established.

The entrepreneurial world have changed since the 1970s owing to cut throat business competitions and the desire for visibility and favourable mention that lead to good image.

¹ Cutlip et al .Effective Public Relations .New Jersey 1995 Page 26

increased sales and increased profits. Again public relations have not been wholly embraced by the business corporate world and when Public Relation persons are hired their role still remains at a lower level, rarely climbing to management level.

When Nolan was again asked, "do you envision that public relations practitioners will be called on to manage organizations in the future"? He responded "the best of the public relations practitioners will move up to the top management roles just as marketing, and financial specialists, engineers, and lawyers have done in the past"³.(Seitel 1995).

The public relations profession involves strategy formulation as part of management function therefore, for an organization to achieve its goals and objectives it would be at its detriment to side-step public relations.

In Kenya today the corporate world and the government who are the major employers confuse the roles of public relations persons as it is indicated by the different titles their jobs are given some titles are simply Public Relations officers, others are Pubic Relations Managers, others. Corporate communications Managers others Public Communications Officers others account officers.

Due to this misunderstanding the terms of reference (TOR) for the Pubic Relations jobs even include some duties that are more inclined to administration rather than communication. Some Public Relations officers have often been assigned wrong duties of

⁵ Seitel Fraser P The Practice of Public Relations, New Jersey, 1995

running errands for the managing directors or ministers. They have often been assigned Personal Assistant duties, while others have been reduced to publicity officers.

1.2 Problem statement

Public relations profession is an important function in any organizational system be it private or public. The issue at hand however is the level of recognition given to the profession in Kenya.

The issue of recognition and appreciation of the profession in Kenya today leaves lots of grey areas and unanswered questions.

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Recently the government of Kenya included public relations practitioners as members of the media council of Kenya. They were further included in the recently launched Brand Kenya initiative and in the task force working on the review of the media Act 2007.

Further the government of Kenya in September 2008 facilitated the enrolment of 93 public relations and communication officers drawn from various government ministries and departments to the Public relations society of Kenya (PRSK).

These gestures by the government elicit the big question whether public relations profession has finally got the recognition it deserves.

In the corporate world which thrives on good name and image, recognition of the profession still has a big gap as most public relations persons have often been confused with marketers, advertisers, publicity officers, and promoters or spin doctors.

Further PR persons are given varied Job Titles depending the understanding of PR roles and functions by different corporate organizations.

In many instances PR persons are assigned wrong duties like being "brief case" people for their seniors, being personal assistants to chief executive officers or cabinet ministers. Thus compromising the essential service the PR professionals are supposed to offer in respect to planned organizational communication.

Owing to the perceived relegation to lower carders. PR persons in organizations finds themselves in antagonistic positions with management especially because of their job descriptions (Terms of Reference) that often are different from the ideal TOR for public relations professionals.

This study therefore is out to investigate the trends of public relations jobs availability in the Kenyan job market and the level of recognition and understanding by employers of the ideal terms of reference for public relation jobs with a view to illuminate the future of PR job market.

This will be done by assessing the amount of PR job opportunities in two Newspapers in Kenya.

This will provide empirical evidence of whether PR profession is recognized or not.

1.3 Study question.

1. What is the level of recognition of public relations profession by employers in the corporate world and in government in Kenya?
2. What is the level of public relations and communication opportunities available in the job market compared to other opportunities like accounting?
3. What are the mandates of public relations professionals as advertised by the requesting employers and how do they compare with the ideal terms of reference for public relations professionals?

The study will also delve into analyzing the terms of reference (TOR) for public relations jobs as advertised in the *Daily Nation and The Standard Newspapers* by the requesting employers and the ideal terms of reference that will help measure whether the employers really understand the roles and functions of public relations persons.

1.4 Specific objectives

1. Assess the level of recognition of PR profession in the corporate world.
2. Establish the level of PR and communication job opportunities in the job market.
3. Assess the level of understanding of the mandates and functions of PR professionals in the corporate world.

1.5 Justification of the study

The world has changed over the years and the way people communicate and relate with one another has changed.

The changes in the world politics from traditional social endeavour to competitive enterprise have increased the need of understanding among peoples than ever before. The varied religious outfits have also increased the need of public relations.

The market forces of demand and supply have also impacted greatly on public relation as every enterprise and corporate desire and compete for favourable mention in the media that may facilitate acceptance, improved image and continued business.

The corporate world today in Kenya and world over has seen an unprecedented interest in image building that has not been witnessed before.

Universities, colleges and other tertiary institutions have continued to train public relations personnel over the years, as the profession has become very attractive to many young people.

The question that lingers around is why is the public relations profession not yet recognized among corporate employers?

Why is Public Relations profession relegated to lower ranks compared to other "*older*" professions like Accounting, Law, Medicine, Nursing to mention a few?

This study will investigate the level of understanding of the corporate, government and other organizations on the public relations professional mandate, terms of reference, and functions in organizational management.

The study will illuminate the variance between the ideal PR professional TOR and what the employers request for in their job advertisements.

1.6 Significance of the study

This study will provide new knowledge on the gaps that exist between the ideal terms of reference for public relations jobs and what the corporate, government and other organizations seek for.

This will be an opportunity of in-depth understanding of the public relations job market and it may help curriculum developers at universities, colleges and other tertiary institutions to frame their curriculum to provide what is relevant in the rapidly changing job market.

The study will quantify the public relation jobs available in the market annually thus providing up coming job seekers the trends to enable them make wise decisions so as to match with the demands of the job market.

1.7 Study assumptions

The assumption of the study is that the low level of recognition of public relation professionals in the corporate, government and other organizations is due to lack of appreciation and understanding of the role public relations persons play in organizational management.

The other assumption is that most corporate, government agencies and organizations do not understand the ideal terms of reference for public relations professionals leading to wrong job descriptions that result in antagonistic tendencies and conflict in organizations.

1.8 Scope of the study

This study will investigate the public relations jobs advertised in the Daily Nation and The Standard Newspapers between 2007 and 2008 with a view to measuring the level of

understanding of the ideal terms of reference for public relations jobs by the corporate, government and other organizations (employers).

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.

2.1 What is Public Relations?

Public relation according to Jefkins (1998) consists of all forms of planned communication, outwards and inwards, between an organization and its publics for the purpose of achieving specific objectives concerning mutual understanding.⁴

John Marson defines public relations "as a management function geared towards building understanding and acceptance."

Another definition that emphasizes the management function of public relation is by the *Public Relations' News magazine* that states that "Public Relations is the management function which evaluates public attitudes. Identifies the policies of organizations and individuals with the public interest and plans and executes a program of action."

⁴ Jefkin, frank; Public Relations; England, 1998 page 6

2.1.1 Evolution of PR in Kenya.

Public relations as a profession has undergone various phases of evolution in line with a fast changing world thus demanding new thinking and relevant ways of doing business.

The question of recognition of the role that public relations practitioners play in organizational management have been a debate among the PR people and business executives and in deed many scholars have done substantial works in this field.

In Kenya, the public relations society of Kenya (PRSK) was established in 1971 with a purpose of promoting public relations practice in the country in liaison with regional and international PR bodies.

"Public relations society of Kenya was established to guide and bring together PR practitioners in Kenya. It was formed by constitution and is a registered society the society's main objective is to enhance the PR practice in the country and to ensure that the practice continues to thrive within the defined ethical framework."⁵

"In order to maintain the highest level of professionalism members adhere to a code of ethics. The PRSK code of professional conduct is based on the code of Athens which was adopted by the international public relations association (IPRA) general assembly in Athens on 12th May 1965. This was later modified in Teheran on 17th April 1968. When

⁵ <http://acronyms.thefreedictionary.com/Public-'-Relations+Society+of+Kenya>

IPRA gained observer status at the United Nations (UN) its code of ethics was then adopted to the universal declaration of human rights."¹⁶

PRSK subscribes to regional and international public relations bodies. Through its membership to their bodies, PRSK is able to network with practitioners globally.

PRSK network with other international bodies including the East African Public Relations Association (EAPRA) which is an umbrella body for all public relations bodies in the East Africa region namely, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and Rwanda.

Its also networks with the Federation of African Public Relation Association (FAPRA) which is the umbrella body for all public relations associations in the Africa continent whose aim is to facilitate exchange of ideas between members and enhancement of PR development in Africa.

Others also include the Global Alliance for Public Relations and Communications Management, which is an umbrella body for global PR and communications associations. Its aim is to liaise with PR and communication professionals and facilitates development of a unified global understanding."

A big number of member of PRSK subscribe to the International Public Relations Association (IPRA) which is an individual membership association, thus forming the (IPRA) Kenyan chapter. It brings together many pr practitioners globally.

¹⁶ Ibid

According to the PRSK website "Kenya's public relations industry is yet to receive the recognition it deserves although it has evolved both in depth and width. Whereas public relation is a respected and lucrative industry in other parts of the world a lot has been done to make the PR industry in Kenya a highly respected and prestigious profession"

2.1.2 Public Relations Society of Kenya (PRSK) SWOT

analysis

A SWOT analysis carried out by PRSK recently revealed the strengths as;

1. Public relation is now being adopted by more organization.
2. Relevant at this point in time when community social responsibility (CSR) is taking root in Kenya.
3. Other professions like marketing and advertising are integrating public relations in their communication plans.

Weaknesses.

1. Public relation is not seen as a vital tool by some organizations.
2. PRSK has low membership subscription

Opportunities.

1. Public relations is a fast growing profession in Kenya.
2. More organizations are beginning to make use of public relations.
3. More students are willing to pursue a career in public relation.

⁷ <http://7acronyms.thefreedictionary.com/Public+Relations+Society+of+Kenya>

Threats.

1. Mistaken belief that public relation can be guided or replaced by marketing and advertising.
2. Misconception about the public relations profession.
3. Affiliation of public relations practitioners to other bodies.⁸

2.1.3 Enrolment of government PROs in PRSK

Many gaps exist in the profession of PR in Kenya. In his New Year message in January 2008 the PRSK national chairman Mr. Peter Mutie said, "...in collaboration with the Public Relation Institute of South Africa (PRISA) we are exploring the implementation process of a professional accreditation system. The accreditation system will provide the much needed streamlining of professional standards in public relation in Kenya in the line with global practices."⁹

On September 29th 2008 the government of Kenya took a bold move towards entrenching professionalism in public relations and communications management in the public service by facilitating enrollment of 93 public relations and communication officers in the Public Relations Society of Kenya.

The move is expected that as member of PRSK the public officers will have access to local and global best practices and engage more closely with the private sector. As member of PRSK the public officers will have access to local and global best practices and engage more closely with the private sector.

Information and communication minister Hon. Samuel Poghio speaking at the enrollment ceremony said "...this is part my ministry's effort to professionalize the PR practice in government to realize effective and efficient public communication"¹⁰ he further said " ...the world century and it technology is a world of ceaseless and seamless communication. This is the age of persuasion, the epoch of PR and communication. Therefore the state, which has always prided itself on being the great communicator, has no option but to expand, enhance and entrench its PR and communication capacities and performance."¹¹

At the occasion while receiving the public officer's PRSK chairman Mr. Peter Mutie "said government PR practitioners should be placed at strategic levels in the government hierarchy to effectively support public communication and integration."¹¹

"This in strategic communication implies that top management must decentralize the roles of the PR office to allow on officer discharge duties as articulated through the service charter. The challenge however comes when drawing a line between senior level and low level responsibilities. And this is where the importance of PRSK membership comes in".¹³

⁸ <http://acronyms.thefreedictionary.com/Public+Relations+Society+of+Kenya>

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ Ibid

¹¹ Ibid

¹² Ibid

¹³ <http://acronyms.thefreedictionary.com/Public+Relations+Society+of+Kenya>

He further said, " communication between the government and the citizens is a basic right forming the basis of social contract between the government and its citizen" he noted that PRSK planned to develop specific programme for the public service communication officers to enable them discharge their communication responsibilities more effectively.¹⁴

During the Public Relation Society of Kenya 2008 Gala night and Awards ceremony held at the Nairobi National Museum. Kenya's Vice President Kalonzo Musyoka who was the chief guest underscored the critical role the public relations officers played in promoting the interests of any organization.

The VP said the government had strengthened the capacity of the department of information and public communications by having PR officers in various ministries.

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The VP said the officer's are strategically positioned in top organs of decision making to facilitate effective communication of government programmes.

"This is in realization that we need to inject energy and vibrancy in the manner we approach PR as a critical tool for connecting with the public and embrace private sector method of doing business with emphasis on transparency and accountability" ", he said.

¹⁴ <http://acronyms.thefreedictionary.com/Public+Relations+Society+of+Kenya>

¹⁵ <http://iprghana.com/?q=node/18>

PR is a serious business which if properly incorporated at every level of decision making can go a long way to prevent some unfortunate events that arise when PR input is either ignored or not sought at all"¹⁶, said the VP.

He said the government was planning to table the freedom of information bill in parliament which when passed to law will facilitate access of information to the public and make government officers more accountable to the public.

2.1.4 Reputation Management.

In a study conducted by Hutton James and others in 2001 it says an empirical study of fortune 500 companies suggest that "reputation management" is gaining ground as a driving philosophy behind corporate public relations whether the phenomenon is a trend or a fad is not clear, given the lack of consensus in defining reputation, the instability and questionable validity of reputation measures and unanswered questions about when and how reputation can be "managed". Besides reputation management, corporate public relations departments in the study embraced a wide variety of other definitions of their functions suggesting that public relations continues to have great in defining itself.(Hutton 2001)¹⁷

In the Hutton study it was revealed that there was noticeable absence of any significant body of research concerning what corporations are actually doing in the way of adopting reputation management as a guiding philosophy. Many of the academic studies that have

¹⁶ Ibid

focuses on corporations reputation management activities have tended to simply assume that organizations are moving towards a reputation management perspective, redefining traditional public relations and communications activities as reputation management. (Hutton 2001).

Davis and Miles for example found little or no "reputation management" terminology in job titles or departments and very little connection between reputation management theory and the reality of organizations. They simply assumed that reputation management existed and was a growing function within the organizations studied despite the fact that only a small minority of respondents described that function as reputation management. (Hutton 2001).

" Reputation management if it is to emerge as a significant business function clearly rests on a foundation of what is traditionally termed as " public relations" which in recent decades has become known commonly in a corporate context as "corporate affairs" "corporate relations" and similar terms in some respects the introduction of reputation management" as a potential business function has further complicated what was already a serious identity crisis in terms of public relations ability or willingness to define itself in a consistent manner"^s (Hutton 2001).

A historical review of public relation definitions suggest that public relations practitioners and scholar have put forth an extraordinary number of definitions and

¹⁷ http://www.accessmylibrary.com/com2/summary_0286_10134953JTM

¹⁸ Ibid

metaphor for the field including "lawyer in the court of public opinion", engineer of public consent", "motivator", persuader, clarifier, lubricant, catalyst, interpreter, devils advocate, educator". Creator or manipulation of symbols" "news engineer" "publicity doctor", "perception manager", "middle person advocate relationship manager and reputation manager" while the debate continues some scholar and practitioners have expressed strong misgivings about elevating reputation management above all other definitions on the list.¹⁹

The rise of "reputation management", "perception management" and "image management" appear to be on an ominous trend for the field, partly because they have come into favour for most of the wrong reasons.

The tendency of managers who lack training in public relations to think in superficial terms like "image" and "perception", the large number of major public relation firms that are owned by advertising agencies who tend to be more comfortable with such terms and the desire to bury the negative connotations of "public relations" once and for all.²⁰ (Hutton 2001).

The continued lack of clarity of the mandate and the role of public relations in organizations have complicated the general perception of PR as a profession and its practitioners.

¹⁹ Ibid

¹⁶ Ibid

David Finn and others have pointed out that concepts such as "reputation" and "image" are not generally something that can be managed directly, but are omnipresent and the global result of a firm's or individual's behaviour.

Attempting to manage one's reputation might be likened to trying to manage one's own popularity (a rather awkward, superficial and potentially self-defeating endeavor)¹ (Hutton 2001).

On the other hand some advocates see reputation management as a guiding new force or paradigm for the entire field in keeping with Warren Buffet's admonition that losing reputation is a far greater sin for an organization than losing money".*¹ (Hutton 2001).

2.1.5 Future of PR in Africa

Colin church who helped found the Public Relations Society of Kenya (PRSK) in an article entitled "which way for PR in Africa" published in the inaugural public relations journal "PR Arena" in 2001 is quoted to have written, "today the public relations industry is making great strides. There are few public companies of consequence, which do not employ either in-house practitioners and or consultancies. Many employ both and now fully appreciate the role both play in projection corporate reputation, getting the message right over issues and crisis and moving the marketing message forward. The government

²¹ Ibid

¹⁶ Ibid

appreciates still only in some ministries that if they cannot get that message across they are losing the political high ground".²³

The issue of public relations profession today seemingly not getting the recognition it deserves stem from a tradition of how the profession evolved in Kenya.

In an article entitled "The Transition of PR in Kenya" Shabanji Opukah wrote "Back in the 1980s and 1990s Kenyans public relations practitioners were no more than purveyors of suitcases and briefcases for their bosses. The practitioners and their bosses alike basked in the glory of the time, least concerned about any professional challenges beyond them. It was a classical era of foolishly resting on one's laurels and staying in one's comfort zone with minimum if any worries. The media was limited the number of journalists small their seniority and qualifications limited even in some cases highly dubious. The main preoccupation of the practitioner seemed to be placing or at worst killing stories in the media. In a way, to the shame of the few professionals in their midst some of the PR practitioners of that era were not too dissimilar to mere hirelings of any propaganda organization".²⁴

"Many chief executives were erroneously led to believe that the number one job of their PR managers was organizing great parties and ensuring a picture with an appropriate caption appears in the papers the following day or day after that.

²³ PR arena issue No. I November 2001 pg 11

³⁴ PR arena issue nol November 2001 pg 5

A two minutes slot on the only TV station which was and still is government owned was considered the equal of a gold medal at the Olympics"⁵

"In the circumstances, it was not surprising that such important elements of the PR manager's job such as role profiles, performance indicators and role objectives, people leadership and resource management were either relegated to the back burner or totally ignored altogether.

In some cases it was alleged that it was much better to do the bosses, own personal bidding including where directed even pimping than to concern oneself with the professional rigours of business strategy, business planning, people management, resource management and strategy advice to the board. (PR Arena 2001).

Opukah further writes "PR in Kenya is no long the preserve of graduates of journalism or members from the fourth estate. We have seen a number of people from other disciplines come in. They include administrators, marketing advertising managers, human resource managers, finance managers. This is a huge credit to PR a recognition that PR is worth of practice by people from what are considered to be better established disciplines. "⁶

Colin Church is further quoted in article in PR Arena 2001 a "for the practitioners out there. I see a very bright future. We must increasingly become the managers of

²⁵ Ibid

²⁶ PR arena issue no I November 2001 pg 8

corporate communication and meaningful internal communication. We must bring the importance of communication skills at the centre stage for every management decision. If we do that we will prove to be cost effective corporate team players.' ²⁷

The world renown pioneer in Public relations Arthur W. Page who at one time edited the *Worlds Work Magazine* and other periodicals when he accepted to become vice president of American Telephone and Telegraph company he at the outset made it clear that he would accept only on the condition that he was not to serve as a publicity man. that he would have a voice in policy and the company's performance would be the determinant of its public reputation.

Page's philosophy is summed up in this statement:

"All businesses in a democratic country begin with public permission and exist by public approval. If that be true, it follows that business should be cheerfully willing to tell the public what its policies are , what it is doing , and what it hopes to do . This seems practically a duty"²⁸.

The practice of PR in Kenya and the world at large is complicated by the fact that a sizeable number of persons practice the profession but cannot be accounted for as registration to the existing local and international associations is largely optional.

²⁷ PR Arena. Page 13.

²⁸ Cutlip et al page 114

"The number of practitioners continues to increase as organizational social, economic and political forces change the role and structure of the function world wide."²⁹.

"Different organizational titles and job descriptions however make accurate counts impractical even within the United States. What one organization calls "Marketing communication" may actually describe a public relations position. What another organization calls a "public relations representative" would be more accurately titled "Sales" or "Customer Service representative". Little agreement on the underlying concept and inconsistent use of titles complicate attempts to determine the size and the scope of the field"³⁰.

2.1.6 Considerations for PR professionals in the advanced economies

As the Kenyans situation grapple with issues of appreciation and recognition of the profession other more advanced economies have different scenarios in a survey conducted by the US departments of labour in 1991 it says in part "Many experienced practitioners earn \$100,000. \$ 200,000 or more. They typically work for multibillion-dollar corporations where top public relations executives often are corporate officers, either elected or appointed. These officers typically receive stock options bonus or profit

sharing checks and lucrative retirement programs in addition to six figure salaries. Fringe benefits and perquisites and considerable value to their positions. Employers do not frivolously dispense high salaries or extra benefits however.When time Warner, New York hired a new senior vice president to head the public relations function one of the newsletter reported a 'compensation package in the hundreds of thousands' The competition for management level talents is so intense that specialized search firms (sometimes called 'head hunters') are retained to identify, screen , and recruit finalist for top public relations positions""¹

In an article carried by PR Arena authored by Tom Kwanya. it says in part "....one thing about public relations in Kenya is clear: the practice and profession has not received the recognition it deserves. This issue is so grave that Mr. Peter Mutie, the PRSK chairman confesses.that, his interaction with many Kenyan corporate and political leaders as well as the public at large has revealed that they do not understand PR. Neither do they recognize it as a profession."

2.1.7 The ideal Terms of Reference for PR professionals.

When we talk of the issue of recognition it is embedded in misconstrued roles of public relations by the employers who ordinarily deviate from the ideal terms of reference for public relations professionals. The ideal terms of reference for public relations professionals are as follows:

²⁹ Cutlip et al Page 26.

³⁰ Cutlip et al, Page 27..

³¹ Ibid page 31.

³² PR Arena November -March 2009 Pace! 8.

1. Writing and editing: Composing print and broadcast news releases, feature stories, employee and external news letters, correspondence, shareholder and annual reports, speeches brochures, film and slide shows, scripts, trade publications articles, institutional advertisements and product and technical collateral materials.
2. Media relations and placement: Contacting news media, magazines, Sunday supplements, freelance writers and trade publications with the intent of getting them published or broadcast news and features about or originated by the organization. Responding to media requests for information verification of stories and access to authoritative sources.
3. Research: Gathering information about public opinion trends, emerging issues, political climate, media coverage, concerns of consumers and environmental special interest groups and so forth to plan programs responsive to its publics and problem situations. Monitoring program implementation and assessing program impact to evaluate program effectiveness.
4. Management and administration: Programming and planning in collaboration with other managers determining needs, establishing priorities, defining publics, setting goals and objectives and developing strategies. Administering personnel budget and program schedules.
5. Counseling: advising top management on social, political and regulatory environment, consulting with the management team on how to respond to crises; and working with key decision makers to devise strategies for managing organizational response to critical and sensitive issues.

6. Special events: Arranging and managing news conferences, conventions, open houses, ribbons cutting and grand openings anniversary celebrations, fund raising events, visiting dignitaries, contests, award programs and other special observances.

7. Speaking: Appearing before groups, coaching others for speaking assignments and managing a speakers' bureau to provide platforms for the organization before important audiences.

8. Production: Creating communication using multimedia knowledge and skills, including art, typography, photography, layout, and computer desktop publishing; audio visual presentations

9. Training: Preparing executives and other designated spokespersons to deal with media and other public appearances. Helping introduce changes in organizational culture, policies, structures and procedures.

10. Contact: Meeting, greetings and hosting people important to the organization. Serving as the liaison with media, community and stakeholder groups both internal and external.³³ (Cutlip 1994)

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In a similar study, a content analysis of daily Nation between 1997 and 2007, conducted by Tom Kwanya, it revealed that " PR job description is wide and lacks specification that would make the holder's appraisal feasible . This indicated that the practitioners are viewed as non professionals who do not do anything that is jacks of all trade and masters of none"³⁴

³³ Cutlip et al Pages 33-34.

³⁴ PR Arena 2009 Page 19.

The same study further showed that, "PR jobs exist as part of other positions like communication and marketing and recently legal. This indicates that these organizations do not perceive PR as a full time job worthy of operational autonomy that must be combined with another to make business sense"

The role of public relations practitioner can be viewed in four prongs; Communication technician, Expert prescriber, Communication facilitator and Problem-solving facilitator. The low recognition of recognition for the public relations persons in Kenya is at times attributed to the technician mindset adopted by majority of the professionals hence impinging on their drive to compete for the limited managerial positions.

A study conducted in Canada by the Canadian public relations society 42% of the public relations people rated themselves in the dominant role of communication technicians, 16% as expert prescribers, 15% as problem solving facilitators and 12% as communication facilitators.³⁶

In the study high scores on the communication technician role tend to stand alone. For the other three roles, however high scores on one tend to go with high scores on the other two. In other words practitioners whose dominant roles are expert prescriber, communication facilitator or problem solving process facilitator also tend to score relatively high on the other two roles. The high correlations among the three roles suggest that they go together to form a single complex role. If so, the simplest way to describe the dominant roles in practice is as either technician or manager.

³⁵ PR Arena, 2009 Page 19.

³⁶ Ibid page 44.

Dr. Joseph T. Nolan one of the worlds foremost public relations practitioner in an interview asked what are the most significant challenges that confront the public relation profession he said "gaining managements confidence by providing high quality advice and mature judgment, by focusing on results rather than on activities, and by being able to measure the results with greater precision than is now being done"¹

He said "in order to get the first job a student must be familiar with the carpentry of communications. But to advance on the job, he or she must demonstrate an ability to analyze, reason and make judgment"

On the greatest threats to the future of public relations Dr. Nolan said "inept practitioners men and women who don't understand thoroughly the enterprise they are trying to represent, or the most effective ways of carrying out that representation"³⁹

Dr. Nolan's prediction for the future of public relations profession was that "major organizations will have a public relations practitioner very near the top, and they will weigh every major decision in light of its public relations impact, just as they do now with respect to its business and financial impact"⁴⁰

³⁷ Seitel F.P 1995. Page 22.

³⁸ Ibid Pg 22

³⁹ Ibid pg 23

2.1.8 Theoretical Framework

This study has been developed from the systems theory. Majority of human endeavor including professions are embedded on systems and therefore the issue of recognition and appreciation of the public relations professionals can be viewed through the spectrum of systems within the work organizations, and systems of thought and or stereotypes held by individuals put in positions of authority.

2.1.9 Systems theory

The ancient Indian story about three blind men and the elephant illustrates this theory very well, three blind men are asked to describe an elephant.

The first one feels the trunk and says an elephant is round narrow flexible like a snake.

The second one feels the middle section of the elephant and says an elephant is like a wall.

The third person feels the tail and says an elephant is like a piece of rope.

Who among the three men is right? is it the first person, the second or the third?

The elephant is greater than its parts. The system is greater than its parts.

2.10 Definition of systems theory

Rapport defines a system as an "entity, which can maintain some organization in the face of change from within, or without".

⁴⁰ Ibid Pg 23

Ryan defines a system as " a set of objects or elements in interaction to achieve a specific goal".

A system according to systems theory is a set of interacting elements or parts or components where change in one could affect in one way or another one. the element or all the other elements in the systems. It goes further to explain that society is a set of interconnected parts which together form the whole.

2.11 What is the function of a system?

The function of any system is to convert or process energy. Information or materials into a product or outcome for use within the system or outside of the system or both. If a system is to survive, it must save some of the outcome or product to maintain the system.

Systems theory is an "interdisciplinary" field that studies the properties of system as a whole. William Ross Ashby founded the theory by Ludwig Von Bertalanffy in the 1950s particularly during discussions at the Macy Conferences. The theory brought together theoretical concepts and principles from "ontology", "philosophy of science", "physics", "biology" and "engineering" and later found applications in numerous fields including "organizational theory", "management", "psychotherapy", "family systems therapy", "economics" among others.

"Cybernetics", is a closely related field. In recent times "systems science and complex system" have been used as synonyms.

Talcott Parsons who was a functionalist looks at the system. He says any social system has four functional prerequisites:

- Adaptation
- Goal attainment
- Integration
- Latent pattern maintenance

Each of these components that are referred to as functions thus functionalism theory. He says each function has a critical role to play for the survival of a system.

"Adaptation is the system's ability to exist in the physical or organic environment (which might harbor forces for change) with a minimum of change in its structure.

A goal attainment is the ability of the system to direct the activities of its individual members in a concerted effort to achieve the system's goals.

Integration refers to how well the different individual units of the social system work together.

Latent pattern maintenance refers to how well the system can maintain its cultural patterns or values"⁴¹

⁴¹ Tan Alexis Pg 368.

2.12 What the theory says.

Systems theory focuses on organization and interdependence of relationships. A system is composed of regularly interacting or interdependent groups of activities and parts the emergent relationship(s) of which forms the whole.

Part of systems theory is a method for understanding the dynamic behaviour of complex systems. The basis of the method is the recognition that the structure of any systems sometimes delayed relationships among its components is often just as important in determining its behaviour as the individual concepts themselves.

Systems theory has also been developed within sociology the most notable scholar in the area are Niklas Luhmann. The theory is also fundamental to organizational theory as organization are made up of complex structures and resources both human and financial that are set to attain certain goals.

Bele H. Banathy argues that "the benefit of human kind" is the purpose of science".

2.13 Understanding general systems theory

System theory was developed by biologist Ludwig Von Bertalanffy in 1936. He felt the need for a theory to guide research in several disciplines because he saw striking parallels among them. His idea was that if multiple disciplines focused their research and theory

development efforts they would be able to identify laws and principles, which would apply to many systems. This would allow scholars and scientists to make sense of system characteristics such as wholeness differentiation order, equifinality progression and others. With common framework scientists could better communicate their findings with each other and build upon each other's work. He believed that over time, what was discovered would come to be applicable to life in general⁴² (Luhmann 1994)

More than 50 years later the work in understanding systems has evolved to the point that we incorporate many of the concepts into our everyday language. We speak of systems like the family system, information system, political system, economic system, social system, and communication system.

It is therefore, imperative to understand that no single object of the system can stand in isolation. In the work place for instance in an industrial system, if the sales department receives an order of 500 trousers and commits to deliver in a day or so time, then the finance department fails to release finances to procure raw materials in good time thus the production department only produces 50 trousers the system will have failed in its endeavor to achieve the organizational objectives of making profits.

Baran Stanley J and Dennis K. Denis in mass communication theory (2006) define system as " a set of interrelated part that can influence and control one another through

⁴² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Niklas_Luhmann

communication and feedback loops". They add that a system consists of a set of parts that are interlinked so that changes in one part induce changes in other parts"⁴³.

Sheila Steinberg, in communication studies (1945) states that system's theory regards the organization as a whole (system) which is made up of separate parts each of which has a relationship to all the other parts and to the environment in which the organization exists. All the parts in the system are dependent on one another in the performance of organizational activities. Any change in one part inevitably affects the other system components⁴⁴.

All the parts of the system must therefore coordinate their activities and functions to remain in a state of equilibrium (balance).

Systems, Baran and Davis say can be goal-oriented; the components are connected so as to achieve a certain goal. So if there is a change or alteration in the component then the overall goal is affected.

Electronic engineers who developed systems to monitor their environment exclusively used systems theory. The engineers were interested in designing systems in which communication link functioned efficiently and transmitted information accurately. System's theory is therefore closely related to engineering sub-field called cybernetics.

•"Baran Stanley J. and Denis K. Davis-Mass Communication Theory (USA) 2006

⁴⁴ Sheila Steinberg; Communication studies; An introduction; Cape Town, 1995.

Cybernetics investigates how communication links between various parts of a machine to enable it to perform very complex tasks. Cybernetics became very important during the World War II because of its use in designing sophisticated weapons.

Organizations world over strive to achieve certain set objectives that guarantee them of their future existence. These objectives vary from organization to organization depending on area of industry it is engaged in.

Ordinarily the personnel peg the success of such endeavour on understanding of the set goals. Each person in their various departments need to understand their role and must perform optimally if the overall organizational goal is to be attained.

In the event that certain departments are not facilitated to think freely and to strategize at their own level, the resultant effect is that the organization or system is suffocated making the realization of organizational objectives a pipe dream.

All departments are important and in an ideal situation none can claim to be more important than the other, as the inputs of all are required to generate the "whole".

In work places, to come home to the discourse of this paper in some organizations PR departments are not given a free hand to do research, take action, communicate and evaluate the organizational communication programmes.

This department at times is tacked in marketing, sales or it is simply a desk in the administration office. This lack of recognition for PR as a critical department that is supposed to discharge its duties in regard to planned organizational communication normally stifles the system.

The terms of reference for PR persons in a system if not spelled out correctly as stipulated in the ideal terms of reference again causes collision between the PR people and the management thus bogging down the system.

Relegation of PR people to very junior positions in the organizational hierarchy causes a backlash of the top-down communication of policies that quite often bounces back to the top without credible action as the PR people are not involved in the decision making process. This proves not to be cost effective, time wasting and it demoralize the PR people who instead of managing the systems reputation, spend time fighting and trying to survive within the hostile organizational systems.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with data collection procedures and methods of analysis. Specifically the chapter involves a description of the research site, the scope of the study, the target population, and the sample size, sampling method, administration of questionnaires, data collection, analysis and presentation.

3.2 Research Design

This research was conducted using secondary data. The study design used both qualitative and quantitative research approaches. The research approach was instrumental in the establishment of the level of recognition, appreciation and understanding of the public relations mandate in corporate management.

This approach was forthright and objective thus enabling the researcher to measure recognition levels and other underlying perceptions that contribute to the situation as it is. The research employed the use of content analysis method where newspapers Advertisements were studied and questionnaires administered on them where qualitative and quantitative data was extracted. The content analysis method was important as it enabled in-depth observation and detailed description of the public relations jobs terms of reference as put down by requesting potential employers. It also was important in revealing the quantities of Public Relations jobs available in the Kenyan job market. The

data collected was analyzed to provide information used to describe and interpret the relationship between levels of recognition of Public Relations as a management function and the number of Public Relation jobs available in the Kenyan job market.

3.3 Research Site

This study was carried out on the Nation and the Standard newspapers that were published between 1st January 2007 and 31st December 2008 (two years). Systematic random sampling was used to select the Nation and The Standard Newspapers since they are the leading newspapers in Kenya and they are popular with job advertisements from corporations and government.

3.4 Target Population

The quantitative target populations constituted 1,460 Nation and The standard newspapers published by the nation media group and The standard group between 1st January 2007 and 31st December 2008.

The sample size was established through the use of the following formula

$$\frac{nfN}{1+n}N$$

Where

nf=the desired sample size (when the population is less than 10,000)

n =the desired sample size (when the population is more than 10.000)

N = the estimate of the population size⁴⁵

A sample of 146 Newspapers which represented 10% of the accessible population, "for descriptive studies, ten percent of accessible population is enough ..." (Gay 1981).

3.5 Sampling Technique.

The sample was again drawn by use of purposive sampling method to include newspapers published on Wednesdays and Fridays as most corporations and government are known to place job advertisements during the two days of the week as the newspapers are perceived to have a huge readership.

The unit of analysis was the job advertisement that advertised jobs in public relations and communication in the newspapers, some newspapers had more than two such adverts.

Since the total number of Newspapers available and accessible within the scope outlined above were 208, a systematic random sampling method was used to obtain 146 Newspapers that included 168 Nation and 32 The Standard Newspapers. Out of the sample of 146, a total of 122 newspapers carried an advertisement or two of a Public Relations job opportunity.

⁴⁵ Mugenda Olive M and Mugenda Abe! G; **Research Methods: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches: Acts press, Nairobi, 2003. Pg 44.**

⁴⁶ Gay, L. R. 1981 .**Educational Research; Competencies for analysis and Application. Charcles E. Mairill Publishing Company A. Bell & Howell Company Collumbus .Toronto, London.**

3.6 Data Collection.

Raw data was collected through administration of questionnaires on the job advertisements. The research instrument was framed against the ideal terms of reference TOR for public relations professionals thus was able to measure incongruity that existed between the ideal and what the potential employers request for.

The data was both quantitative and qualitative.

3.7 Data Collection Instrument

The method of data collection was by use of questionnaires. The questionnaires were structured in three sections, with section one capturing the details of the publication and the job titles, section two capturing the sector offering the job. section three capturing job requirements (demographics), section four capturing the public relations jobs terms of reference.

3.8 Training of Research Assistants

Researchers must be trained if objective and reliable information is to be obtained. The training included familiarizing the research assistants with the various skills which included in-depth study of job advertisements and effective interrogation of the terms of reference.

The researcher carried out training of the assistants. The researcher and the assistants went through the questionnaire in great detail. A short pilot test (a pre-test) was

conducted jointly where the research instrument was administered on a job advertisement.

The researcher and the assistants did a detailed evaluation of the questionnaire in an effort to identify gaps this was crucial as it greatly determined the out come of the data collection exercise.

The process stuck to strict research protocol and ethics in an effort to improve the integrity and validity of the findings.

3.9 Data Quality Control

The researcher was at hand to constantly cross check filled in questionnaires at random to ensure quality. The filled in instruments (code sheet) were checked for possible errors for consistency, completeness and clarity.

3.10 Data Analysis

Once data was collected it was organized systematically, all questionnaires were numbered in accordance to the dates of the newspapers that were also arranged in ascending order during the time of data collection.

The coding was done on the questionnaire and the raw data was entered into the computer by use of the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS VER 12).

Frequency and correlation tables, graphs and histograms were generated showing the quantities of jobs advertised and recognition levels for public relations professionals in the Kenyan job market among corporate and government.

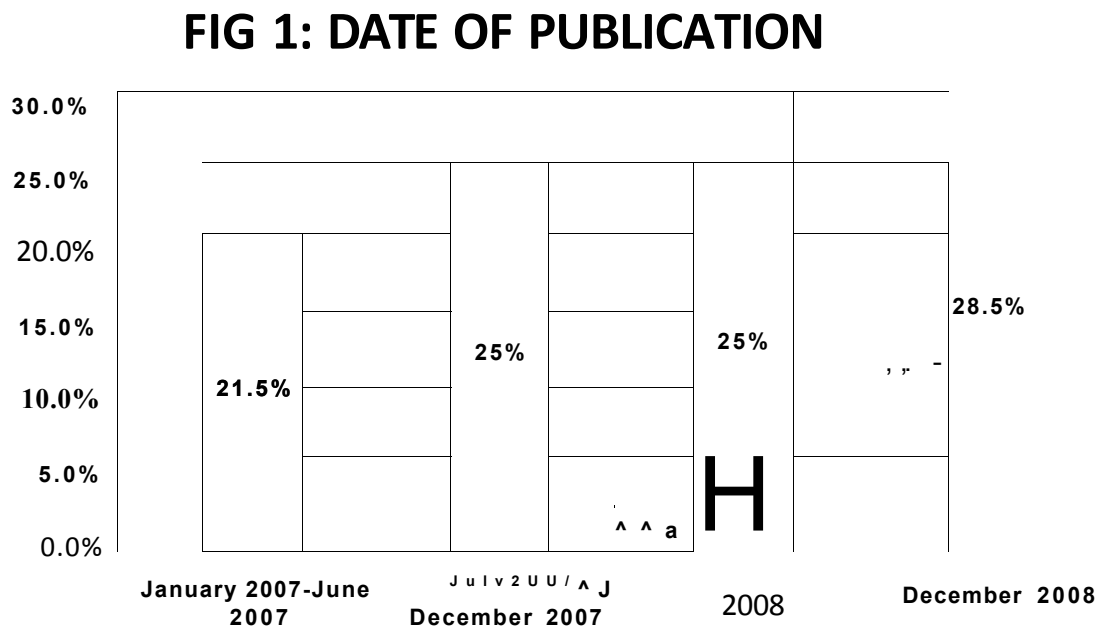
Where applicable pie charts were generated by use of the spreadsheet (Microsoft Excel

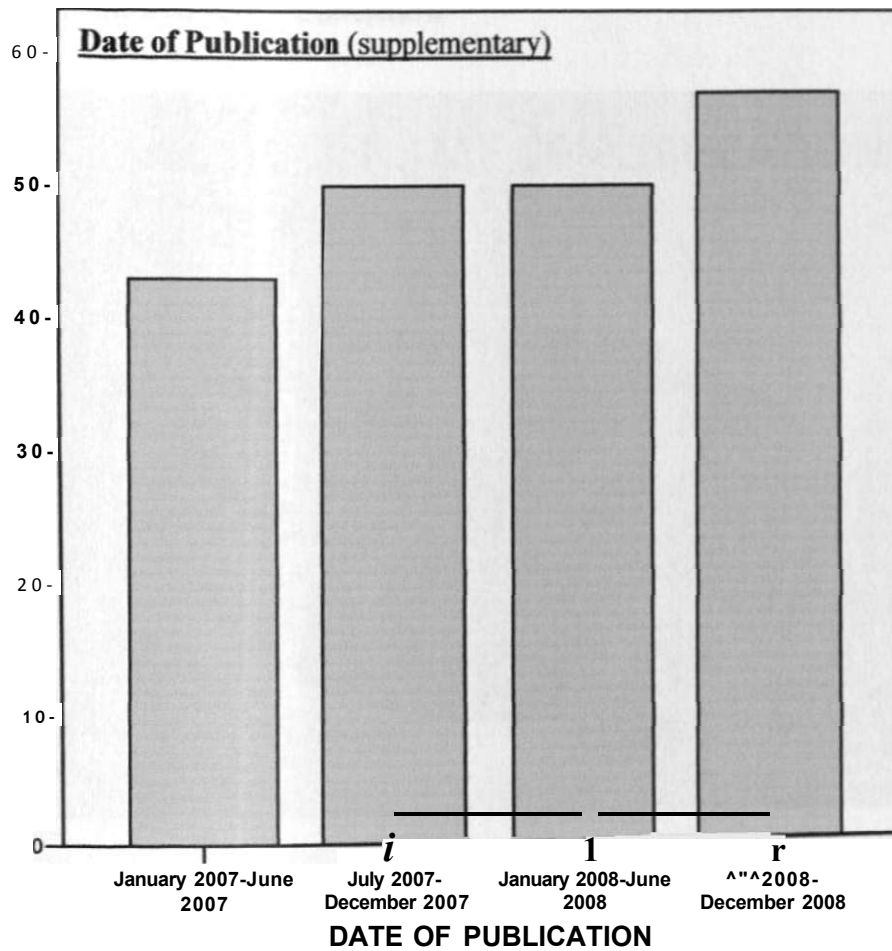
2003)

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 Data findings and presentation

Fig 1: Date of Publication.



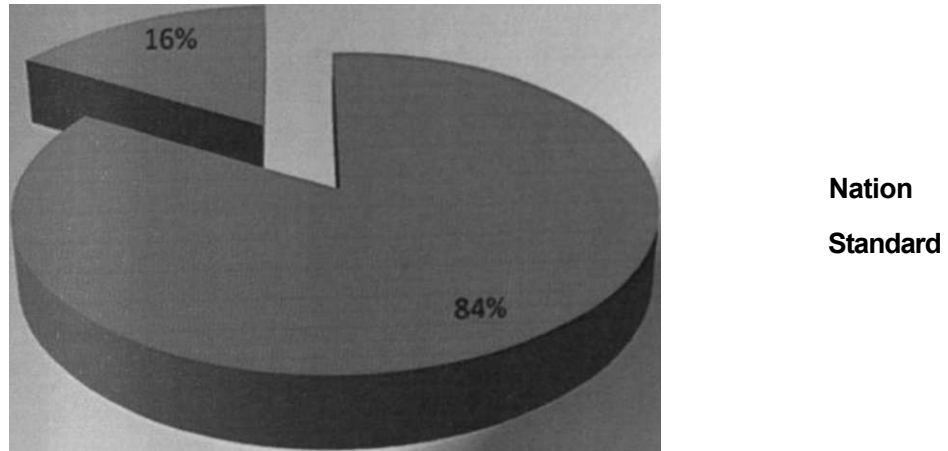


Observation

Of the 200 job advertisements investigated within the period January 1, 2007 and December 31st 2008, 21.5% were in the 1st half of 2007, 25.% in the 2nd half, another 25.% in the first half of 2008 and 28.5% in the last half of 2008. The Last half of 2008 had the highest opportunities

Fig 2: Name of the Publication

FIG 2: NAME OF PUBLICATION



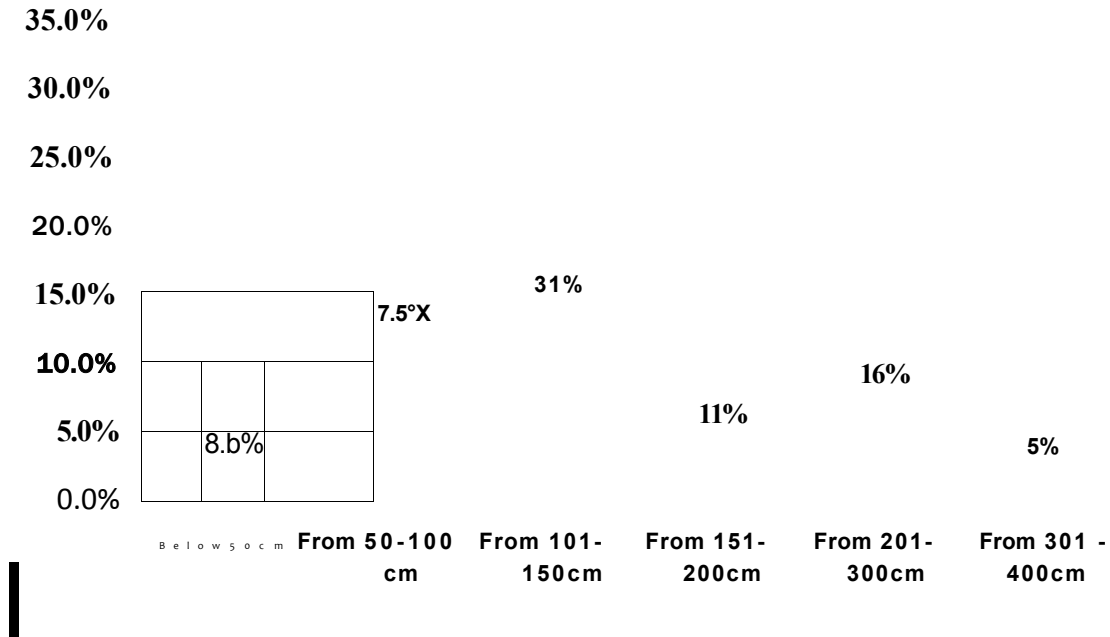
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Observation

In Figure 2, a total of 168 advertisements representing 84% were drawn from The *Nation* while 32 representing 16% were drawn from *The Standard*. These advertisements carried PR job opportunities.

Fig 3: Size of the Advertisement.

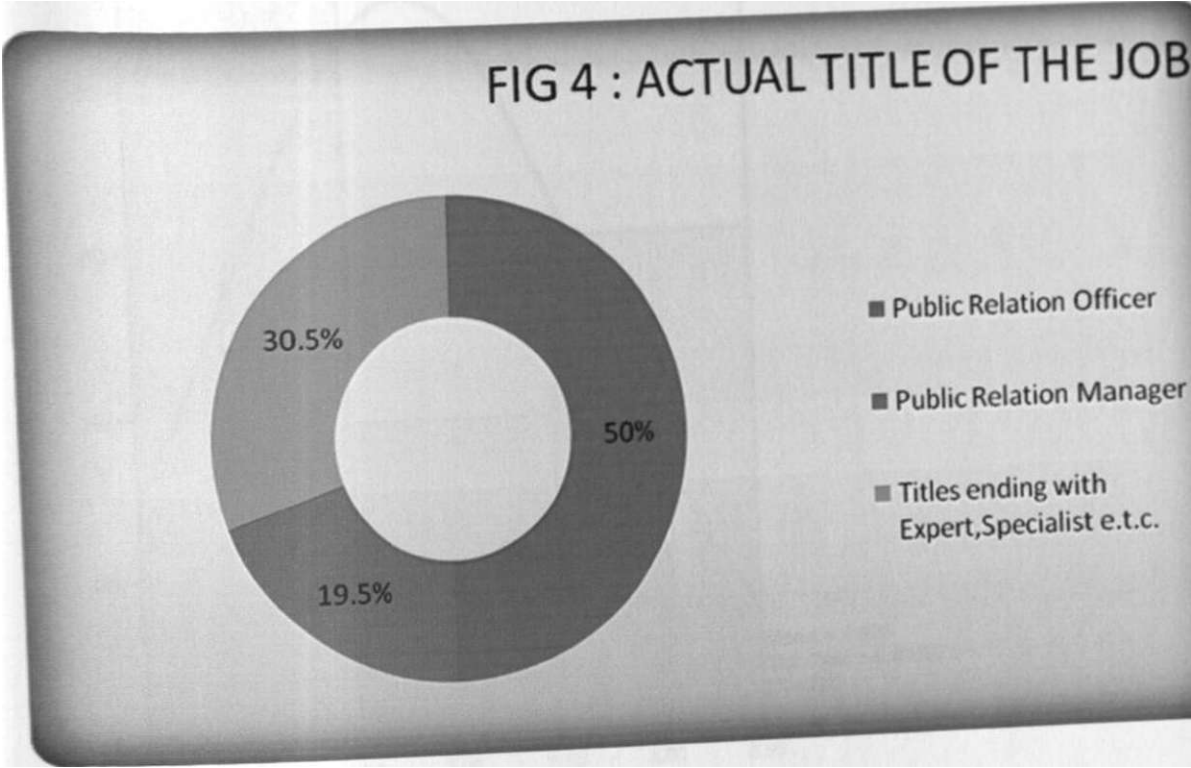
FIG 3: SIZE OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

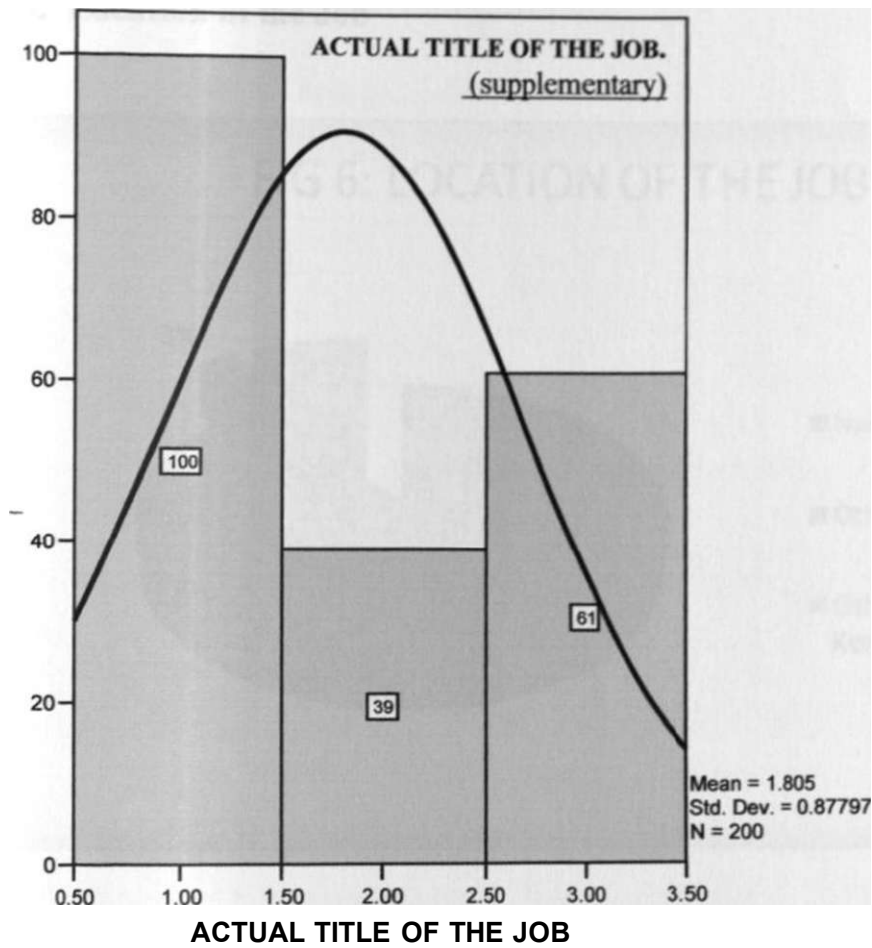


Observation

In table 3, majority of the advertisements measured from 101 to 150 cm², they represented 31% of the total advertisements investigated. 8.5% of the advertisements were below 50 cm² while only 1% were above 400 cm².

Fig 4: Actual Title of the Job





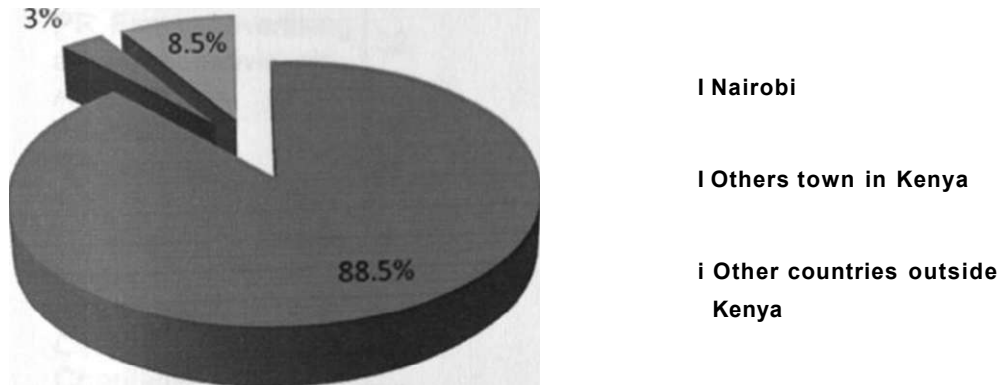
Observation

In figure 4, we observe that 19.5% of the advertisements carried management jobs whose titles were Public Relations Manager. While 50% of the advertised jobs were titled Public Relations Officer. Other titles ended with 'Expert', 'Specialist', 'Executive', 'assistant', 'Director', 'Professional', and 'Coordinator' they represented 30.5%.

Fig 5: Location of the Job

r

FIG 6: LOCATION OF THE JOB



J

Observation

in this figure 88.5% of fee jobs advertised within the 2 year period in both newspapers were in Nairobi, 3% of the jobs opportunities were in other towns in Kenya while 8.5% were in foreign countries

TABLE 1: Sector offering the Job.

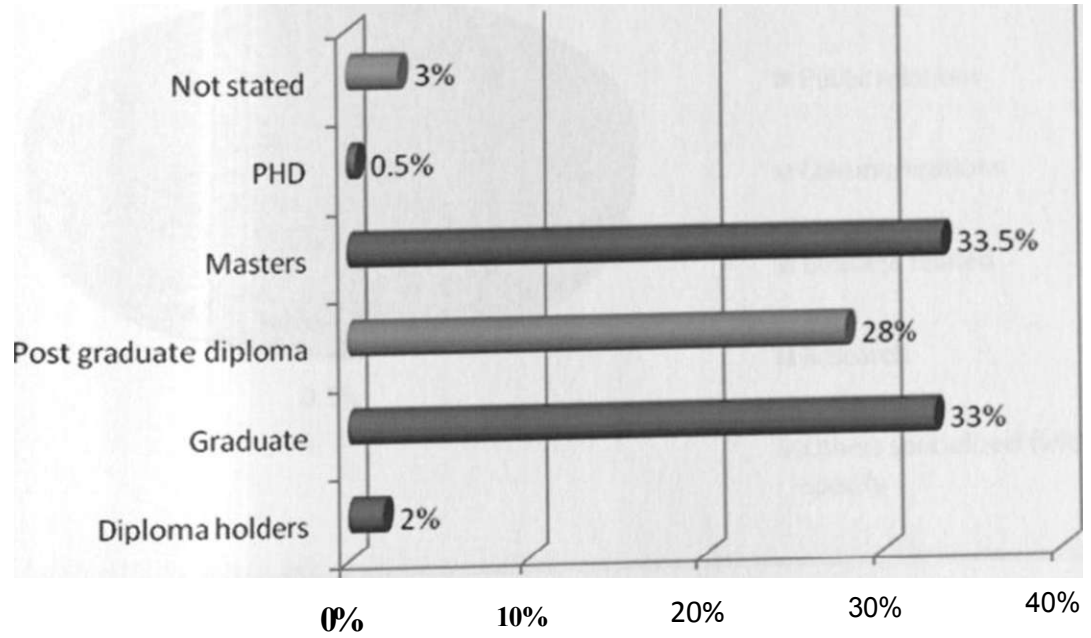
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Corporations, Manufacturing, Industrial	60	30.0
	PR Firms, Advertising agencies, Individuals	32	16.0
	Associations, Foundations, Educational	32	16.0
	Health Care, Hospitals, Clinics, Home	8	4.0
	Government, Local, Central	19	9.5
	Charitable, Religious, Social Welfare org.	42	21.0
	International, Regional organizations	7	3.5
	Total	200	100.0

Observation

In this table, 30% of the jobs opportunities advertised during the period were from corporations, manufacturing, industrial, consumer goods, financial, insurance, media and entertainment sectors. While 21% of the jobs were from the charitable, religious, and social welfare organizations. International organizations had the least opportunities with 3.5%.

Fig 7: Educational Requirements

FIG 7: EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

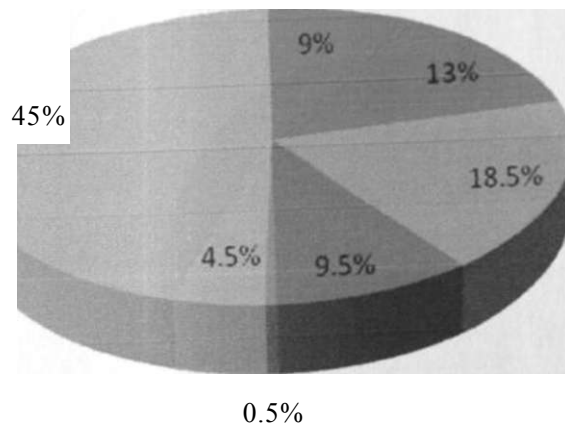


Observation

33.50% of the job adverts required masters education, 33% required graduates with first degree. 2% required diploma education, while 0.5% required PhD education.

Fig 8 WORK EXPERIENCE

FIG 8: WORK EXPERIENCE



- i Journalism
- i Public relations
- i Communications
- Business related
- Research
- Others specialized fields specify

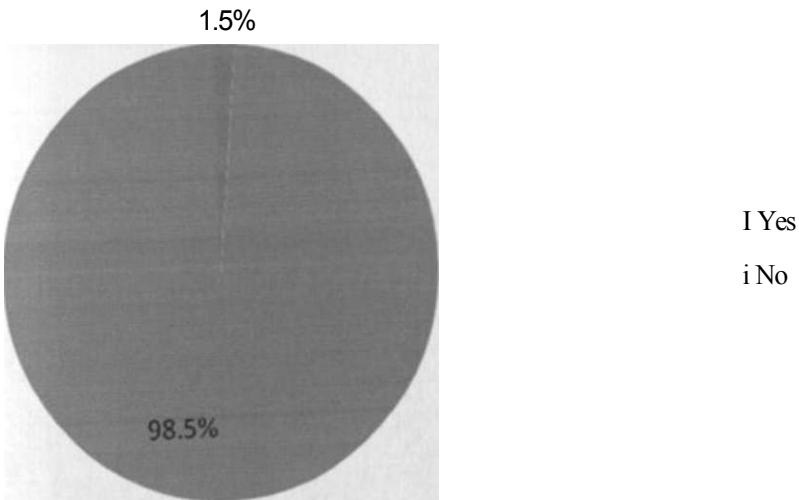
Observation

In this figure, 45% of the advertisements required SKHs in a number of fields including,

• experience in communication, 13% required experience in public relations, 9% required experience in journalism.

FIGURE 9: Gender of Employee

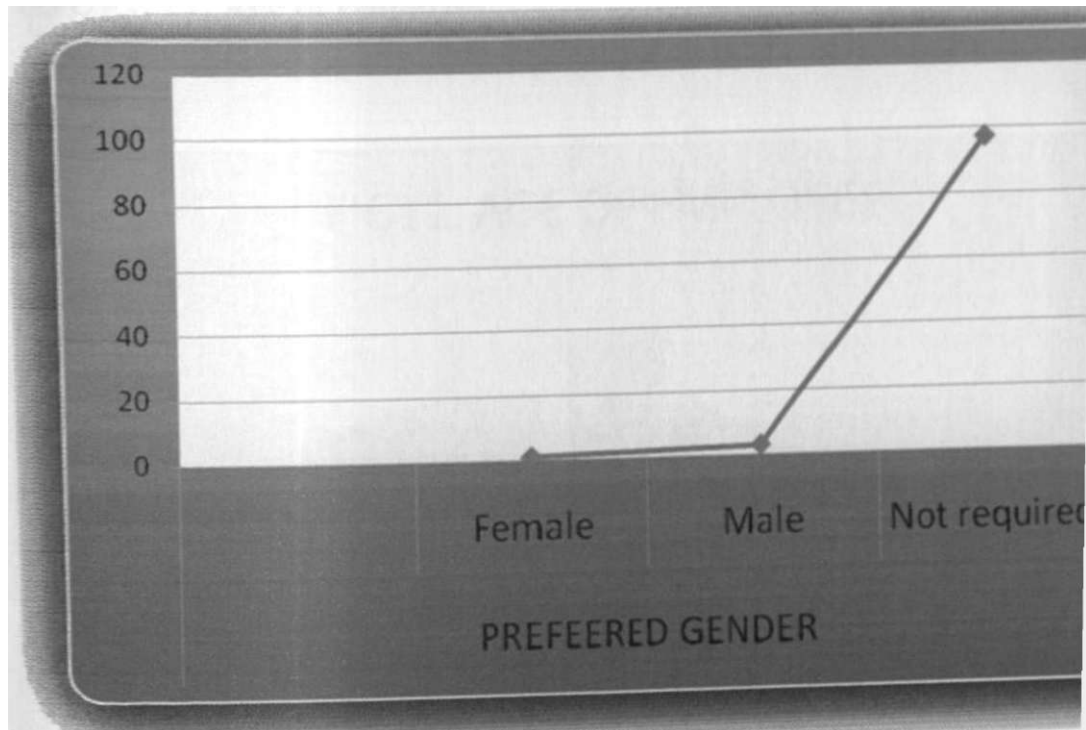
FIG 9: GENDER OF EMPLOYEE



Observation

The figure above, 98% of the **advent** had no specified gender of employee required.

FIGURE 10: Preferred Gender

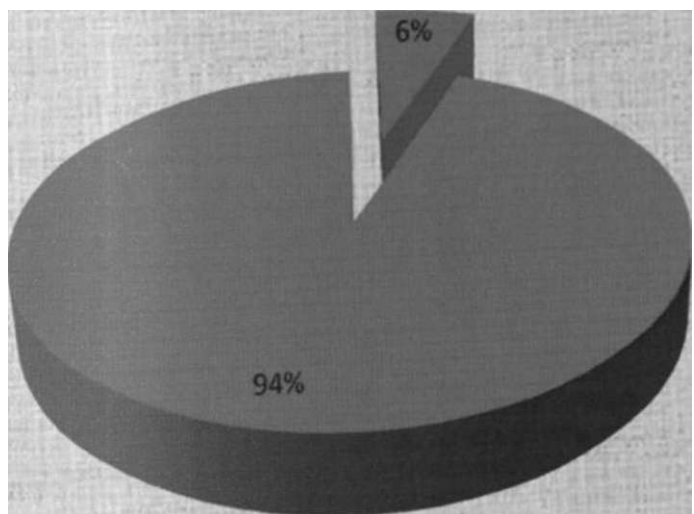


Observation

In the figure above, only one job advertisement required a female while 3 requested males the rest of the advertisements did not ask for a particular gender of the employee sought for.

FIGURE 11: Age of Employee

FIGU: AGE OF EMPLOYEE

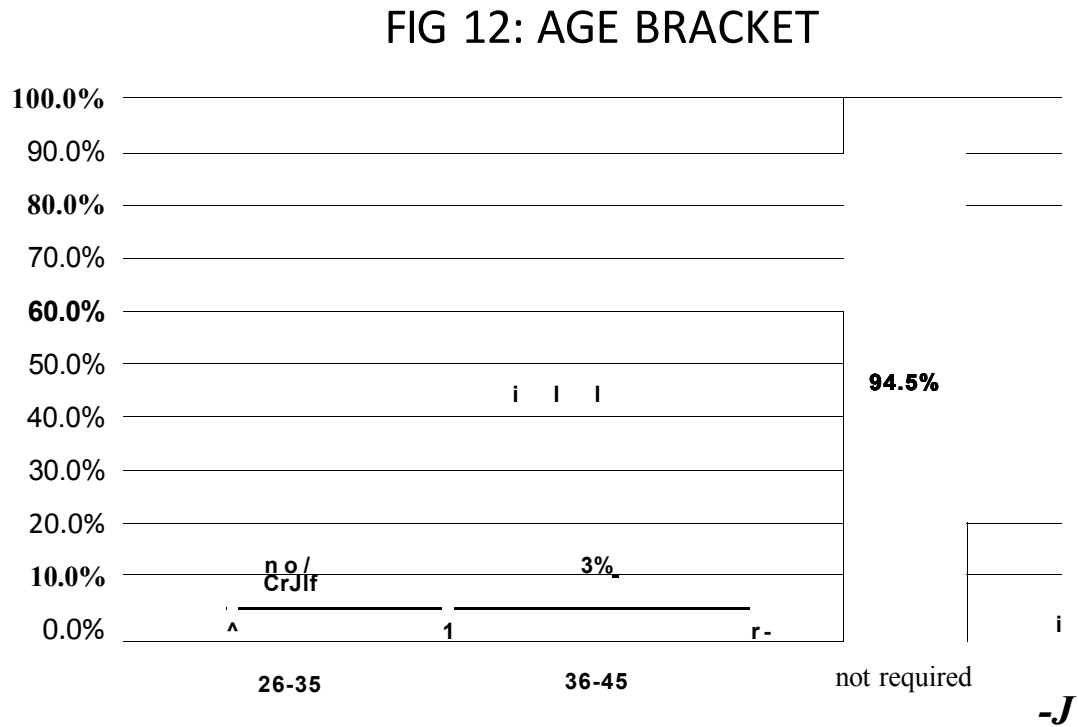


i Yes
I No

Observation

In figure H, only 6% of PR- J* opportunities for a parted age of the employee.

FIGURE 12: Age Bracket



Observation

In Figure 12, Ages 36-45 which represented 3% was most preferable while 26-35 years was second with 2.5%, the balance of 94.5% did not indicate age as a requirement.

FIGURE 13: Work Experience in Years.

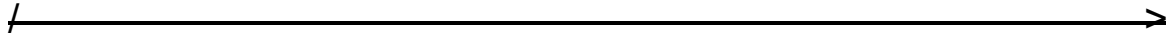
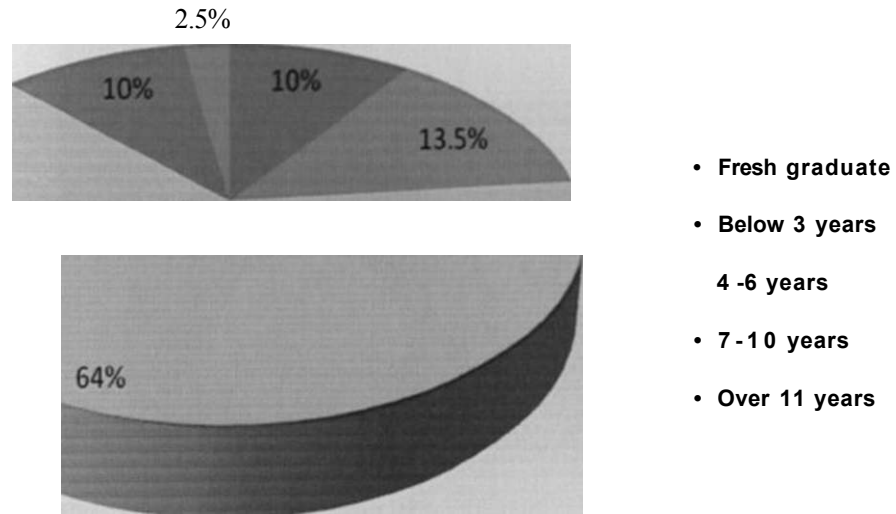


FIG 13: WORK EXPERIENCE IN YEARS



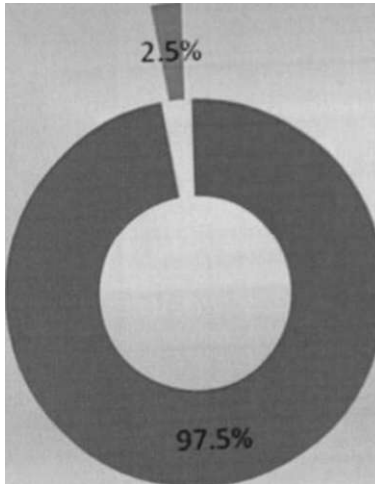
V _____

Observation

In this figure, 64% of the job opportunities required persons with between 4-6 years work experience, 10% required fresh graduates, over 11 years work experience was requested in 2.5% of the opportunities.

FIGURE 14: Writing Skills

FIG 14: WRITING SKILLS

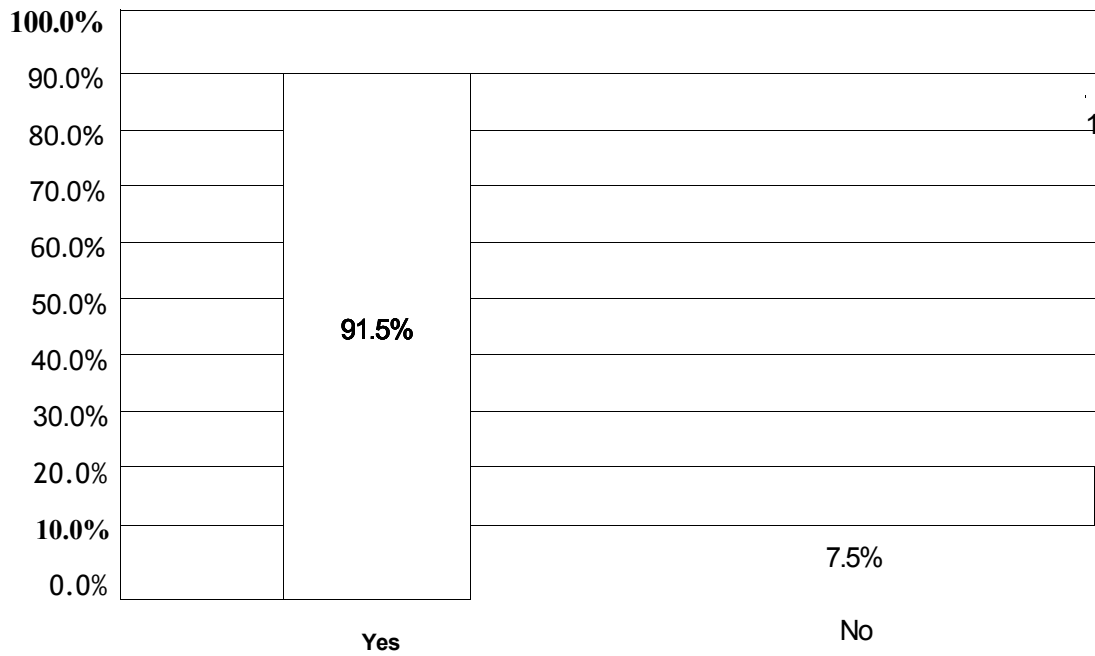


Observation

97.5% of the job opportunities required writing t a b . with oniy 2.5% not requiring sueh skills.

FIGURE 15: Media Relations and Placement.

FIG 15: MEDIA RELATIONS/PLACEMENT

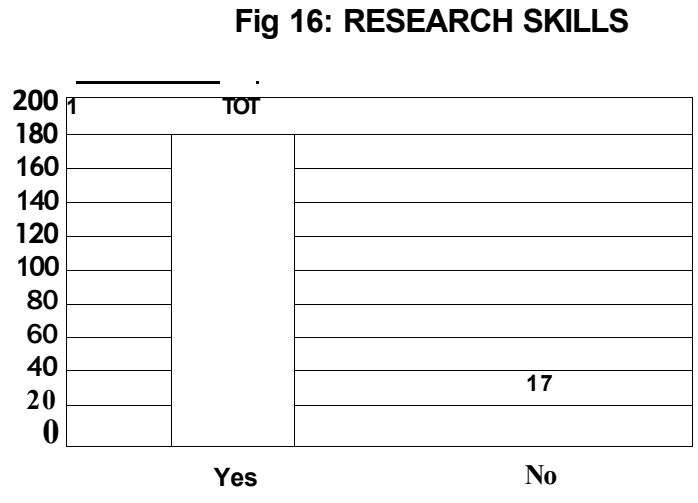


V

Observation

In this figure, 91.5.% of the opportunities requested for media relations and placement skills. 7.5% did not.

FIGURE 16: Research Skills

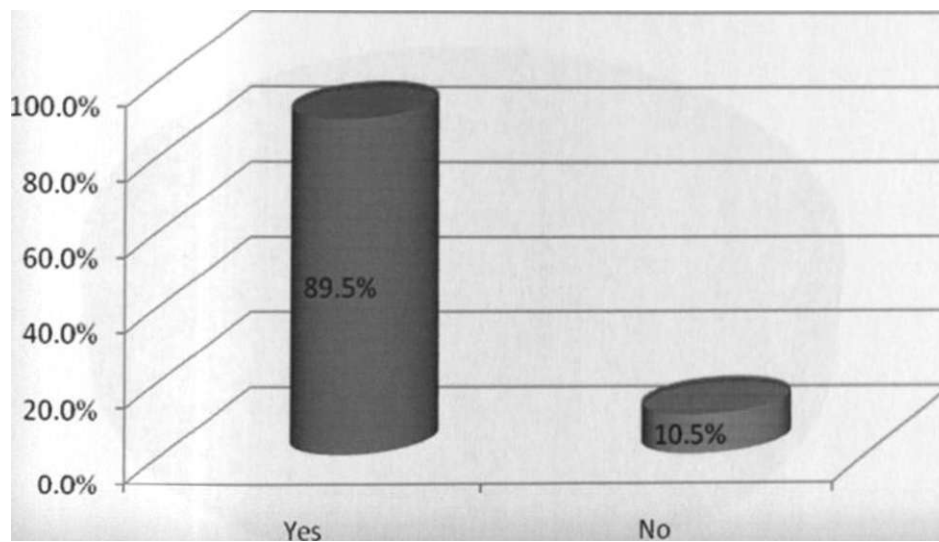


Observation

In this figure, 183 of the advertisements representing 91.5% required research skills, 17 opportunities representing 8.5% did not require such skills.

FIGURE 17: Management and Administration Skills

FIG 17: MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION SKILLS

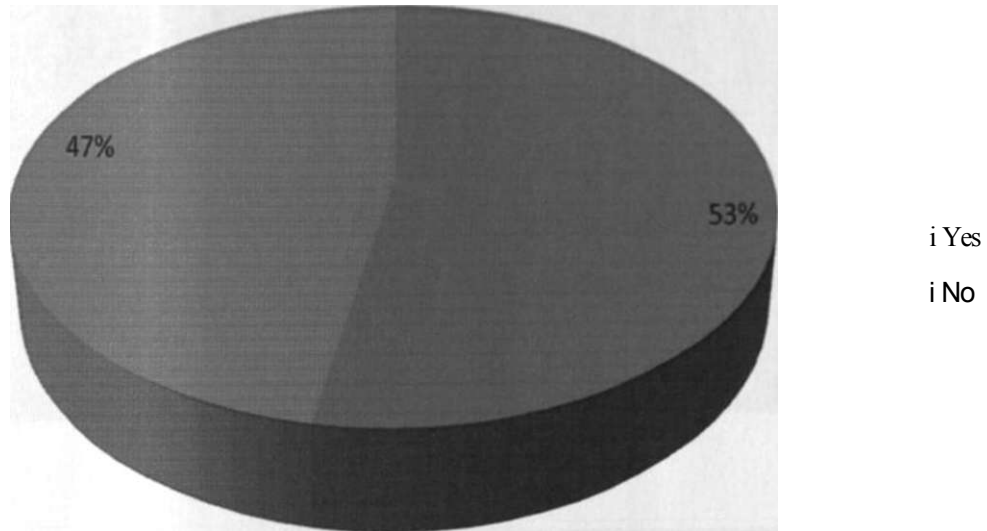


Observation

In this figure 179 of the job advertisements representing 89.5% required management and administration skills, 10.5% or 21 advertisements did not require those skills.

FIGURE 18. MANAGEMENT COUNSELLING SKILLS

FIG 18: MANAGEMENTCOUNSELINGSKILLS

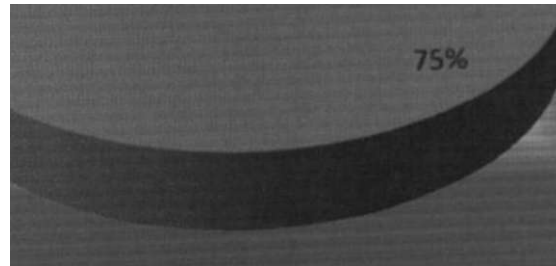
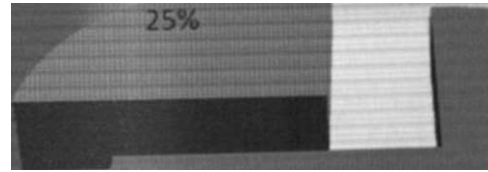


Observation

In the figure above, 47% of the job opportunities did not require management counseling skills, while 53% of the jobs needed such skills.

FIGURE 19: Special Events Organization.

FIG 19: SPECIALEVENTSORGANIZATION

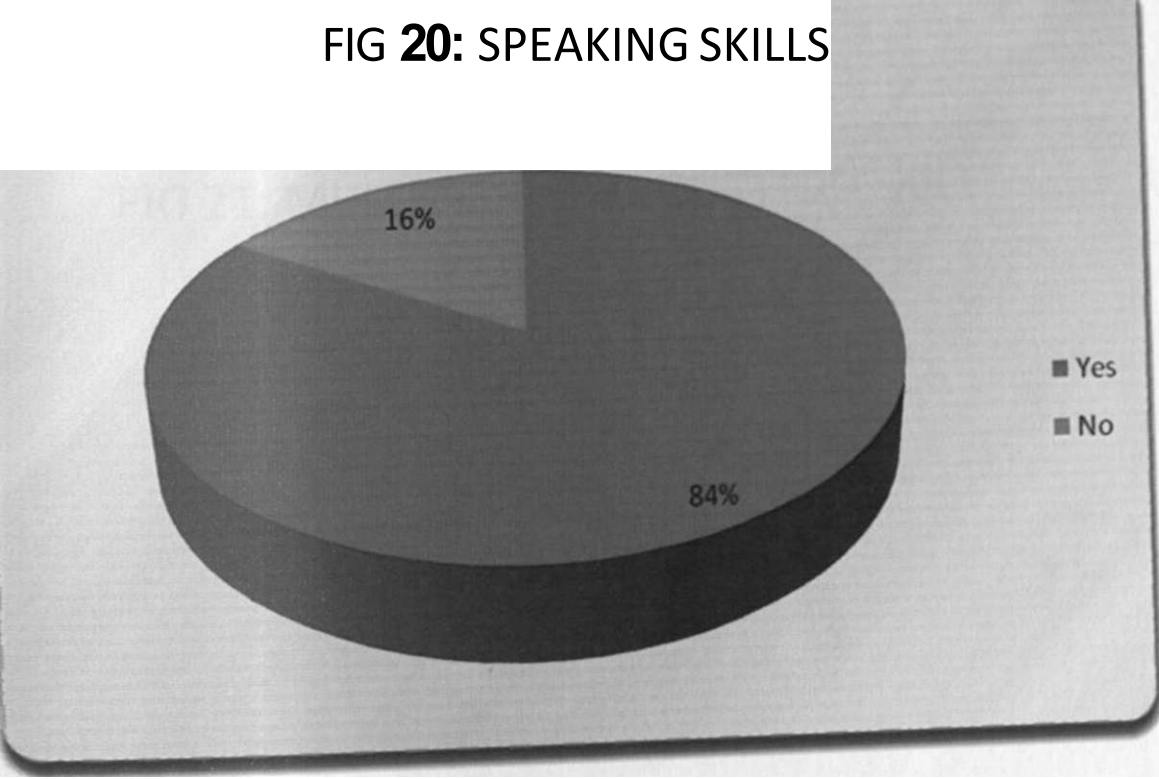


Yes

Observation

in the figure above, 25% of the job opposers did not require skills in organizing special events, while 75% actually required skills in organizing such events.

FIGURE 20: Speaking Skills

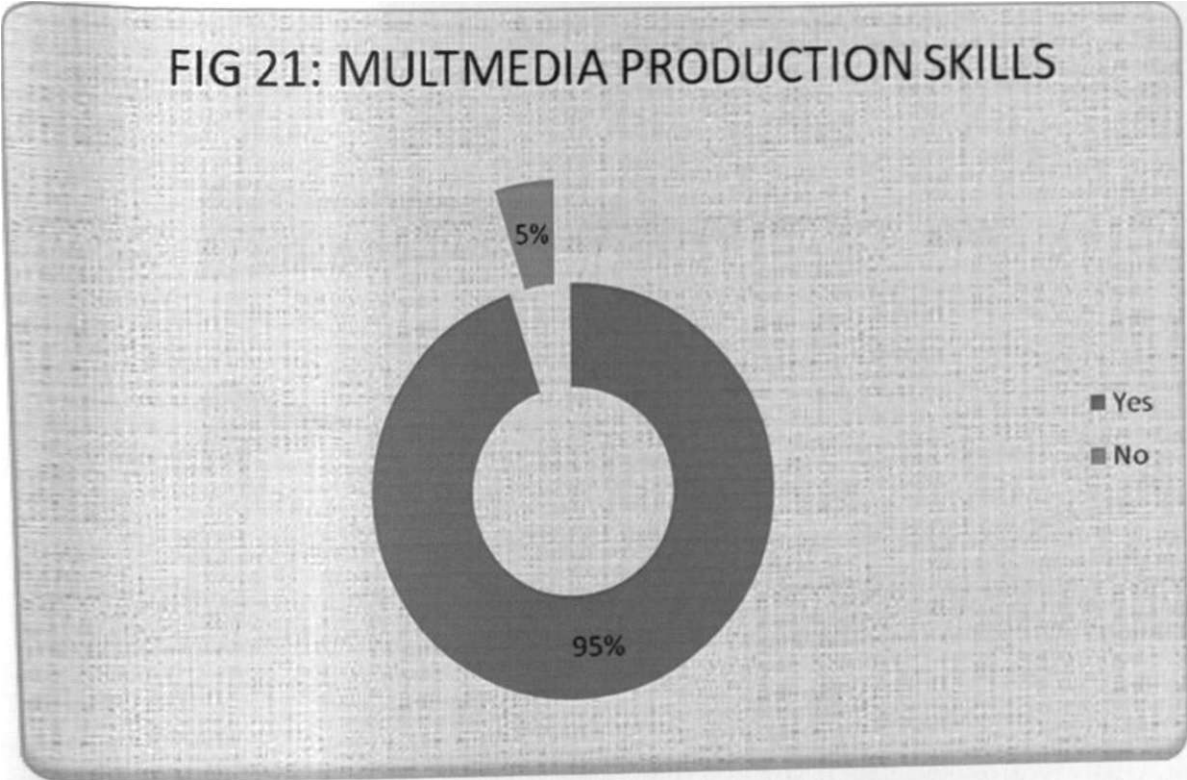


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Observation

In this figure, 16% of the opportunity did not require speaking skills, while 84% requested for those skills.

FIGURE 21: Multi-Media Production Skills

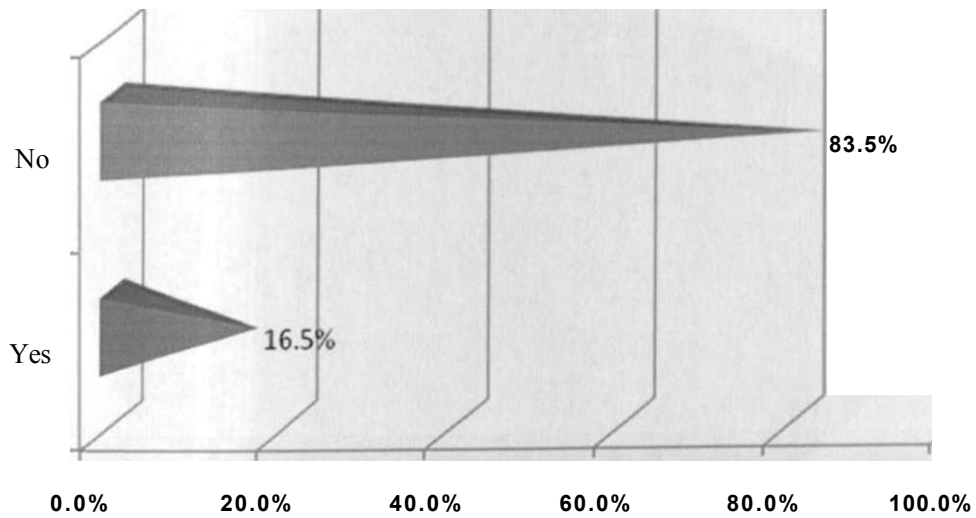


Observation

In this figure, 95% of the job opportunities required multi-media production skills while 5% did not require such skills.

FIGURE 22: Training Executive for Public Appearance Skills

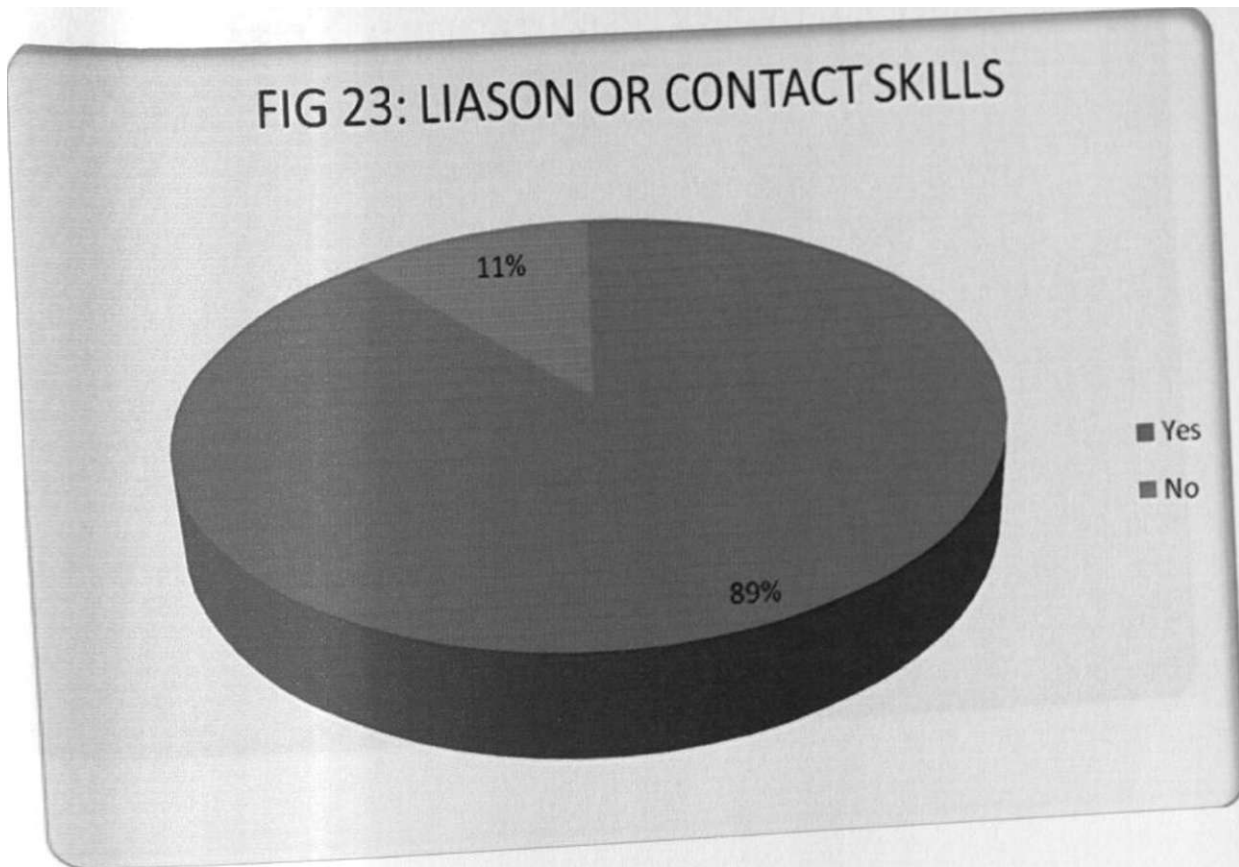
FIG 22: TRAINING EXECUTIVE FOR PUBLIC APPEARANCE SKILLS



Observation

In this figure, 83.5% of the job opportunities did not require skills in training executive for public appearances, 16.5% required for such skills.

FIGURE 23: LIAISON OR CONTACT SKILLS



Observation

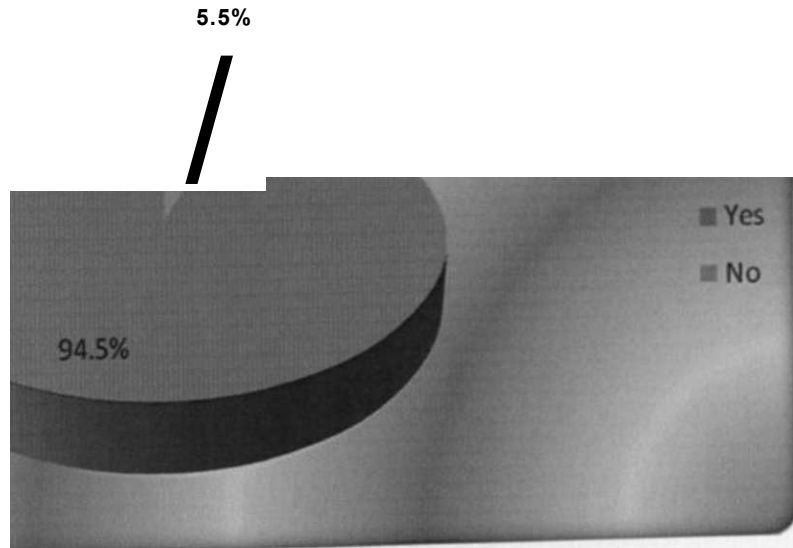
• V
rhinities required person with liaison or contact skills.
In this figure, 89% of the job opportunities require p

11% did not require such skills.

FIGURE 24: Indication of any Other Duty Assigned by Executive

ft

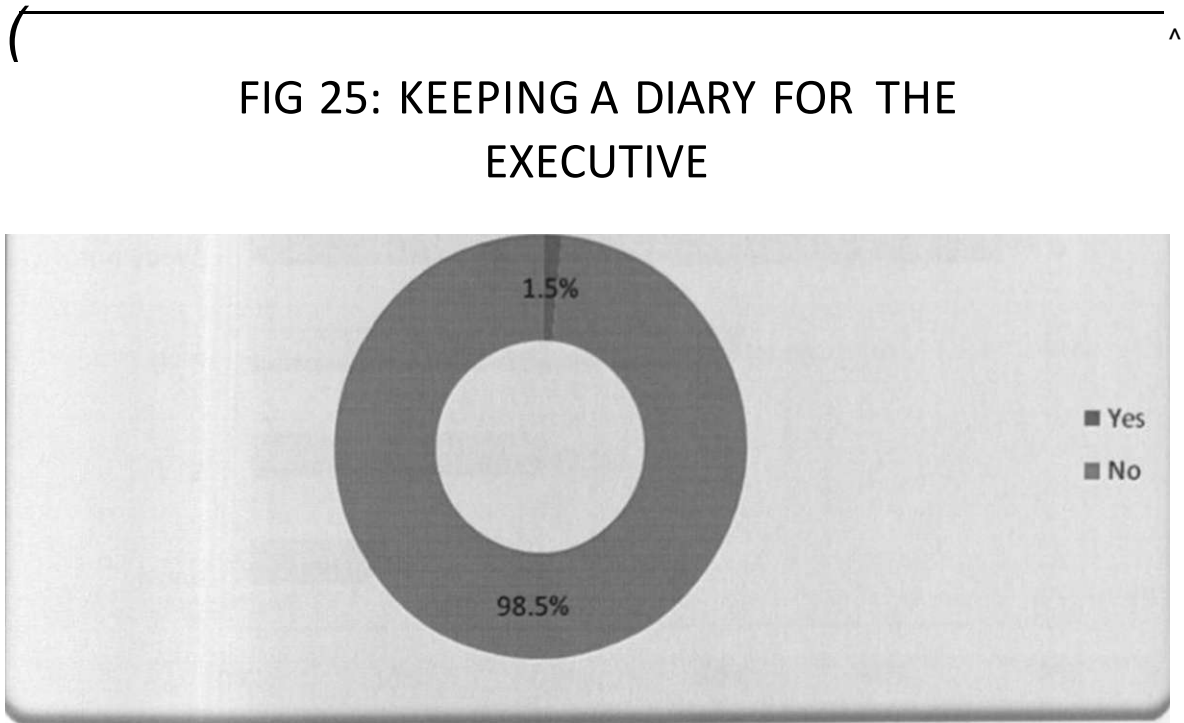
**FIG 24: INDICATION OF ANY OTHER DUTY
ASSIGNED BY EXECUTIVE**



Observation

In this figure, 5.5% of the opportunities indicated that the individual seeking the job may be assigned any other duty by the executive, 94.5% did not indicate assignment of any other duties.

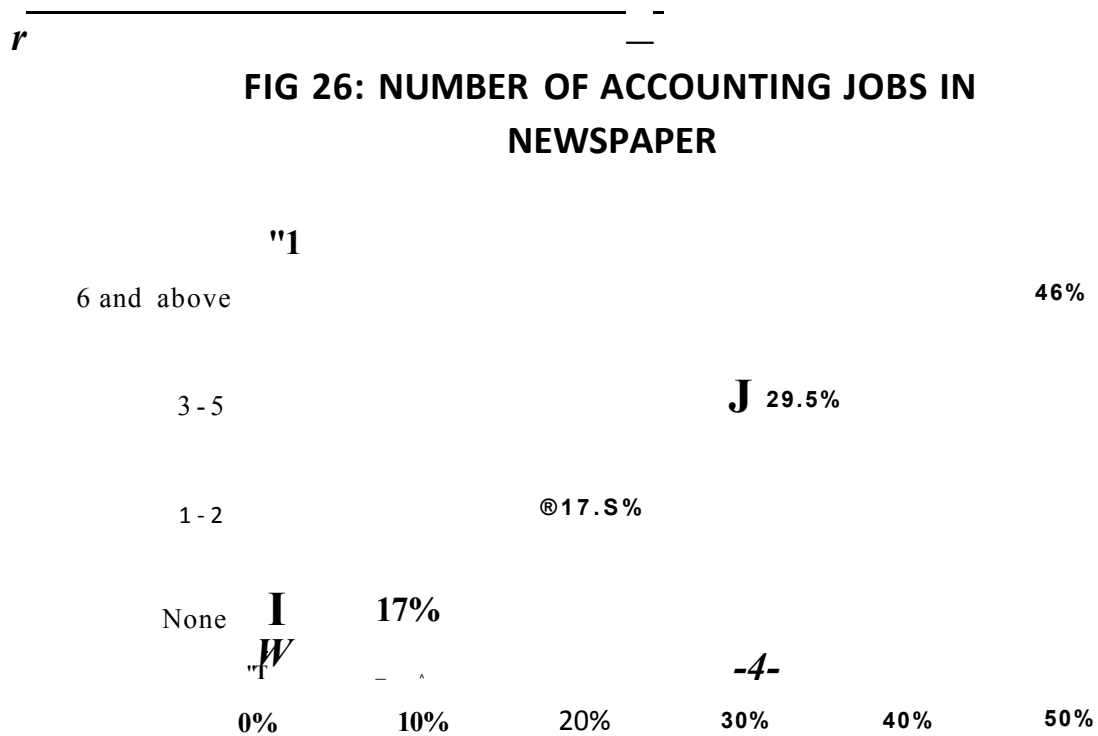
FIGURE 25: Keeping a Diary for the Executive



Observation

In this figure, 1.5% of the opportunities required the employee to keep the diary for the executive, 98.5% did not require the employee to perform such duties.

FIGURE 26.: Number of Accounting Jobs in the Newspaper

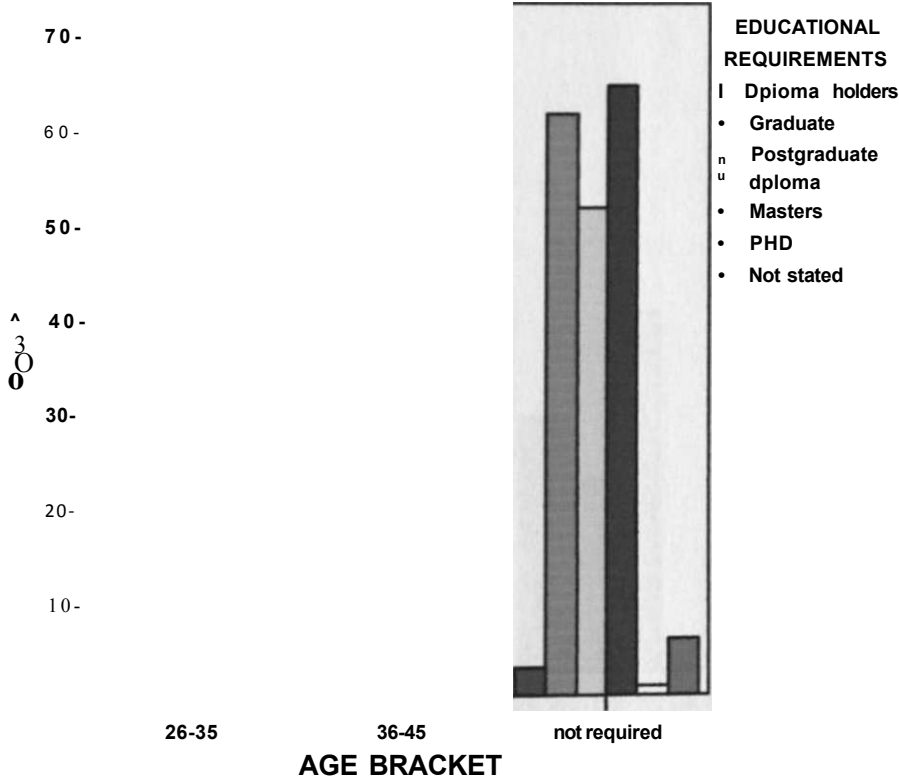


Observation

In this figure, 46% of the newspaper investigated contained 6 and above accounting job opportunities, 7% of the newspapers had none.

Fig 27.CORRELATIONS 1.

Bar Chart

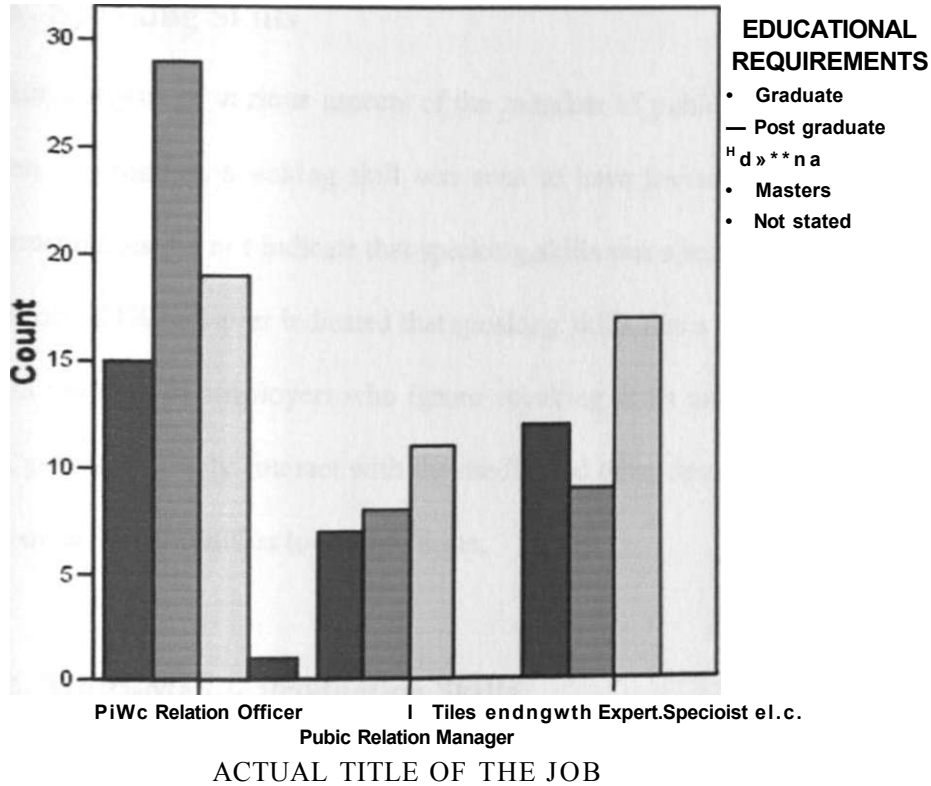


Observation

The correlation between age and academic standard indicates that Masters education was most preferable not the age of the applicant

Fig 28: CORRELATIONS 2.

WORK EXPERIENCE IN YEARS-4 -6 years



Observation

In the correlation between the job title and educational level, it indicated that lower cadre position required absolutely high educational standards.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1. Speaking Skills

After analysis of various aspects of the mandate of public relations as perceived by the open job market, speaking skill was seen to have favourably featured 16% of the job opportunities did not indicate that speaking skills was a requirement for one to qualify for the job. 84% however indicated that speaking skills was a requirement.

This segment of employers who ignore speaking skills may find it difficult to allow the PR person to freely interact with the media and other associates or publics thus limiting his or her opportunities to communicate.

5.2. Multi-Media Production Skills

Multi-media production skills are important as they allow the PR person to use varied media to communicate with different public, these skills include, print, video, audio, internet to mention a few. 95% of the 200 jobs advertisement that were investigated required multi - media production skills, 5% however did not indicate the need for such skills. Again a PR person who is only good in one area of production may find it very difficult to package information to be communicated to certain special publics thus failing in his or her performance.

5.3. Training Executive for Public Appearance Skills

Part of the important duties of the PR person in any organization is to prepare or rather train the executive who may include CEO's, ministers, permanent secretaries and presidents for public appearances. These people project the entire image of the organization they represent, so how they appear, how they speak and their general grooming has to be very well choreographed.

In this study, it revealed that 83.5% of the job opportunities that were available during the two years. (2007 to 2008) did not require the applicants to have the skills of training executive for public appearances. This portends a dangerous attitude as in the event of a public relations person attempting to coach the executive he or she may be rebuffed and this could be a source of conflict in the work environment. The employers therefore need to underscore the value of such skills in the personnel they recruit so as to synergize organizational communication.

5.4. Writing Skills

Writing skills should and is the first qualification of a PR person, because the written word forms the bedrock of communication since the era of Johann Gutenberg (1495) of the printing press.

The study revealed that 97.5% of all the PR job opportunity on offer during the period under study required applicant to have writing skills. This is commendable. 2.5% however did not indicate whether the applicants needed to have such skills. This means that some employers still do not think that writing is part of the fundamental functions of a PR person. A PR person who takes writing skills for granted may find him or herself in

an awkward position especially when required to generate content for media briefing or media consumption.

The gap however small can eventually grow thus compromising the quality of the person holding such offices at the detriment of the profession.

5.5. Media Relations and Placement Skills

A PR person is ordinary the person who deals with the media on a day-to-day basis as the media provides a platform through which he or she communicates to the publics. The PR person therefore analyses the media channels available and selects the ones that are suitable for specific publics. Media relations and placement skills therefore are very crucial and every PR person must have. In this study 9% of the job opportunities did not require such skills. This means that the employers have obviously ignored a very important function of PR profession. These are the employers who hire staff whose titles are public relations related but eventually end up assigning them jobs that have no relationship with planned communication.

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5.6. Research Skills

All communication strategies are based on information that can only be obtained through research. Research skills therefore are very important in public relations. In this study 183 job opportunities that represented 91.5% required persons who had research skill while 17 opportunities representing 8.5% did not require such competences.

This percentage of employers who do not require research skills demonstrate utter lack of understanding of the public relations mandate, roles and duties. This means that some

individuals may secure PR jobs and fail in their responsibility due to lack of research skills.

5.7. Management and Administration Skills

Planning, determining needs establishing priorities, defining publics, and setting goals and objectives and developing strategies are functions that cannot be realized without management and administration skills.

In this study 21 opportunities representing 10.5% did not require such skills while 179 representing 89.5% required them. The employers who seek PR people who have no management and administration skills also curtail the office occupants in their responsibilities. The scenario is dangerous as the PR person may sorely rely on other professionals to plan for his department. This can and has a potential of bringing about conflict in organizations especially when other people have to do budgets for the PR department and this may be a cause of failure.

5.8. Management Counseling Skills

These skills include the role of advising top management on social, political and regulatory environment. This also includes developing strategies on managing organizational response to critical and difficult issues that may confront an organization. In this study 47% of the PR job opportunities offered during the two years period under study did not require the applicants to have management counseling skills. This is a very serious scenario as this indicates that the executive who have this kind of mindset may side step the counsel of PR person and appear on media unprepared thus putting the organizational reputations and image in jeopardy.

5.9. Special Events Organization Skills

Many PR professionals find themselves arranging and managing conferences, open houses, grand openings, press conferences and other meetings. These skills are therefore critical. In this study, it was revealed that 25% of the job opportunities available during the period under review did not require special events organizational skills. This means that the thinking of the employer in this case is that the individual will not be involved in organizing such meetings. Normally when such roles are not included in one's job description it means the role is given to another officer could be in marketing, administration or other departments. This may compromise the efficacy of planned organizational communication.

5.10. Contact Skills

Contact skills form an integral part of the duties of a PR person, it involves meeting, greeting and inviting people who are important to the organization. They also include media liaison, community internal and external publics. In this study 11% of the job opportunities did not require these skills therefore the ideal terms of reference for a PR person were not complete in the thinking of the employers.

5.11. Indication of any Other Duty Assigned by Executive

In the formulation of this study one of the assumptions was that when PR persons are hired most employers indicate from the outset that the holders of the offices may be assigned any other duties that may have not been clearly stated in the job description. The study revealed that only 5.5% of the 200 job opportunities investigated indicated that other duties may be assigned. This however was difficult to measure since quite a few employers would want to be vague at the time when they are hiring personnel. Most of them have impressive job descriptions only to flout them when the employer is already on board. This may end up compromising the professional expectation of the PR person and in most instances could generate conflict in the work place.

5.12. Keeping a Diary for the Executive

Ordinarily the work of keeping and managing the diary for the executive in any organization is for the personal assistants. This role is basically administrative and has absolutely nothing to do with communication. In this study it was revealed that 1.5% of the 200 jobs opportunities required the incumbent to keep the diary for the executive however the balance of 98.5% did not require that.

This again was difficult to deduce from the advertisements as employers change goal posts the soonest staff are hired these duties are assigned quietly and in most instances burden the PR person with duties that are not theirs at the expense of planned organizational communication.

^>-13. Number of Accounting Jobs in Newspaper

It was an assumption during the formulation of this study that public relation jobs are fewer compared to other older professions like accounting, medicine, nursing etc. For the purpose of this study we singled out accounting for comparative purposes and from every newspaper that was sampled we investigated how many accounting job opportunities were advertised in it.

The study revealed that 46% of the newspapers that had PR job advertisements had 6 and above accounting job opportunities advertised in them.

This means that for every one or two PR job opportunities there were 6 accounting job opportunities. The message these findings reveal is that if 122 newspapers were investigated 46% of 122 is 56 newspapers and in each had 6 and above accounting jobs making a total 336 jobs opportunities compared with 200 PR opportunities drawn from 112 newspapers.

This indicates that even if PR and accounting are critical aspects of organizational management PR is still way below par in terms of recognition and opportunities.

29.5% of the newspapers had between 3 - 5 accounting job opportunities while 17.5% had between 1 - 2 job opportunities.

It is important to note that no single newspaper investigated had more than four PR opportunities on a particular date.

5.14. Name / Date of the Publication

From the study it emerged that the nation newspaper was more popular with employers willing to advertise, out of the 200 advertisements investigated. 168 representing 84%

were from The Nation newspapers. The Standard produced 32 advertisements that represented 16%. The period between July and December 2008 had the greatest number of PR job opportunities advertised, 57 opportunities representing 28.5%. It also emerged that Fridays had the highest number with 105 of advertisements, which stood at 52.5% while Wednesday had 51 advertisements representing 25.5%.

5.15. Size of the Advertisement

The analysis of the size of the advertisements presented a normal distribution, majority of the advertisements were between 101 cm² to 150 cm², they were 62 in number representing 31% of the total advertisements. The size can be described as medium. Those measuring between 50 cm² to 100 cm² were 55 representing 27.5% while those measuring 400cm² and above were only 2 representing 1%. It emerged that organizations also take advantage of the job advertisements by taking the first part to outline very clearly their services, products and their location, this is a scenario of killing two birds with one stone since advertizing space in newspaper is expensive.

5.16. Actual Title of the Job

The titles of the PR jobs were varied and in some instances they were merged with other professions. 100 opportunities out of the 200 carried the title public relations officer represented 50%. 19.5% of the opportunities carried management jobs whose titles were public relations manager. 61 opportunities representing 30.5% carried titles ending with expert, specialist, executive, assistant director, professional and coordinator.

The study revealed a fair balance between junior cadre opportunities and senior management opportunities. The idea of the titles being merged with other major professions was however of big concern. These titles included "logistics and communications expert", "senior communications and field officer", "communication and education specialist", "public relations and resource mobilization officer", "Development outreach and communication specialist", "marketing and communications coordinator".

The interpretation of the varied job titles is that often PR job occupants realize that their jobs are not clearly defined as their titles are equally vague therefore in the event of being allocated wrong duties they normally have no basis to raise issues with the management. The idea of tacking PR function in other major professions like marketing, advocacy, fund raising and publicity can be viewed as demeaning it and now raises the issues of the level of recognition of PR. The mindset of the employers who tack or mix PR with other major professions is that PR is not a profession that can engage an employee fully and therefore the employee will need to perform additional tasks. This however is an area that may demand a separate study to understand the thinking of such employers.

5.17. Location of the Job

Most PR jobs as it emerged were in Nairobi, 177 opportunities available in the 2-years period were in Nairobi. They represented 88.5%. Other towns in Kenya had only 6 opportunities 8.5% of the opportunities however were outside the country. This indicates that most organization though represented in the provinces and other small towns the PR jobs are confined at their head offices, which are normally in Nairobi.

5.18. Sector Offering Job

Majority of the PR jobs available were from the corporations, manufacturing, industrial, consumer goods, financial, insurance, medial and entertainment they represented 30% of the opportunities. Charitable, religious and social welfare organizations followed with 21% of the opportunities. International and regional organizations had the least opportunities, which represented 3.5%. It emerged that corporations, industrial and financial organization survive on the goodwill of the people and therefore majority of them were willing to spend substantial amounts of money on hiring qualified PR persons.

5.19. Educational Requirements

The educational preference of the employers according to this research was master degree. 33.5% of the opportunities required individuals with master degrees. Almost at par was first degree holders (graduate) with 33%, post graduate qualifications was required in 28% opportunities. This trend indicates that very high qualifications are needed for one to secure a PR job. Diploma holders were needed in only 2% of the opportunities. This again shows that despite of the high qualifications asked for majority of the PR people stagnate and in few instances they get into management. In other professions master degree holders gets hired straight into the management. There is therefore a gap in the levels of academic qualifications and the positions on offer as the two variables do not seem to be commensurate.

? .20. Work Experience

The work experience required by majority of the opportunities included several fields. 45% of the jobs required a number of backgrounds like, communication, journalism, public relations, business related. 13% required specifically work experience in communication. 13% required specific work experience in public relations while only 9% required specific work experience in journalism. This indicates that individuals who have experience in different backgrounds had an advantage over those who had experience in specific areas.

5.21. Gender and Age of the Employee

Less than 1% of the opportunities specified the gender of the employee, 2 preferred a male while 1 preferred a female. This dismal request on gender is an indication that the Kenyans job market is very gender sensitive thus the selling point of prospective employees is their qualification and not their gender. On age only 11 opportunities out of 200 specified the ages of prospective employees. These opportunities represented 6% of the total with ages between 36-45 being the most preferable (3%) followed by 26-35 years with 2.5%. This indicates that persons with some form of work experience were preferred than fresh recruits.

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5.22. Years of Work Experience

Majority of the opportunities required individuals with between 4-6 years work experience. They represented 64%. 10% required fresh graduate, while the least required were persons with 11 years and above work experience.

^C chaptersix

Summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations.

This chapter outlines the outcome of the study, conclusions and recommendations by the researcher. This chapter also answers the study questions, assumptions and objectives based on the evidence emanating from the study.

6.1. Level of Recognition of Public Relations

Level of recognition of public relations profession by employers in corporate world and government.

On level of recognition of public relations profession, the study revealed that it is evident that PR persons are relegated to lower cadres. This was deduced by the lopsided trend of having so many lower cadres. (100 opportunities) representing 50% whose work experience was substantially high (4-6 years) 64% and very high academic qualifications of master degree (67%).

This is clearly a testimony of low recognition of PR jobs, since out of the total opportunities investigated only 39, representing 19.5% carried the title "manager". This means that management jobs were few while the ones that were available required highly qualified individuals.

**6*2- Level of PR Job Opportunities available in the job market
Hi p_a red to other opportunities like accounting.**

Considering the level of economic growth and the emerging numbers of social, political ^ economic enterprises in Kenya since 2003, PR job opportunities are performing dismally.

During the two years, a total of 200 PR job opportunities were available. Since this study isolated accounting as an older profession for comparative purposes it was revealed that 46% of the 122 newspaper investigated carried each over 6 accounting job opportunities. This means that 56 newspapers had more that 6 accounting job opportunities which translated to 336 opportunities, if **we** include the others, within the same period there were 522 accounting job opportunities available against the 200 PR opportunities.

These two professions are crucial in organizational management thus there is a glaring disparity between the two. The reason as to why this trend is so may require a separate further research.

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6.3. Comparison between PR mandate as requested by employers and the ideal terms of reference for PR professionals.

6.3.1 The terms of reference for any job are vital as they serve as the job description. In instances where the job description as outline at the time of hiring significantly differs with the actual roles assigned to the employees they make them feel cheated, bitter, frustrated and quite often than not this leads to poor work performance.

In this Study **significant** disparities were revealed between the ideal terms of reference for PR Professionals and what employers requested for in their job advertisement as placed on *the* newspapers (*Nation and the Standard*)

most notable areas included the very fundamental role of training the executive for Public appearance. 83.5% of the job opportunities available were silent on this, meaning these skills were either ignored or not required.

Fundamentally this role helps the executive or the designated organizational **spokesperson** to deal with media and other public appearance like meetings and **conferences**. Ignoring the mood of the audience which obviously the PR person need **to carry out** periodic research on, may be at the great peril of the organization. This **scenario therefore** is out order.

Another incongruity revealed by the study was the role of management counseling. 47% of the job opportunities did not require such skills, that effectively means that the thinking of such employers was that the PR person had no role whatsoever in counseling the management. This role involves counseling or advising the top management on social, political and regulatory environment especially during difficult times where organizations may be in crisis. The role also involves devising strategies of communication on sensitive issues.

Another revelation was that in virtually all aspects of the ideal terms of reference there was a consistent gap or discrepancy, on writing skills 2.5% of the opportunities did not ask for such skills; on media relations 9% of the opportunities did not ask for those skills. Research skills, which is critical in PR, 8.5% of the opportunities did not request for them. 10.5% of the opportunities did not require management and administration skills

While 25% of the job openings did require skills of organizing special events. A total of 16% of the opportunities did not need speaking skills, 5% did not require the job applicants to possess skills in multi-media production. 11% of the opportunities did not require the prospective jobholders to have liaison or contact skills.

gaps may appear small and insignificant but by and large they are an indication of a Professional erosion scenario where slowly the roles may be compromised and eventually veer off the track. This trend means there are indeed persons working as public relations People in either the corporate world or government and their job descriptions are not anywhere near the true public relations job description or the terms of reference.

6.4 Recommendations / Conclusions

- 1) The Public Relations Society of Kenya needs to devise mechanisms of policing employers who seek highly qualified individuals and eventually offer them low cadre jobs. All PR jobs should and must be commensurate with the level of education and **work experience.**
- 2) Job titles in PR should be synchronized, the present scenario where so many titles are used to describe PR jobs leaves a lee way for wayward employers to frustrate PR people by either assigning them wrong duties, tacking PR roles in other professions or by under employing them.
- 3) The public relations society of Kenya needs to mount a strategic communication campaign in an effort to sensitize employers on the values and uses of public relations in organizational management. This should also include the roles and benefits of PR to an organization. This will demystify the role of PR and may also increase the need

and therefore job opportunities in the field may increase. This may be in line with the Policy of "awareness creates demand".

's therefore evident that there are gaps in the profession of PR and in conclusions I quote Joseph T. Nolan who said "If public relations keeps working at its accreditation Procedure improving it as it goes along and does a better job of policing its ranks it could very well eventually achieve a place along side accounting..." (Seitel 1995)⁴.

B I B L i o c ; r a p h y

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ANNEXTURE

APPENDIX -RESEARCH INSTRUMENT.

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM

QUESTIONNAIRE.

Study: An assessment of the level of recognition of public relations profession in Kenya:
A trend analysis of PR and communication job opportunities and understanding of PR
mandate in two Kenyans Newspapers

SECTION I.

1. Date of publication
2. Name of publication
3. Announcer's (Advertiser's) name
4. Size of advertisement (in cm²)
5. Actual title of the job
6. Location of the job_

SECTION II.

7. Sector offering the PR jobs opportunity.

- Corporations, manufacturing, industrial, consumer goods, financial, insurance, media and entertainment.
- Public relation firms, advertising agencies and individual practitioners
- Associations, foundations and educational institutions
- Health care, hospitals, clinics, home health care agencies, and mental health facilities.
- Government, local, central
- Charitable, religious, and social welfare organizations.
- Regional And International Organizations

SECTION III.

8. What is the educational requirement for the job?

- High school leaver
- Diploma holders
- Graduate
- Post graduate diploma
- Masters
- PhD

9. What is the work experience asked for?

- Journalism
- News editorials
- Public relations
- Linguistics (English)
- Communications
- Business related
- Research
- Others specialized fields (specify).
- A number of those mentioned above (specify)

10. Does the job advertisement specify the gender of the employee sought for?

- Yes
- No

11. If yes what gender?

- Male
- Female

12. Does the advert specify the age of the employee sought for?

- Yes
- No

13. If yes what age bracket?

- Below 25
- 26-35
- 36-45
- 46-55
- 56 and above

14. How many years work experience is required by the advertised job

- Fresh Graduate
- Below 3 years
- 4-6 years
- 7-10 years
- Over 11 years.

15. According to the TOR does the job require writing editing skills'?

- Yes
- No

16. According to the TOR does the job require media relations and placement skills?

- Yes
- No

17. According to the TOR does the job require research skills?

- Yes
- No

18. According to the TOR does the job require management and administration skills?

- Yes
- No

19. According to the TOR does the advertised job require management counselling **skills?**

- Yes
- No

20. According to the TOR does the job ask for knowledge/ability of organizing special events?

- **Yes**

- No

-1 - According to the TOR does the job ask for speaking skills?

- **Yes**

- No

22. According to the TOR does the job require multimedia communication production skills?

- **Yes**

- No

23. According to the TOR does the job ask for training (executives for public appearance) skills?

- **Yes**

- No

24. According to the TOR does the job ask for liaison or contact skills?

- **Yes**

- No

25. According to the TOR does the job advertisement indicate (and any other duty that may be assigned by the management)?

- Yes

- No

26. Does the job require the intended employee to keep the diary of the chief executive officer?

- Yes

- No

27. How many accounting jobs are advertised in this Newspaper?

- 1-2

- **3-5**

- 6 and above.