

## Research on Certain aspect of PR function in Serbian companies\*

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*The paper presents the results of the research on certain aspects of PR function in Serbian companies. 70 PR managers were polled, and it is estimated that they represent a third of the total number of PR managers in Serbia. 29 questions were asked, and they were divided into three characteristic categories: a) Questions relevant to the analysis of the position of PR managers and their profession; b) Questions relevant to the analysis of characteristic profession and education of PR managers; c) Questions relevant to the analysis of the most frequent and most important activities and media for the performance of PR function. In addition to the presentation of the results of the survey, the paper also presents their detailed analysis.*

*Der Aufsatz präsentiert die Resultate der Untersuchung bestimmter Aspekte der PR Funktion in serbischen Unternehmen. 70 PR Manager wurden befragt, die voraussichtlich ein Drittel der PR Manager Serbiens repräsentieren. Es gab 29 Fragen zu beantworten, die sich auf drei charakteristische Kategorien verteilten: a) Fragen im Hinblick auf die Analyse der Positionen der PR Manager und deren Ausübung; b) Fragen im Hinblick auf die Analyse des typischen Berufs und der Ausbildung der PR Manager; c) Fragen im Hinblick auf die Analyse der meist verwendeten und wichtigsten Maßnahmen und Hilfsmittel bei der Ausführung der PR Funktion. Neben der Präsentation der Umfrageergebnisse legt der Artikel auch eine detaillierte Analyse vor.*

*Keywords: Communication, PR managers, research, results, analyses, Serbia*

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## 1. Introduction

One of the most important segments of marketing is marketing communication. The aim of communication is to set the communication receiver into action, which should be perceived more comprehensively in terms of creating a situation which could result in taking or giving up the action. Modern society has made a step into a new stage of its development, which is defined as 'information society'. What is essential for doing business in information society is the production and distribution of information. According to (Kotler/Armstrong 1996), fast development of information technologies and direct marketing has had the most important impact on forming a new pattern of marketing communication, which is defined as integrated marketing communication. This model involves careful integration and coordination of many communication channels – from standard media of mass communication to direct marketing, designed to send a clear and consistent message about the company, its products and services.

Modern approach to a company's communicative activities implies integrating all the forms of communication aimed at achieving synergic effect in the communication process. Along these lines, public relations assume the characteristic of a communicative activity which should permeate the entire process of market communication of a company. PR is a communication activity aimed at establishing and developing understanding with general public – which is itself divided into segments – and also aimed at achieving public trust, that is, creating a favourable picture of the company.

According to (Baskin et al. 2000), PR can be observed and interpreted as a profession, process, communication with general public and practice. In addition to this, PR represent a multidimensional and extremely complex business activity requiring knowledge of various fields of human activities (psychology, communication science, journalism, economics, politics, ethics, culture, etc.), and their combining in order to achieve efficient communication. Its objective is to build up good relationships with various segments of general public on the grounds of publicity, building up good corporate image and solving of problems generated by unfavourable stories, rumours and events. The importance of relations with general public stems from the time we live in, which is the time of inter-dependence of all the segments which make a society. A company is linked with other segments of society by multiple ties. Due to that fact, a company has to take care of forming and maintaining mutual understanding with the segments of interest. General public needs to get acquainted with all the activities of a company and this need grows with the strengthening of public opinion in modern society. Besides this, a company has to pay due attention to building up positive interpersonal relationships in the company itself (internal PR).

Important part of communicative efforts of an organization is aimed at creating public opinion. Public opinion could be defined as the dominant attitude of the

society, collective will of the people, and as summarizing the opinion of general public in relation to a particular issue. According to (Black 2003), PR could be described with some key words: reputation, perception, credibility, trust, unity, mutual understanding, truthful and comprehensive informing.

According to (Wragg 1996), the main PR forms are the following: relations with media, communication with the employees, relations with investors, relations with politics, corporate identity, sponsorship, relations with the community, relations with clients.

There is an ever increasing demand made by modern society from companies aimed at company's defining of its social responsibility. On the other hand, companies are fully aware that they must have affirmative attitude to such demands. Modern society requires both responsibility and contribution. Social responsibility in doing business refers to the obligation of companies and other business organisations to increase their positive impact on the society, and to reduce their negative activities. In the past, it was enough for a company to meet the basic economic goal – profit, as the basis for achieving the objectives of growth and development. At the present level of development of business, companies have to accept advanced market philosophy, which is defined as social marketing. This concept is based on three basic elements: the welfare of the society as a whole, satisfying customers' needs, and making of profit for the company.

Brookes and Little, considering the appearance of organizations on the market in the future, define a new model of market activity designated as relationship marketing. This model is based on the following: databases management, interactive market communication, and marketing networks (Brookes/Little 1997). A new model of market management implies that the company has to meet a wider range of interests which dominate its social surroundings.

Relationship marketing is a significant paradigmatic breakthrough in approach to marketing, from thinking only in categories of competition and conflict to thinking in categories of interdependence and collaboration. It recognizes the importance of different participants – suppliers, employees, distributors, dealers, retail sellers, who collaborate in order to provide the target customer with the best value. The basic categories of relationship marketing are the following: (Kotler 2004)

- it is oriented more to the partners and consumers than to the products,
- a greater stress is laid on keeping and developing the existing customers than on finding new customers,
- it relies on multifunctional teams more than on the work at the sector level,
- it relies more on listening and learning than on talking.

By establishing efficient PR function, the company has impact on forming, maintaining and developing the company's image in positive direction. Favourable climate of public opinion, quality and differentiation of products are the prerequisites for the successful company image which affects the overall business performance of the company.

## **2. Application of public relations in Serbian companies**

Development of PR is particularly important in companies operating in countries in transition. Since PR involves communicative activities which have strategic importance for a company's business, it is usually positioned next to the executive management. In the process of transition, companies must have highly developed communicative activities with the segments of its surroundings, as well as with the internal public. These activities are even more manifest in companies which have completed the process of ownership transformation, especially in cases of direct foreign investments. With the completion of the process of economic transition, and with the coming of foreign capital on the market, PR plays an increasingly important part in the process of internalization of the process of doing business.

From the aspect of theory, the concept of PR has been present in Serbia since the mid-1980s. A more serious study of this discipline began at the beginning of the 1990s, and that is the time when PR practice in Serbian companies started.

At the beginning of the 1990s, PR appears as independent course of studies at postgraduate studies (Faculty of Economics in Belgrade, and Faculty of Organizational Sciences in Belgrade). In parallel with the studies of PR at specialist and master studies at faculties, the studies of this area were also initiated in the field of informal educational system and very important results were achieved in that field. In the mid-1990s, several agencies – PR training centres – were founded (for example PRA Educa in Belgrade, etc.). It is interesting that the largest number of individuals who deal with PR in practice have completed instructional seminars with one of the organizations which were dealing with training in the field of PR. The lecturers at these seminars were mostly given by practitioners from various fields which partly deal with PR, such as journalists, communication experts, marketing experts, advertising experts, etc.

As a specific form of marketing communication, PR had a minor role in the overall communication process of Serbian companies on the domestic market and also when appearing on foreign markets. PR activity was not well-established in a large number of Serbian companies during the 1990s. In the late 1990s, with establishing of a larger number of foreign marketing agencies, there came to a more significant presence of this activity in the practices of companies which operate on Serbian market.

However, PR, as a business activity, is still at the beginning of the process of establishing itself on the Serbian market. Development of market economy and accepting private capital logically contributes to accepting the fact of necessity of this activity. According to (Taylor 2004), a similar situation (but somehow more favourable) is present in referent neighbouring countries (Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria). In these countries, PR activity has been developing more intensively over the past 15 years. In Serbia, such trends started later, and most intensively only after 2000. Over the last few years, the public relations practice has made substantial progress because of the increased number of foreign and international companies which have entered the Serbian market. All this created the need to examine and study PR, as well as the very people who deal with this activity. This is how the research whose results are presented here originated.

### 3. Characteristics of the research

The research was carried out by polling the experts (PR managers) who are employed in companies operating in different fields of business activities. The basic characteristics of the process and the results of polling are the following:

- The number of PR managers. The total of  $N = 70$  managers from 70 different companies were polled and gave their answers. It is estimated that this number represents one third of all the PR managers in Serbia. A relatively small number of PR managers stems from the fact that many companies do not have an independent PR function and employees who would deal exclusively with PR. In many companies, the PR function is a part of some other functions, usually marketing. Also, very frequently, there are no persons specialized for this job, since it is considered that PR is not necessary for good business results.
- Research area in geographical terms. The research was carried out on the territory of Serbia.
- Time period of the research. The research lasted for six months, approximately in the period between March 1 and September 1, 2006.
- Type of questions. The survey comprised 29 questions which were subdivided into three characteristic groups: a) questions for analysis of the position of PR managers and their profession (11 questions: P1 – P11), b) questions for analysis of characteristics and education of PR managers (12 questions: CE1 – CE12), and c) questions for analysis of the most frequent and most important activities and media for the realization of the PR function (6 questions: A1 – A6). The subdivision of the questions into these groups is not determined by strict limits. Some of the questions could as well be found in two groups at the same time. The subdivision of

the questions into groups was made for the sake of easy reference and easier analyses.

- Question formulating. The questions have been formulated so as to encompass all the topics of interest for this research. In the course, the references which research some of these topics, for example: PR manager career development (Wolf 2006), PR manager satisfaction (Abbott 2003), PR manager education and skills (Elliot et al. 2003; Lubbers 2002). References which present other countries' experience in the field of PR (Arceo 2004; Bardhan et al. 2006; Guth 2000; Taylor 2004) had important impact on creating the questionnaire, as well as the references by the authors who deal with PR in the conditions which are the subject of this paper (Đorđević et al. 2004; Filipović/Kostić/Prohaska 2003; Sajfert/Đorđević/Bešić 2006).

Presentation of the results and analysis for each group of question follows below.

## 4. Position of PR management and their profession in Serbia

### 4.1. Initial results and analyses

Initial results and analyses refer to individual consideration of the 11 questions (P1 – P11) which belong to the group of questions for analysis of the position of PR managers and their profession in Serbia. Table 1 shows the questions asked, the results and the comments on the results obtained.

*Table 1. Questions for the analysis of the position of PR managers and their profession, results and comments*

Questions with the offered answers	Number of votes	Percentage
P1. How satisfied are you with the job of PR manager?		
a) Extremely satisfied	16	22.8
b) Very satisfied	27	38.6
c) Well satisfied	19	27.1
d) Little satisfied	6	8.6
e) Very little satisfied	2	2.8
<u>Comment:</u> The majority of the respondents (more than 61%) is extremely or very satisfied with the job of PR manager. There are very few of those who are not satisfied with their job.	$\Sigma = 70$	$\Sigma = 100$ %
P2. How motivated are you for the job of PR manager?		
a) Extremely motivated	16	22.8
b) Very motivated	24	34.3
c) Well motivated	36	37.1
d) Little motivated	3	4.3
e) Very little motivated	1	1.4

<u>Comment:</u> The majority of the respondents (more than 57%) is extremely or very motivated for the job of PR manager. Average or good motivation is also present, which means that there are very few of those who are not motivated for their job (below 6%).	$\Sigma = 70$	$\Sigma = 100$ %
P3. What are the chances of professional improvement from the position of the PR manager? a) Extremely strong b) Very strong c) Average d) Little e) Very little	6 24 26 12 2	8.6 34.3 37.1 17.1 2.8
<u>Comment:</u> The chances of professional improvement from the position of PR manager are slightly better than average.	$\Sigma = 70$	$\Sigma = 100$ %
P4. What are the chances of promotion in the career from the position of PR manager? a) Extremely strong b) Very strong c) Average d) Little e) Very little	9 20 32 7 2	12.8 28.6 45.7 10.0 2.8
<u>Comment:</u> The chances of promotion in the career from the position of PR manager are mainly average.	$\Sigma = 70$	$\Sigma = 100$ %
P5. How important do you think your job is for the company's business success? a) Extremely important b) Important c) Of average importance d) Of little importance e) Of very little importance	36 31 3 0 0	51.4 44.3 4.3 0 0
<u>Comment:</u> A large number of the respondents (over 96%) consider their job important and extremely important for the company's business success.	$\Sigma = 70$	$\Sigma = 100$ %
P6. How appreciated is the job of PR manager in your company? a) Very much b) Much c) Averagely d) Little e) Very little	6 29 29 4 2	8.6 41.4 41.4 5.7 2.8
<u>Comment:</u> The job of PR manager is mainly much or averagely appreciated in companies. This is a relatively good situation, but it refers to a small number of companies which have a special PR function. In addition to this, if these results were to be compared to the question P5, which indicates the importance of the job of PR manager, then it can be concluded that PR is still not appreciated enough in companies.	$\Sigma = 70$	$\Sigma = 100$ %
P7. How much is the job of PR manager appreciated by your friends? a) Very much b) Much c) Averagely d) Little e) Very little	21 28 19 2 0	30.0 40.0 27.1 2.8 0

<u>Comment:</u> The job of PR manager is very much appreciated by the people outside the company, considerably more than within the companies themselves. This is probably the consequence of the facts that PR managers appear in public, that they are always well dressed, in good mood, that they are articulate, etc.	$\Sigma = 70$	$\Sigma = 100$ %
P8. How appropriate is the work in PR management in Serbia? a) Very much b) Much c) Averagely d) Little e) Very little	6 15 32 14 3	8.6 21.4 45.7 20.0 4.3
<u>Comment:</u> Work in PR management is averagely appropriate for the conditions in Serbia.	$\Sigma = 70$	$\Sigma = 100$ %
P9. What are the prospects of your profession in Serbia? a) Very good b) Good c) Average d) Poor e) Very poor	20 40 7 2 1	28.6 57.1 10.0 2.8 1.4
<u>Comment:</u> The majority of the respondents (more than 85%) think that the prospects of PR profession in Serbia are very good. This can be considered an optimistic view, and progress in relation to the result of the question P8. In other words, the present position of the PR profession is average, but in the near future a much better situation can be expected.	$\Sigma = 70$	$\Sigma = 100$ %
P10. How often do you travel abroad per year (on business)? a) More than 10 times a year b) 5–10 times a year c) 3–5 times a year d) 1–2 times a year e) I do not travel abroad	3 8 14 20 25	4.3 11.4 20.0 28.6 35.7
<u>Comment:</u> Almost two thirds of the respondents (64.3%) do not travel abroad, or travel 1–2 times a year. The situation is even worse if account is taken of the fact that the respondents work in companies which have a special PR function, that is, those companies which are presumably better than the average ones. A small number of travels abroad is the consequence of the poor presence of Serbian companies on foreign markets. This is also confirmed by the study (Nikolic/Sajfert/Klarin 2006).	$\Sigma = 70$	$\Sigma = 100$ %
P11. How long is your workday (on average)? a) 12 hours b) 10 hours c) 8 hours d) 6 hours e) Working hours are not specified	10 32 22 0 6	14.3 45.7 31.4 0 8.6
<u>Comment:</u> Less than a third of the respondents (31.4%) work on average 8 hours a day. The others work more than that. PR manager has to be hard-working and ready to work a lot.	$\Sigma = 70$	$\Sigma = 100$ %

## 4.2. Additional results and analyses

Additional results and analyses refer to special consideration of particular questions for some characteristic conditions of observation of the position of PR managers and their profession in Serbia. Specifically, additional analysis of certain questions for those companies in which the job of PR manager is

appreciated Much (29 companies – question P6, Table 1), and Very much (6 companies – question P6, Table 1) was carried out. This analysis has shown that the following holds true for the companies in which the job of PR manager is much and very much appreciated:

- PR managers are more satisfied with the job than on the whole,
- PR managers are more motivated for the job than on the whole,
- the chances of professional improvement from the position of PR manager are better than on the whole,
- the chances of promotion in the career from the position of a PR manager are much better than on the whole,
- PR managers are more successful than on the whole.

## 5. Characteristics and education of PR managers in Serbia

### 5.1. Initial results and analyses

Initial results refer to individual consideration of the 12 questions (CE1–CE12) which belong to the group of the questions for the analysis of characteristics and education of PR managers in Serbia. Table 2 shows the questions asked, results, and comments on the obtained results.

*Table 2. Questions for analysis of the characteristics and education of PR managers, results and comments*

Questions with the offered answers	Number of votes	Percentage
CE1. What kind of knowledge and skills are most important for the job of a PR manager? Mark 3 out of the 10 offered answers.		
a) Knowledge of production	7	10.0
b) Knowledge of finances	4	5.7
c) Knowledge of management	9	12.8
d) Knowledge of marketing	37	52.8
e) Knowledge of foreign languages	18	25.7
f) Creativity	26	37.1
g) Communicativeness	55	78.6
h) Negotiating skills	13	18.6
i) Ability to work with people	30	42.8
j) Ability to make decisions	11	15.7
<u>Comment</u> : Of all the offered answers, the most important kinds of knowledge and skills for the job of PR manager are in the first place communicativeness, then knowledge of marketing, ability to work with people, and creativity. Knowledge of production and finances are least important for a PR manager.	$\Sigma = 210$	$\Sigma = 300 \%$

CE2. What kind of knowledge and skills do you have which help you in the job of PR manager? Mark 3 of the 10 offered answers.		
a) Knowledge of production	8	11.4
b) Knowledge of finances	4	5.7
c) Knowledge of management	14	20.0
d) Knowledge of marketing	30	42.8
e) Knowledge of foreign languages	16	22.8
f) Creativity	30	42.8
g) Communicativeness	53	75.7
h) Negotiating skills	12	17.1
i) Ability to work with people	39	55.7
j) Ability to make decisions	4	5.7
<u>Comment:</u> Of all the offered answers, most PR managers have the following kind of knowledge and skills: communicativeness, ability to work with people, knowledge of marketing, and creativity. Knowledge of finances and ability to make decisions are least represented with PR managers. There is a great degree of similarity with the desirable kinds of knowledge and skills (Question CE 1). It can be seen that skills prevail, with the exception of knowledge of marketing. People with noted skills should be selected for PR managers, with raising their level of knowledge of marketing.	$\Sigma = 210$	$\Sigma = 300 \%$
CE3. Which personal characteristic traits are most important for the job of PR manager? Mark 5 of the 19 offered answers.		
a) Education	45	64.3
b) Intelligence	35	50.0
c) Strong will	9	12.8
d) Experience	20	28.6
e) Ethicality and sincerity	10	14.3
f) Creativity	26	37.1
g) Communicativeness	52	74.3
h) Negotiating skills	12	17.1
i) Positive attitude	18	25.7
j) Charisma	28	40.0
k) Self-confidence	34	48.6
l) Personal satisfaction	3	4.3
m) Loyalty to the company	10	14.3
n) Ability to make decisions	12	17.1
o) Physical appearance	17	24.3
p) Ambitiousness (desire for promotion)	11	15.7
q) Willingness to learn	8	11.4
r) Desire for money	0	0
s) Lust for power	0	0
<u>Comment:</u> Of all the offered answers, the most important characteristics for the job of PR manager are: in the first place, communicativeness, then education, intelligence, self-confidence, and charisma. Desire for money, lust for power, personal satisfaction, willingness to learn and strong will are the least important characteristics for a PR manager.	$\Sigma = 350$	$\Sigma = 500 \%$

CE4. Which personal characteristics do you have that help you in the job of PR manager? Mark 5 of the 19 offered questions.		
a) Education	40	57.1
b) Intelligence	23	32.8
c) Strong will	25	35.7
d) Experience	18	25.7
e) Ethicality and sincerity	16	22.8
f) Creativity	22	31.4
g) Communicativeness	55	78.6
h) Negotiating skills	8	11.4
i) Positive attitude	31	44.3
j) Charisma	13	18.6
k) Self-confidence	24	34.3
l) Personal satisfaction	4	5.7
m) Loyalty to the company	16	22.8
n) Ability to make decisions	10	14.3
o) Physical appearance	10	14.3
p) Ambitiousness (desire for promotion)	14	20.0
q) Willingness to learn	20	28.6
r) Desire for money	1	1.4
s) Lust for power	0	0
<u>Comment:</u> Of all the offered answers, the majority of PR managers have the following personal characteristics: in the first place, communicativeness, then education, positive attitude, strong will, and self-confidence. Lust for power, desire for money, personal satisfaction, and negotiating skills are the least represented characteristics with PR managers. In relation to the desirable characteristics of PR managers, a great similarity is noticeable. Weaker placement of characteristics such as intelligence and charisma can be the consequence of the respondents' modesty. These characteristics have to the greatest extent replaced the following ones: strong will, positive attitude, willingness to learn, ethicality, and sincerity.	$\Sigma = 350$	$\Sigma = 500 \%$
CE5. Level of your education.		
a) PhD	0	0
b) Master of science	3	4.3
c) University degree	58	82.8
d) College education	7	10.0
e) Secondary education	2	2.8
<u>Comment:</u> The majority of the respondents have university degree (82.8%). It should be pointed out that two of the respondents with secondary education are currently studying, which can additionally increase the number of PR managers with university degree.	$\Sigma = 70$	$\Sigma = 100 \%$
CE6. Type (profile) of your education.		
a) Organization and management	11	15.7
b) Engineering disciplines	5	7.1
c) Economics	28	40.0
d) Law	2	2.8
e) Sociology	2	2.8
f) Psychology	3	4.3
g) Journalism	8	11.4
h) Literature and languages	8	11.4
i) Faculty of Dramatic Arts	1	1.4
j) Geography	1	1.4
k) Biology	1	1.4

<u>Comment:</u> According to the type (profile) of education, most of the respondents graduated from economics, management, journalism and literature. Considerable variety of the respondents' professions indicates that people whose education is sometimes related to strictly expert business activity of the company.	$\Sigma = 70$	$\Sigma = 100 \%$
CE7. How much does your education help you in the job of PR manager? a) Very much b) Much c) Averagely d) Little e) Very little	14 30 19 4 3	20.0 42.8 27.1 5.7 4.3
<u>Comment:</u> Education helps much and very much (62.8%) to most of the respondents in their job. Only 10% of the respondents said that their prior education helps them little and very little in the job of PR manager.	$\Sigma = 70$	$\Sigma = 100 \%$
CE8. What is the need for developing specialized educational programmes for acquiring knowledge and skills in the field of PR? a) Extremely great b) Very great c) Average d) Little e) Very little	25 37 7 1 0	35.7 52.8 10.0 1.4 0
<u>Comment:</u> Most of the respondents (88.5%) think that the need for developing specialized educational programmes for acquiring knowledge and skills in the field of PR is great or extremely great. This fact is interesting in relation to the question CE7, to which most of the respondents answered that their education considerably helps them in their job. However, according to the respondents' opinion, this does not reduce the need for developing specialized educational programmes for acquiring knowledge and skills in the field of PR.	$\Sigma = 70$	$\Sigma = 100 \%$
CE9. In which way do you acquire the necessary knowledge for the PR manager practice? Mark 3 of the 6 offered answers. a) Education b) Studying of foreign professional literature c) The Internet d) Specialist seminars and courses e) Experience and routine f) By studying professional literature published in Serbian	28 36 44 46 44 12	40.0 51.4 62.8 65.7 62.8 17.1
<u>Comment:</u> There is considerable uniformity regarding the way of acquiring the necessary knowledge for the practice and job of PR manager. If the votes for professional literature, both Serbian and foreign, were to be added up, then education is the lowest ranked way of acquiring the necessary knowledge for PR practice. A very high degree of independent training is also present. This confirms once again the need for developing specialized educational programmes for acquiring knowledge in the field of PR (Question CE8).	$\Sigma = 210$	$\Sigma = 300 \%$
CE10. How much do you enjoy working with people? a) Very much b) Much c) Averagely d) Little e) Very little	24 38 7 0 1	34.3 54.3 10.0 0 1.4
<u>Comment:</u> The majority of the respondents (88.6%) enjoy working with people much and very much.	$\Sigma = 70$	$\Sigma = 100 \%$

CE11. How successful do you think you are in your job?		
a) Extremely successful	12	17.1
b) Very successful	33	47.1
c) Averagely successful	24	34.3
d) Unsuccessful	1	1.4
e) Very unsuccessful	0	0
<u>Comment:</u> The majority of the respondents (64.2%) think that they are very successful and extremely successful in their job. Very few respondents (1.4%) consider themselves unsuccessful and very unsuccessful in the job of PR manager.	$\Sigma = 70$	$\Sigma = 100 \%$
CE12. Did you plan to do the job of PR manager?		
a) Yes	12	17.1
b) It was a possibility	31	44.3
c) No	27	38.6
<u>Comment:</u> A greater number of the respondents did not plan to do the job of PR manager. This is understandable considering the fact that PR profession is relatively new in Serbia, and that there are relatively few specialized educational programmes for PR managers.	$\Sigma = 70$	$\Sigma = 100 \%$

## 5.2. Additional results and analyses

Additional results and analyses refer to special considerations of certain questions for some characteristic conditions of observation of the characteristics and education of PR managers in Serbia. Two additional analyses were carried out.

First of all, additional analysis of the type (profile) of education for the PR managers who answered that their education Very much helps them in their job (14 PR managers – question CE7, Table 2). This analysis has shown that PR managers to whom their education helps a lot in their work have different profiles of education. However, journalists significantly stand out with 50%. Of the 8 polled journalists, as many as 7 think that their education helps them a lot in their work.

Secondly, additional analysis of certain questions was carried for those PR managers who said that they are Extremely successful (12 managers – question CE11, Table 2). This analysis has shown the following:

- PR managers who said that they are very successful, mostly have the following knowledge and skills: in the first place, communicativeness, then knowledge of marketing, creativity and negotiating skills. In relation to the overall results with the same question (question CE2, Table 2), similarity is noticeable here, with the exception of the ability to work with people, which has a very low ranking. Instead of this, the four mentioned answers are intensified.
- PR managers who said that they are extremely successful, mostly have the following characteristics: in the first place, communicativeness and self-confidence, then positive attitude, charisma, and willingness to learn. Generally, PR managers who said that they are as extremely successful

are closer to the desirable state (question CE3, Table 2), in relation to all the interviewees (question CE4, Table 2).

- PR managers who said that they are extremely successful, mostly have a degree in economics and journalism. Economics is not a surprise, considering the high percentage of economists among all the polled PR managers (question CE6, Table 2). What is interesting is that journalists appear as educational profile which is very successful in the job of PR manager. It has already been shown that journalists are helped most in their job by their previous education.
- PR managers who said that they are extremely successful work slightly more in relation to the result obtained when all the respondents are observed together (Question P11, Table 1).

## **6. Most frequent activities and media for realization of PR function in Serbia**

### **6.1. Initial results and analysis**

Initial results and analyses refer to individual considerations of the 6 questions (A1–A6), which belong to the group of questions for the analysis of the most frequent and most important activities and media for realizing PR function in Serbia. Table 3 shows the questions asked, the results and comments on the obtained results.

### **6.2. Additional results and analyses**

Additional results and analyses refer to special consideration of certain questions for some characteristic conditions of observing the most frequent and most important activities and media for realization of PR function in Serbia. Additional analysis of certain questions was specifically carried out for the companies in which PR is Extremely successful in PR managers' opinion (16 PR managers – question A6, Table 3). This analysis has shown the following:

- The companies in which PR is very successful, most frequently undertake the following forms of PR activities: actions and campaigns aimed at creating company's image, internal programmes, presentation of new products and services, and monitoring the information from the market. Generally speaking, the companies in which PR is extremely successful are closer to the desirable state (question A3, Table 3) in relation to all the respondents (question A4, Table 3). This is the result of the fact that preparing various publications is considerably less represented here.
- The companies in which PR is extremely successful most frequently use the following media: Press (newspapers, magazines, reviews, etc.) and personal contacts. In relation to all the companies (question A5, Table 3),

the percentage of use of various publications is reduced, whereas the percentage of personal contacts is increased.

*Table 3. Questions for analysis of the most frequent and most important activities and media for realizing PR functions, results and comments*

Questions with the offered answers	Number of votes	Percentage
A1. What do you like most about the job of PR manager? Mark 3 of the 10 offered answers.		
a) Possibility of learning	25	37.5
b) Chances for promotion	4	5.7
c) Opportunity of good earnings	9	12.8
d) Meeting a large number of people	49	70.0
e) Working with people	15	21.4
f) Creativity of the job	43	61.4
g) Dynamism of the job	47	67.1
h) Opportunity to travel	12	17.1
i) Appreciation by other people	6	8.6
j) A relaxed, stress-free job	0	0
<u>Comment:</u> The respondents like best the following about the job of PR manager: meeting a large number of people, dynamism of the job, and creativity of the job.	$\Sigma = 210$	$\Sigma = 300 \%$
A2. What do you like least about the job of PR manager? Mark 3 of the 11 offered answers.		
a) The need to learn	0	0
b) Poor prospects of promotion	15	21.4
c) Low earnings	9	12.8
d) The need to be always in good mood	40	57.1
e) The need to communicate very frequently	6	8.6
f) The job which does not require much knowledge and creativity	0	0
g) Monotony of the job	1	1.4
h) The need for frequent travels	2	2.8
i) Poor reputation of the profession	28	40.0
j) High degree of stress	60	85.7
k) The need to be insincere sometimes	49	70.0
<u>Comment:</u> In the job of PR manager the respondents least liked the following: high degree of stress, the need to be insincere sometimes, the need to be always in good mood and poor reputation of the profession. It should be pointed out the job of PR manager understands a high degree of stress (no less than 85.7% of the respondents mentioned stress as the greatest problem). This is at the same time the highest percentage in the survey.	$\Sigma = 210$	$\Sigma = 300 \%$

<p>A3. Which forms of PR activities are most important and most efficient in general, in your opinion? Mark 3 of the 12 offered answers.</p> <p>a) Preparing press releases</p> <p>b) Organizing press conferences</p> <p>c) Preparing communications fro radio and TV</p> <p>d) Organizing appearance in radio and TV programmes</p> <p>e) Actions and campaigns aimed at creating company image</p> <p>f) Presentation of new products and services</p> <p>g) Monitoring the information from the market</p> <p>h) Preparing various publications (catalogues, prospectuses, magazines, posters, etc.)</p> <p>i) Patronages and sponsorships</p> <p>j) Organizing special events (celebrations, anniversaries, meetings, openings, etc.)</p> <p>k) Appearance at fairs and exhibitions</p> <p>l) Internal programmes (building up the motivation of the employees, creating the feeling of belonging to a successful team, creating recognizable identity and style of doing business, education and training of the employees in the field of PR, etc.)</p>	<p>12</p> <p>16</p> <p>11</p> <p>23</p> <p>50</p> <p>12</p> <p>21</p> <p>5</p> <p>8</p> <p>15</p> <p>8</p> <p>29</p>	<p>17.1</p> <p>22.8</p> <p>15.7</p> <p>32.8</p> <p>71.4</p> <p>17.1</p> <p>30.0</p> <p>7.1</p> <p>11.4</p> <p>21.4</p> <p>11.4</p> <p>41.4</p>
<p><u>Comment:</u> The most important and efficient forms of PR activities are: in the first place actions and campaigns aimed at creating company's image, then internal programmes, organizing appearances in radio and TV programmes, and monitoring the information from the market.</p>	<p><math>\Sigma = 210</math></p>	<p><math>\Sigma = 300 \%</math></p>
<p>A4. Which are the most frequent forms of PR activities in your company? Mark 3 of the offered 12 answers.</p> <p>a) Preparing press releases</p> <p>b) Organizing press conferences</p> <p>c) Preparing communications fro radio and TV</p> <p>d) Organizing appearance in radio and TV programmes</p> <p>e) Actions and campaigns aimed at creating company image</p> <p>f) Presentation of new products and services</p> <p>g) Monitoring the information from the market</p> <p>h) Preparing various publications (catalogues, prospectuses, magazines, posters, etc.)</p> <p>i) Patronages and sponsorships</p> <p>j) Organizing special events (celebrations, anniversaries, meetings, openings, etc.)</p> <p>k) Appearance at fairs and exhibitions</p> <p>l) Internal programmes (building up the motivation of the employees, creating the feeling of belonging to a successful team, creating recognizable identity and style of doing business, education and training of the employees in the field of PR, etc.)</p>	<p>21</p> <p>14</p> <p>19</p> <p>13</p> <p>33</p> <p>26</p> <p>15</p> <p>27</p> <p>8</p> <p>9</p> <p>12</p> <p>13</p>	<p>30.0</p> <p>20.0</p> <p>27.1</p> <p>18.6</p> <p>47.1</p> <p>37.1</p> <p>21.4</p> <p>38.6</p> <p>11.4</p> <p>12.8</p> <p>17.1</p> <p>18.6</p>
<p><u>Comment:</u> The most frequent PR activities in companies are: actions and campaigns aimed at creating company's image, preparing various publications (catalogues, prospectuses, magazines, posters, etc.) and presenting new products and services. The results in reality are not far from the desired, with the exception of, perhaps, overusing preparing various publications as a form of PR activity. This is probably the consequence of the simplicity and relatively low cost of this form of PR activity.</p>	<p><math>\Sigma = 210</math></p>	<p><math>\Sigma = 300 \%</math></p>

A5. Which are the most frequently used media for PR activities in your company? Mark 3 of the 11 offered answers.		
a) Press (newspapers, magazines, reviews, etc.)	58	82.8
b) Radio	19	27.1
c) TV	46	65.7
d) Film / Video	2	2.8
e) Various company's publications (catalogues, prospectuses, magazines, posters, etc.)	40	57.1
f) Correspondence with the customers	4	5.7
g) Visits to the company	6	8.6
h) Exhibitions	6	8.6
i) Public address	9	12.8
j) Personal contacts	16	22.8
k) The Internet	4	5.7
<u>Comment:</u> The most frequently used media for PR activities are: Press (newspapers, magazines, reviews, etc.), TV and various company's publications (catalogues, prospectuses, magazines, posters, etc.).	$\Sigma = 210$	$\Sigma = 300 \%$
A6. How successful do you think is PR in your company?		
a) Extremely successful	16	22.8
b) Very successful	29	41.4
c) Averagely successful	22	31.4
d) Unsuccessful	1	1.4
e) Very unsuccessful	2	2.8
<u>Comment:</u> To a great extent, (64.2%), the respondents think that PR in their companies are very successful and extremely successful. On the other hand, very few (4.2%) of the respondents think that PR in their companies are unsuccessful or very unsuccessful.	$\Sigma = 70$	$\Sigma = 100 \%$

## 7. Key attitude dimensions of PR management in Serbia

Part of the data (14 questions), has been processed by factor analysis. Principal Component Analysis (PCA) has been applied. Selection of the number of factors has been made according to Kaiser - Guttman criterion. Five factors have been identified which refer to PR function in Serbian companies (Table 4). These factors cover around 67% of variations in attitudes of PR managers in Serbia.

The identified factors have been rotated by applying varimax method. The results of the rotation are shown in Table 5. (Table 5 shows the questions which have been processed by factor analysis).

The identified factors have been interpreted on the basis of the results shown in Table 5. In this way, factors which describe (represent) the attitudes of PR managers in Serbia have been defined:

F1 – Satisfaction with PR function, subjective and organisational,

F2 – PR managers' personal prospects,

F3 – PR managers' personal reputation,

F4 – Quality of professional improvement of PR managers,

F5 – Importance of education for the job of PR manager.

Interpretation of the factors points to the fact that PR managers in Serbia are ambitious, proactive people to whom non-material categories are important above all: reputation and success of PR function in the company, satisfaction and prospects in the job, personal reputation and professional improvement. These results can be considered encouraging, both in terms of prospects of PR management in Serbia and in terms of creating and developing positive climate and high system of values in Serbian companies.

*Table 4. PR function factors in Serbian companies (Eigenvalues and Percent of variance explained)*

Factor	Eigenvalue	Total Variance %	Cumulative Eigenvalue	Cumulative %
1	4.207772	30.05551	4.207772	30.05551
2	1.487835	10.62739	5.695606	40.68290
3	1.341726	9.58376	7.037332	50.26666
4	1.220627	8.71876	8.257959	58.98542
5	1.092717	7.80512	9.350677	66.79055

## 8. Conclusion

The research conducted in Serbian companies shows that PR managers' satisfaction at work and motivation are at a high level. Chances of professional improvement and career promotion from the position of PR manager are average or slightly better than average. It was proved that the job of PR manager is very important for the company's business success. The finding that the prospects of PR profession in Serbia are better in relation to the present situation gives grounds for optimism. Also, factor analysis has shown that PR managers can be promoters of creating a high level of organisational culture in Serbian companies.

Furthermore, the job of PR manager in Serbian companies is appreciated slightly more than average, but still insufficiently considering its real importance. In companies in which the job of PR manager is appreciated more than average, better results are observed in relation to the satisfaction at work, motivation, chances of professional improvement, career prospects, and successfulness of PR managers.

The respondents' answers show that there is a great similarity in the knowledge and skills which PR managers have in relation to the desirable knowledge and skills. The following knowledge and skills prevail: communicativeness, knowledge of marketing, ability to work with people, and creativity. There is a great similarity in personal characteristics which PR managers have in relation to the desirable personal characteristics of PR managers. The most frequently desirable and existing personal characteristics are: communicativeness, education, intelligence, self-confidence, and positive attitude.

Vast majority of PR managers in Serbian companies have a university degree. The profiles of their education are different, and most of them have graduated from economics, management, journalism, and literature. Journalism appears as educational profile which helps PR managers most in their work. In addition to this, PR managers who said that they are extremely successful, mostly have a degree in journalism. Although education considerably helps PR managers in their work, there is a great need for developing specialised educational programmes in the field of PR (in Serbia, there are very few faculties at which such programmes are studied).

A large number of PR managers consider themselves very successful in their jobs. Consequently, very few respondents consider themselves unsuccessful in the job of PR manager. Extremely successful PR managers have similar knowledge and skills as all the other respondents. Their personal characteristics are slightly closer to the desirable characteristics in relation to all the respondents.

*Table 5. Factor loadings (varimax normalized rotation); Extraction: Principal components*

Variable	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5
P1. How satisfied are you with the job of PR manager?	0.684372	0.213864	0.257448	0.133309	0.335958
P2. How motivated are you for the job of PR manager?	0.558219	0.116729	0.178601	-0.334462	0.392191
P3. What are the chances of professional improvement from the position of the PR manager?	-0.012954	0.788356	0.072369	0.005396	0.127302
P4. What are the chances of promotion in the career from the position of PR manager?	-0.003215	0.519737	0.646401	-0.154804	-0.017002
P5. How important do you think your job is for the company's business success?	0.060712	-0.031999	0.762151	0.146025	0.366193
P6. How appreciated is the job of PR manager in your company?	0.735325	0.027169	0.231686	0.094560	-0.260227
P7. How much is the work in PR management appreciated by your friends?	0.278456	0.074140	0.724708	0.203316	-0.119266
P8. How appropriate is the work in PR management in Serbia?	0.497272	0.624425	-0.116968	0.283397	-0.141129
P9. What are the prospects of your profession in Serbia?	0.136814	0.627678	0.143179	0.600315	0.065166
CE7. How much does your education help you in the job of PR manager?	0.038716	0.112226	0.038823	0.217611	0.834682
CE8. What is the need for developing spec. educational programmes for acquiring	0.112110	0.003993	0.173003	0.814331	0.161748

knowledge and skills in the field of PR?					
CE10. How much do you enjoy working with people?	0.189002	0.492515	0.116433	-0.097955	0.402627
CE11. How successful do you think you are in your job?	0.594533	-0.002989	0.431403	0.297490	0.073827
A6. How successful do you think is PR in your company?	0.652442	0.066648	-0.081882	0.023801	0.100121
Expl. Var.	2.497016	2.001773	1.952991	1.475076	1.423820
Prp. Totl	0.178358	0.142984	0.139499	0.105363	0.101701

In the job of PR manager, the respondents like most the following: meeting a large number of people, dynamism of the job, and creativity of the job. On the other hand, the respondents like least the following: high degree of stress, the need to be insincere sometimes, the need to be always in good mood, and poor reputation of the profession.

The most frequent forms of PR activities in companies are: actions and campaigns aimed at creating company's image, preparing various publications (catalogues, prospectuses, magazines, posters, etc.) and presenting new products and services. The results in reality are not far from the desired, with the exception of, perhaps, overusing preparing various publications as a form of PR activities. This is probably the consequence of the simplicity and low cost of this form of PR activity. The most frequently used media for PR activities are: the press (newspapers, magazines, reviews, etc.), TV, and various company's publications (catalogues, prospectuses, magazines, posters, etc.).

And finally, a vast majority of the respondents think that the PR department in their companies is very successful. Likewise, very few respondents think that the PR department in their companies is unsuccessful. The fact that the research included the companies which have a special PR function should be taken into account here, as well as the fact that their number in Serbia is relatively low. These are mainly successful companies, so that the PR department in them is successful, too.

In accordance with the conclusions drawn, several proposals to improve PR function in Serbian companies could be defined. First, it is necessary to permanently and systematically raise the reputation of PR profession at all levels. In accordance with this, it is necessary to appreciate PR profession more, as well as the people who deal with PR in the companies themselves. Second, people with the desirable knowledge, skills, and personal qualities should be selected for PR managers (identified in the research). The choice of PR managers did not show itself as a special problem, but this should certainly be taken into account. Third, it is necessary to develop specialized educational programmes in the field of PR and increase the number of faculties at which such programmes can be studied. This would undoubtedly contribute to the reputation of the profession and provide a sufficient number of quality and

competent people for the job of PR manager. Fourth, it is necessary to reduce the level of stress in PR jobs as much as possible.

By drawing the conclusions and defining the proposals for improving PR function, the objectives of the research have been met, and its carrying out has been justified. Overall results can be considered good and encouraging. The realization of the above-quoted proposals would contribute to the overall increase of successfulness of PR in companies, as well as to higher quality performance of individuals who deal with this problem area. This is extremely important in relation to the increasing importance of PR function in companies in economies in transition.

In order to improve the activity of public relations in companies in Serbia, special attention should be paid to the implementation of new approaches to marketing in both conceptual and organizational sense. This particularly refers to wider acceptance of the new model of marketing, conditioned by technological development, and in the communicational component of marketing represented by the model of integrated marketing communication. The new approaches to studying marketing and its application in practice represent the reality of modern business, as well as the globalization process of world economy. The key factor for improving the PR activity in international marketing is educating the experts in this field, and application of modern methods of marketing management, where relations marketing and the concept of integrated marketing communication have the most prominent place.

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