

# بحوث العلاقات العامة

## الشرق الأوسط



معامل التأثير العربي لعام ٢٠١٧ = ١.٣٤

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## مجلة بحوث العلاقات العامة الشرق الأوسط

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### التعريف بالمجلة:

- مجلة بحوث العلاقات العامة الشرق الأوسط دورية علمية تنشر أبحاثاً متخصصة في العلاقات العامة وعلوم الإعلام والاتصال، بعد أن تقوم بتحكيمها من قبل عدد من الأساتذة المتخصصين في نفس المجال، وهي تابعة للجمعية المصرية للعلاقات العامة أول جمعية علمية مصرية متخصصة في العلاقات العامة.
- المجلة معتمدة ولها ترقيم دولي ومصنفة دولياً لنسختها المطبوعة والإلكترونية من أكاديمية البحث العلمي والتكنولوجيا بالقاهرة، ومصنفة من لجنة الترتيبات العلمية تخصص الإعلام بالمجلس الأعلى للجامعات في مصر.
  - أول دورية علمية محكمة في التخصص على مستوى الوطن العربي والشرق الأوسط، وأول دورية علمية عربية في تخصص (الإعلام) تحصل على معامل التأثير العربي Arab Impact Factor بمعامل تأثير = ١.٣٤ بنسبة ١٠٠% في تقرير عام ٢٠١٧ للمؤسسة الأمريكية " NSP نشر العلوم الطبيعية " برعاية اتحاد الجامعات العربية.
  - المجلة فصلية تصدر كل ثلاثة أشهر خلال العام.
  - تقبل المجلة نشر عروض الكتب والمؤتمرات وورش العمل والأحداث العلمية العربية والدولية.
  - تقبل المجلة نشر إعلانات عن محركات بحث علمية أو دور نشر عربية أو أجنبية وفقاً لشروط خاصة يلتزم بها المعلن.
  - يُقبل نشر البحوث الخاصة بالترقيات العلمية – وللباحثين المتقدمين لمناقشة رسائل الماجستير والدكتوراة.
  - يُقبل نشر ملخصات الرسائل العلمية التي نوقشت، ويُقبل نشر عروض الكتب العلمية المتخصصة في العلاقات العامة والإعلام كذلك المقالات العلمية المتخصصة من أساتذة التخصص من أعضاء هيئة التدريس.

### قواعد النشر:

- أن يكون البحث أصيلاً ولم يسبق نشره.
- تقبل البحوث باللغات: ( العربية – الإنجليزية – الفرنسية ) على أن يكتب ملخص باللغة الإنجليزية للبحث في حدود صفحة واحدة إذا كان مكتوب باللغة العربية.
- أن يكون البحث في إطار الموضوعات التي تهتم بها المجلة في العلاقات العامة والإعلام والاتصالات التسويقية المتكاملة.
- تخضع البحوث العلمية المقدمة للمجلة للتحكيم ما لم تكون البحوث قد تم تقييمها من قبل اللجان والمجالس العلمية بالجهات الأكاديمية المعترف بها أو كانت جزءاً من رسالة أكاديمية نوقشت وتم منح صاحبها الدرجة العلمية.
- يراعى اتباع الأسس العلمية الصحيحة في كتابة البحث العلمي ومراجعته ويراعى الكتابة ببنت (١٤) Simplified Arabic والعناوين الرئيسية والفرعية Bold.
- يتم رصد المراجع في نهاية البحث وفقاً للمنهجية العلمية بأسلوب متسلسل وفقاً للإشارة إلى المرجع في متن البحث وفقاً لطريقة APA الأمريكية.
- يقدم الباحث عدد (٢) نسخ مطبوعة من البحث ونسخة إلكترونية على CD مكتوبة بصيغة Word مصحوبة بسيرة ذاتية مختصره عنه.

- في حالة قبول البحث للنشر بالمجلة يتم إخطار الباحث بخطاب رسمي بقبول البحث للنشر. أما في حالة عدم قبول البحث للنشر فيتم إخطار الباحث بخطاب رسمي وإرسال جزء من رسوم نشر البحث له في أسرع وقت.
- إذا تطلب البحث إجراء تعديلاً بسيطاً فيلتزم الباحث بإعادة إرسال البحث معدلاً خلال أسبوع من استلام ملاحظات التعديل وإذا حدث تأخير منه فسيتم تأجيل نشر البحث للعدد التالي أما إذا كان التعديل جذرياً فيرسله الباحث بعد ١٥ يوم من إرسال الملاحظات له.
- يرسل الباحث مع البحث ما قيمته ٢٠٠٠ جنيه مصري للمصريين من داخل مصر، ومبلغ ٥٠٠\$ للمصريين المقيمين بالخارج والأجانب، مع تخفيض لمن يحمل العضوية العلمية بالجمعية. وتخفيض ٥٠% من الرسوم لطلبة الماجستير والدكتوراه. يتم بعدها إخضاع البحث للتحكيم من قبل اللجنة العلمية .
- يتم رد نصف المبلغ للباحثين من داخل وخارج مصر في حالة رفض هيئة التحكيم البحث وإقرارهم بعدم صلاحيته للنشر بالمجلة.
- لا يزيد عدد صفحات البحث عن (٣٥) صفحة A4- في حالة الزيادة تحتسب الصفحة بـ ٢٠ جنيه مصري للمصريين داخل مصر وللمقيمين بالخارج والأجانب ٥\$.
- يتم تقديم خصم خاص من قيمة النشر العلمي لعضوية زمالة الجمعية المصرية للعلاقات العامة من المصريين والجنسيات الأخرى بنسبة ١٠% ولأى عدد من المرات خلال العام.
- يُرسل للباحث عدد (٢) نسخة من المجلة بعد نشر بحثه، وعدد (٥) مستلة من البحث الخاص به.
- ملخص رسالة علمية (ماجستير) ٢٥٠ للمصريين ولغير المصريين ١٥٠\$.
- ملخص رسالة علمية (الدكتوراه) ٣٥٠ جنيه للمصريين ولغير المصريين ١٨٠\$. على أن لا يزيد ملخص الرسالة عن ٨ صفحات. ويتم تقديم خصم ١٠% لمن يشترك في عضوية الجمعية المصرية للعلاقات العامة . ويتم إرسال عدد (٣) نسخ من المجلة بعد النشر للباحث على عنوانه بالبريد الدولي.
- نشر عرض كتاب للمصريين ٧٠٠ جنيه ولغير المصريين ٣٠٠\$ ، ويتم إرسال عدد (٣) نسخ من المجلة بعد النشر لصاحب الكتاب على عنوانه بالبريد الدولي السريع. ويتم تقديم خصم ١٠% لمن يشترك في عضوية زمالة الجمعية المصرية للعلاقات العامة .
- بالنسبة لنشر عروض تنظيم ورش العمل والندوات من داخل مصر ٦٠٠ جنيه ومن خارج مصر ٣٥٠\$. بدون حد أقصى لعدد الصفحات.
- بالنسبة لنشر عروض المؤتمرات الدولية من داخل مصر ٨٥٠ جنيه ومن خارج مصر ٤٥٠\$ بدون حد أقصى لعدد الصفحات.
- جميع الآراء والنتائج البحثية تعبر عن أصحاب البحوث المقدمة وليس للجمعية المصرية للعلاقات العامة أى دخل بها.
- ترسل المشاركات باسم رئيس مجلس إدارة المجلة على عنوان الجمعية المصرية للعلاقات العامة- جمهورية مصر العربية - الجيزة - الدقى - بين السرايات - ٢ شارع أحمد الزيات، والإميل المعتمد من الجمعية jpr@epra.org.eg ، أو إميل رئيس مجلس إدارة المجلة Chairman@epra.org.eg بعد تسديد قيمة البحث وإرسال صورة الإيصال التي تفيد ذلك.

## الافتتاحية

في العام السادس ومنذ بداية إصدارها في أكتوبر/ ديسمبر من العام ٢٠١٣م - يتواصل صدور أعداد المجلة بانتظام ليصدر منها ثمانية عشر عددًا متتابعة تضم أبحاثًا ورؤى علمية متعددة لأساتذة ومتخصصين وباحثين من مختلف دول العالم.

وبما أن المجلة أول دورية علمية محكمة في بحوث العلاقات العامة بالوطن العربي والشرق الأوسط - تصدر عن الجمعية المصرية للعلاقات العامة (عضو شبكة الجمعيات العلمية بأكاديمية البحث العلمي والتكنولوجيا بالقاهرة) - وجد فيها الأساتذة الراغبون في تقديم إنتاجهم للمجتمع العلمي بكافة مستوياته ضالتهم للنشر على النطاق العربي وبعض الدول الأجنبية التي تصل إليها المجلة من خلال مندوبيها في هذه الدول وكذلك من خلال موقعها الإلكتروني. فقد تحصّلت المجلة على أول معامل تأثير عربي (AIF) للدوريات العلمية العربية المحكمة في تخصص (الإعلام) على مستوى الجامعات والمؤسسات العلمية التي تصدر محتوى باللغة العربية بمعدل = ١.٣٤، والمعامل تابع لمؤسسة النشر الأمريكية العالمية (NSP) دار نشر العلوم الطبيعية Natural Publishing Sciences وبرعاية اتحاد الجامعات العربية. والمجلة مفهرسة حاليًا ضمن قواعد البيانات الرقمية الدولية (EBSCO HOST) - دار المنظومة - العبيكان).

وفي العدد الثامن عشر من المجلة في عامها السادس؛ نقدم للباحثين في الدراسات الإعلامية والمهتمين بهذا المجال بحوثًا ورؤى علمية للأساتذة ولأساتذة المشاركين والمساعدين كذلك الباحثين، مقدمة للنشر العلمي بهدف تكوين رصيد للباحثين من أعضاء هيئة التدريس للتقدم للترقية أو الباحثين لمناقشة الدكتوراه والماجستير.

ففي البداية نجد بحثًا مقدمًا من: أ.م.د/ محمد الصبيحي - جامعة الإمام محمد بن سعود الإسلامية - من (السعودية)، والذي قدم دراسة ميدانية على الجامعات السعودية عن: "اتجاهات الطلاب نحو البرامج التعليمية في كليات الإعلام وأقسامه وعلاقتها بمتطلبات الجودة الشاملة".

أما: أ.م.د/ عمر إبراهيم بو سعدة - جامعة الملك خالد - من (الجزائر) فقدم دراسة نظرية عن: "دور إدارة المعلومات لأجهزة العلاقات العامة في مواجهة الأزمات المؤسسية".

وقدمت: د/ خلود عبد الله ملياني - جامعة الملك عبد العزيز - من (السعودية)، والتي قدمت دراسة عن: "دور تطبيقات وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في تنمية الوعي السياسي لدى المرأة السعودية".  
بينما قدم د/ نصر الدين عبد القادر عثمان - جامعة عجمان - من (السودان)، دراسة ميدانية على عينة من العاملين في العلاقات العامة عن: "أدوار مستشار العلاقات العامة في التعامل مع الأزمات المؤسسية".

أما د/ رباب صلاح السيد - جامعة المنوفية - من (مصر) قدمت دراسة عن:  
"استخدامات طلاب الجامعة للمواد الفكاهية المقدمة بوسائل الإعلام والإشباع التي تحققها لهم".

وضمن متطلبات الحصول على درجة الدكتوراه قدم كل من: حسين فايز الشهراني - جامعة اليرموك - من (السعودية)، بحثاً بعنوان: "اعتماد الطلبة الخليبيين على مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي في تواصلهم مع الهيئات الدبلوماسية لدول مجلس التعاون الخليجي".

وقدم ناصر أودية - جامعة الجزائر ٣ - من (الجزائر)، بحثاً بعنوان: "الاتصال في الحملات الانتخابية: من الإعلان السياسي إلى العلاقات العامة السياسية حالة تشريعات ٢٠١٧ بالجزائر".

ومن جامعة الشارقة - قدمت/ نادين عصام سليم - من (مصر)، بحثاً باللغة الإنجليزية بعنوان:  
" تدريس وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في العلاقات العامة وعلاقته بسوق العمل"، كدراسة مقارنة على الجمهور في دولة الإمارات.

وهكذا فإن المجلة ترحب بالنشر فيها لمختلف الأجيال العلمية من جميع الدول. ومن المعلوم بالضرورة أن جيل الأساتذة وبحوثهم لا تخضع للتحكيم طبقاً لقواعد النشر العلمي المتبعة في المجالات العلمية.

أما البحوث المنشورة لأعضاء هيئة التدريس الراغبين في التقدم للترقي للدرجة الأعلى والطلاب المسجلين لدرجة الدكتوراه والماجستير فتخضع جميعها للتحكيم من قبل الأساتذة المتخصصين. وجميع هذه البحوث والأوراق العلمية تعبر عن أصحابها دون تدخل من هيئة تحرير المجلة التي تحدد المحكمين وتقدم ملاحظاتهم إلى أصحاب البحوث الخاضعة للتحكيم لمراجعة التعديلات العلمية قبل النشر.

وأخيراً وليس آخراً ندعو الله أن يوفقنا لإثراء النشر العلمي في تخصص العلاقات العامة بشكل خاص والدراسات الإعلامية بشكل عام.

والله الموفق،،

**رئيس تحرير المجلة**

أ.د/ علي عوجة

**تدريس وسائل التواصل الإجتماعي في العلاقات العامة و علاقته بسوق العمل  
دراسة مقارنة على الجمهور في دولة الإمارات**

إعداد

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## تدريس وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في العلاقات العامة وعلاقته بسوق العمل دراسة مقارنة على الجمهور في دولة الامارات

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### المخلص:

تطورت وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي بشكل هائل وأصبحت أكثر شعبية خلال السنوات الأخيرة. وقد أدركت المنظمات والمؤسسات والشركات، والهيئات سواء العامة أو الخاصة، أهمية وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي كأداة قوية لإقامة علاقات مع المواطنين أو العملاء . كما ترغب المزيد من المنظمات في توظيف ممارسي العلاقات العامة في محاولة لإدارة واستخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي بشكل فعال في أعمالهم أو مشاريعهم. لذلك جامعات من خلال أقسام العلاقات العامة بها أصبحت في حاجة إلى إعداد مناهج دراسية للطلاب تؤهلهم لتولي مثل هذه الوظائف.

لذا تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحديد مدى نجاح تدريس مقررات تتضمن وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في الجامعات الإماراتية في تلبية احتياجات صناعة العلاقات العامة الحديثة في دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة ، في ضوء ما يراه الممارسون و أعضاء هيئة التدريس في تخصص العلاقات العامة من ضرورتها ضمن الخطط الدراسية .

وتشمل الدراسة ٤٠ مشاركاً؛ ٢٠ من ممارسي العلاقات العامة من مختلف الجهات في دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة و ٢٠ آخرين من أعضاء هيئة التدريس من خمس جامعات في الدولة، وذلك باستخدام العينة القصدية.

بالإضافة إلى ذلك، أجرت الباحثة تحليلاً وصفيًا لمضمون توصيفات المساقات المتضمنة مواداً متعلقة بوسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في أقسام العلاقات العامة بخمس جامعات في دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة. واستخدمت الباحثة نظرية "التعلم التجريبي" لدعم الجانب النظري للدراسة الحالية.

- أهم النتائج التي توصلت إليها الدراسة:
- أظهرت نتائج المسح العام أن هناك إجماع واضح بين المعلمين والممارسين على وجود فجوة بين الأوساط الأكاديمية والعلاقات العامة.
- أظهرت نتائج المسح العام أن هناك إجماع واضح بين المعلمين والممارسين حول درجة أهمية التكوين المعرفي للطلبة.
- ومع ذلك، اختلفت وجهات نظر وآراء معلمي العلاقات العامة والممارسين حول المهارات التي ينبغي تدريسها ودرجة أهميتها.

- وبمقارنة نتائج الدراسات الاستقصائية بتحليل المحتوى، أظهرت أنه لا يوجد توافق كبير بين وجهات نظر المجموعتين وما يجري تدريسه الآن في مناهج العلاقات العامة.
- ووفقاً لنتائج الدراسة الحالية، خلصت الباحثة إلى وجود فجوة بين الأوساط الأكاديمية وإدارات العلاقات العامة في دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة، حيث أن وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي ليست فعالة بما فيه الكفاية في تلبية احتياجات صناعة العلاقات العامة الحديثة في دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة.



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background. Sites like Facebook, Instagram and Twitter should all be incorporated into Public Relations curriculum. Today's practitioners need to be brand advocates, and at the same time capable of providing an engaging online user experience. According to the results of the current study, the researcher concluded that there is a gap between PR academia and PR industry in the UAE in which social media education isn't efficient enough in fulfilling the needs of modern Public Relations Industry in the UAE.

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relationship with PR professionals positively, indicating the presence of close contact with them, in addition to the joint activities. On the other hand, the majority of PR Professionals indicated that they don't maintain close contact with Faculty Members or arrange joint activities. Accordingly, there is no consensus among both on their perception of having good contact or coordination.

However, comparing the results of the surveys to the content analysis, it showed that there is no much consensus among the two groups' views and what is being taught now in PR curriculums. Given that New Media was indicated as the most important knowledge component that should be taught to PR students, only five courses out of five highly reputed universities included social media. In addition to new media, PR & Media Ethics was included in only three courses out of the five courses, which are already low compared to the number of courses within these universities.

For that reason, the gap doesn't exist because the two parties don't agree on the importance of common knowledge areas and skills. However, the reason lies in the fact that there is a problem in the curriculum itself. What PR faculty members believe should be taught isn't translated in the PR curriculum development. In addition, there should be more emphasis on the skills that should be taught while giving priority to the skills PR professionals indicate their importance. A possible explanation for the gap among the views of PR Faculty Members & Professionals and what is taught in PR curriculum might be that technology and emerging media are changing much more quickly than academic processes generally allow; for example, course catalog planning takes place often a year in advance of the semester in which the courses will be offered, in addition to the explanation of a possible lack of coordination and cooperation among the two parties when it comes to joint activities.

The results of the current study coincide with the results of another study by Neff et al. (1999) which concluded that serious gaps exist between the outcomes we desire and those presently achieved in public relations education. These gaps are reflected in the problems faced when hiring both entry-level and advanced level practitioners. Both educators and practitioners indicate these gaps exist. While the goals of public relations education seem clear, the means of achieving those goals, including curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment, may not be as clear (p.44).

In conclusion, graduates entering the workforce should be prepared with a broad array of Social Media knowledge as well as a strong Public Relations

The two surveys & content analysis results revealed the similarities and differences in opinions among the two parties, indicating how close the groups came to consensus about what should be taught in Social Media education in PR. As discussed in the literature review, consensus is important in advancing the Social Media field in PR industry.

Overall, the surveys' results helped identify the knowledge areas and skills that PR Faculty Members & Professionals consider important for students. Then the content analysis identified what skills and knowledge areas are being taught now. Do these correspond? Are PR graduates taught what will benefit them later as PR professionals? These questions will be answered in this chapter.

The overall survey results indicated a clear consensus among educators and practitioners of the existence of a gap between PR academia and PR industry. In order to search for the source of this gap, the researcher must compare between the views of PR Faculty Members and Professionals, and the results of content analysis indicating what is taught in the courses syllabi to students now. In addition, the overall survey results indicated that there was clear consensus among educators and practitioners about the degree of importance of knowledge components. The top three knowledge areas with the same order according to the degree of importance were indicated. They are first New Media, then PR management and campaigns, and PR & Media ethics. However, the views and opinions of Public Relations educators and practitioners differed on the skills that should be taught and their degree of importance. The top three skills that should be taught from PR Faculty Members point of view were Creativity, writing skills, and Analytical Skills, while PR Professionals indicated their top three most important skills as Social Media Crisis Management, flexibility, and writing skills. However, writing skills was common among both; regardless of the order according to the degree of importance. And although consensus was not as obvious in regard to the most important skills, agreement among the groups could still be seen. It is a good thing that educators and practitioners generally seem to agree about what is important for undergraduate public relations students to learn based on the idea suggesting that consensus among both parties is crucial in the development of a good model for public relations education. In addition, when educators and practitioners agree about what should be included in the public relations curriculum, it shows that there are clear ideas about the function that Public Relations play in the work force.

Moreover, the results showed a contradiction among the responses of PR Faculty Members and PR Professionals, in which PR Faculty members view the

Only one of the courses (20%) demanded a portfolio from the students that includes all the course work at the end of the semester.

Concerning the type of evaluative tools and strategies in which the course use in order to analyze the student's performance, theoretical examinations were the most utilized assessment tool used, followed by assignments; such as writing a report, group or individual project, and activities; such as attending conferences or field trips. Less common assessment tools utilized were practical examinations, presentations, theoretical & practical examination, and portfolios. The last research question further provide details on the actual status of Social Media courses in PR, which will help contribute to the development of Social Media Education in PR. This can be done through understanding what we already have, versus what should be done for future development.

### **Conclusion**

The purpose of the current study is to determine to what extent is social media education efficient in fulfilling the need of modern PR industry in the UAE. Since PR Professionals and PR Faculty Members are involved together on a daily basis in PR work and education, they are the most suitable subjects to indicate the state of relationship among the two parties, and what is required to in order to improve their relationship for graduating well educated PR professionals to work in the Social Media field. Therefore, to better understand how social media education in PR contributes to modern PR industry, the researcher surveyed PR Faculty Members and PR Professionals, and conducted a content analysis on social media related courses syllabi in PR programs in five universities in the UAE. The two groups were asked to determine what they think is important to be taught, what is being taught now, and how prepared they think PR graduates are to work in the social media field. On the other hand, the content analysis aimed to determine what's on the ground already; what is being taught to PR students and the teaching methods used. It was important to differentiate the result of the two groups; PR Faculty Members and Professionals, since the two have differing opinions about Social Media education in PR. In addition, asking about the teaching methods used by PR Faculty members and analyzing the syllabi for the teaching methods used, was important since the researcher utilized experiential learning theory as the theoretical framework of the current study. As a consequence, an understanding of the teaching methods used in Social Media education and if experiential learning was one of the methods undertaken, was required for applying the theoretical framework throughout the study.

Assessment		Frequency	Percentage
Presentations		<u>1</u>	<u>20%</u>
Group/Individual Project		<u>4</u>	<u>80%</u>
Activities		<u>3</u>	<u>60%</u>
Assignments		<u>4</u>	<u>80%</u>
Examinations	Practical	<u>2</u>	<u>40%</u>
	Theoretical	<u>4</u>	<u>80%</u>
	Both	<u>1</u>	<u>20%</u>
Portfolio		<u>1</u>	<u>20%</u>
<b><u>Total</u></b>			<b><u>5</u></b>

Table 4-33. Content Analysis Courses Assessments

*Presentations:*

Twenty percent (n=1) of courses demanded project presentations from the students, in addition to seminars.

*Group/Individual Project:*

Eighty percent of courses demanded an individual or group project, or both from the students. They are for example designing a social media app, launching a media campaign in support of an applied project or client's brief.

*Activities:*

Sixty percent of courses included activities. They are for example field visits (ex: to website design companies), and attending seminars and conferences (ex: on the uses of the internet in the field of public relations and advertising).

*Assignments:*

The majority of courses (80%) included assignments required from students. They are either conducting researches, preparing reports (on for ex. how to manage reputation of institutions online, a case study for one of the institutions), writing an essay (on for ex. Identification and critique of current social media platforms and how they are used to support an applied project or client's brief), or practical assignment such as analyzing a group of advertisements, browsing a number of social media websites and their apps, and analyzing the content of a website and evaluate its quality.

*Examinations:*

Courses included two types of examinations: Theoretical, or practical. The majority of courses by 80% included a theoretical examination, while 40% included practical examinations. One of the courses, Social media & Smart Apps, included both practical and theoretical examinations. On the other hand, Introduction to Social Media course included only practical examination.

*Portfolio:*

**OUTCOMES**

The researcher compared the list of topics provided in the course syllabus, with the course outcomes, and determined whether there a strong, weak, or no correlation among both.

<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strong Correlation with Course topics	<u>5</u>	<u>100%</u>
Weak Correlation with Course topics	<u>0</u>	<u>0%</u>
No Correlation with Course topics	<u>0</u>	<u>0%</u>
<b><u>Total</u></b>	<b><u>5</u></b>	

Table 4-32. Content Analysis Courses Outcomes

*Strong Correlation with Course topics:*

All the courses (n=5) showed strong correlation among the course outcomes and course topics. For instance, the course outcome of constructing a social media solution to an applied project strongly correlates or matches with understanding and applying the principles and law of freedom of speech and press for the country in which the institution that invites ACEJMC is located as well as understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the world, understanding concepts and applying theories in the use and presentation of images and information, and conducting research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work.

*Weak Correlation with Course topics:*

None of the courses showed weak correlation among the course outcomes and course topics.

*No Correlation with Course topics:*

None of the courses in the sample lacked a correlation among the course outcomes and course topics.

**ASSESSMENTS**

The researcher looked in the course syllabus for the assessment methods utilized in order to assess student's performance.

the course analyzed for the special expertise of social media showed mixed results. These courses included writing, research, technology, law, internships, management, strategic planning, media planning, history, international public relations, crisis communications, integrated marketing communication, social media, and business literacy.

## COURSE CLASSIFICATION

The researcher classified each course syllabus based on its core topic. The core topics classified upon are Online PR, Social Media, and others.

Course Classification	Frequency	Percentage
Online PR	2	40%
Social Media	2	40%
Others	1	20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	

Table 4-31. Content Analysis Courses Classification

### *Online PR:*

Forty percent of the courses syllabi were classified as Online PR. The courses were mainly about the new trends in PR, the functions of public relations on the internet, Internet use in public relations and corporate communications, the ethics of the practices of public relations over the internet, and online advertising.

### *Social Media:*

The core focus of the current study is social media focused courses whether social media was the core topic of the course or within the course topics. Forty percent (n=2) of the courses were classified as social media. The courses were mainly about the theoretical aspects and practical applications of websites and social media tools involved in managing PR, the basics of web and smart apps design involved within social media, computer software used to create and design social media website and its apps, theoretical and practical introduction to social media and its role in the media experience, how social media has transformed personal and business communication with a particular focus on their own discipline, and introduction to data analytics.

### *Others:*

Twenty percent of the Courses; one course, which were neither related to social media nor online media were classified as others in the content analysis sheet. The course was mainly about Integrated Marketing Communications.

*Active-learning:*

Active learning has been defined as ‘anything course-related that all students in a class session are called upon to do other than simply watching, listening and taking notes’ (Felder & Brent, 2009, p. 2). 60% of the courses included active-learning method. Activities related to active learning method, are guest speakers, conferences, and seminars. The pedagogical strategy of using guest lectures in social media education can be classified as substituting for experiential learning and related to a vicarious apprenticeship model of learning (Bell, 2006). In essence this method of teaching provides the students with an understanding of professional activity by providing a ‘real-life picture’ of theory. In addition, most of the courses invited their students to participate in conferences and seminars on for example the uses of the internet in the field of public relations and advertising. However, fewer courses included inviting guest speakers from professionals in order to give a lecture.

*Team-based learning:*

Forty percent of the courses included team-based learning, in which students are expected to work in groups to undertake a group project, for instance; to conduct analytical study on websites, in addition to cooperative group learning tasks.

**Research Question 12: What are the aspects of the available syllabi that cover Social Media in UAE universities, as provided by the content analysis?**

**A. Results of the Content Analysis**

The researcher started the content analysis with ten courses syllabi that included Online PR. The ten courses included in the sample of the current study is derived from five universities in UAE. One course from the AUS: Principles of Integrated Marketing Communications; Six courses from Ajman University: Introduction to Multimedia, New trends in PR, Social media & Smart Apps, Electronic Marketing, Communication Technology, and Online PR & Advertising; One course from University of Sharjah: Online Public Relations; One course from Zayed university: Introduction to Social Media; and one course from United Arab Emirates University: Contemporary Issues in Mass Communications.

However, after analyzing each course syllabus thoroughly, five courses were eliminated. The remaining five courses syllabi were analyzed using the content analysis sheet (see Appendix B) The final data results, as shown in Table 2, of the manual coding for all universities and colleges (see Appendix B) included in

Teaching Method	Frequency	Percentage
Computer-based	<u>5</u>	<u>100%</u>
Paper-based	<u>4</u>	<u>80%</u>
Experiential learning	<u>4</u>	<u>80%</u>
Active-learning	<u>3</u>	<u>60%</u>
Team-based	<u>2</u>	<u>40%</u>
<b>Total no. of Frequencies</b>		<b><u>18</u></b>
<b>Total no. of Syllabi</b>		<b><u>5</u></b>

Table 4-11. Content Analysis Courses Teaching Methods

*Computer-based Learning:*

The term "Computer-based learning" is applied by the researcher on courses that include E-books, E-learning, and software. The entire courses utilized computer based learning.

Starting with the E-books, only one course provided students with E-books only. Next, the use of software programs such as Adobe Muse, Adobe XD, and PowerPoint software program as technological support, which are used in lectures and practical side. Forty percent of the courses utilized Adobe Muse, Adobe XD, and other software programs. On the other hand, sixty percent of the courses syllabi included the use of PowerPoint in the lectures.

Regarding E-learning, 80% of the courses assigned students to do online exercises, such as analyzing a range of online advertisements in terms of forms and strategies, or training students how to design social media websites and apps, and how to design mobile phone apps.

*Paper-based teaching:*

This method of teaching includes hard copy books or journal articles distributed on students, or used as a hard copy in class. 80% of the courses used paper-based learning, in which a textbook is provided within the course references used.

*Experiential learning:*

Experiential learning is a holistic learning model based on an integrative process where students first obtain knowledge, then perform an activity (generally with some "real-world" application), and finally reflect on the experience (Kolb 1984), often iteratively. 80% of the courses included experiential learning method which includes field trips or visits. They provide students with an authentic learning experience. When constructed to include reflection, conceptualization, and activity, field trips can provide incredibly formative and impactful educational experiences for students. Courses included for example field trips to a full service agency, a visit to Abu Dhabi art hub, the social entertainment zone, and the zones of social commerce.

**Research Question 3: What are the teaching methods that can be used in social media education in PR? Is experiential learning one of the teaching methods used?**

**A. Results of the Survey**

Survey Question 16: Which of the following teaching methods do you use in teaching Social Media in Public Relations courses?

Respondents were asked to choose the teaching method they use while teaching social media in Public Relations courses. In addition, they were allowed to choose more than one answer. First, Power point presentations was the highest chosen method (n=11). Second, using both online and in-person learning experiences when teaching students (Blended Learning) (n=8). Third, integrating academic learning with its application in the workplace (Work-integrated Learning) (n=8), Fourth, Supporting students in applying their knowledge and conceptual understanding to real-world problems under the instructor's supervision (Experiential Learning) (n=8). Fifth, involving students in the process of meaning and knowledge construction (Constructivist Learning) (n=7). Sixth, Paper-based teaching using books and worksheets (n=4). Finally, observation (n=3). Three respondents provided other responses. They are case studies, online media production and participation; Real world campaigns and competitions. (Table 4-10)

<b>Freq / Percent Teaching Method</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
PowerPoint presentations	<u>11</u>	<u>91.7</u>
Blended Learning	<u>8</u>	<u>66.7</u>
Work-integrated Learning	<u>8</u>	<u>66.7</u>
Experiential Learning	<u>8</u>	<u>66.7</u>
Constructivist Learning	<u>7</u>	<u>58.3</u>
Paper-based teaching using books and worksheets	<u>4</u>	<u>33.3</u>
Observation	<u>3</u>	<u>25</u>
Others	<u>3</u>	<u>25</u>
<b>Total no. of Responses</b>	<b><u>60</u></b>	
<b>Total no. of Respondents</b>	<b><u>12</u></b>	

Table 4-10. Teaching methods used in teaching social media in Public Relations courses

**B. Results of the Content Analysis**

What are the teaching strategies or methods used in the course in order to build desired knowledge or skills?

Diverse teaching methods were utilized by PR faculty members teaching social media. There are five teaching methods classified: paper-based, team-based, active-learning, experiential-learning, and computer-based learning.

As table 4-7 illustrates, data revealed that the majority of PR professionals in the current study agreed that there is a gap between PR industry and PR education. Therefore, the results of the current study confirm that there is a gap between PR education and PR industry.

### **B. PR Faculty Members**

#### **Survey Question 12: To what extent do you agree that there is a gap between PR education and PR industry?**

When asked about their attitude regarding the statement that there is a gap between PR education and industry, 55% of respondents "agreed", 20% strongly agreed, 15% of respondents were "neutral", and finally 10% of respondents "disagreed" (Table 4-8)

Freq / Percent Attitude	Frequency	Valid Percent
Agree	<u>11</u>	<u>55</u>
Strongly agree	<u>4</u>	<u>20</u>
Neutral	<u>4</u>	<u>15</u>
Disagree	<u>1</u>	<u>10</u>
Strongly disagree	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>20</u></b>	<b><u>100</u></b>

Table 4-8. Attitudes of respondents towards the statement: "There is a gap between PR education and industry".

As table 4-8 illustrates, data revealed that the majority of PR faculty members in the current study agreed that there is a gap between PR industry and PR education.

#### **Survey Question 13: To what extent do you agree with the following statement?**

Respondents were asked to express their attitudes towards the statement; Our PR program prepares future PR graduates to the requirements of social media-related industry. The majority of respondents (55%) agreed, while 20% were neutral, 15% disagreed, and finally 10% of respondents strongly agreed (Table 4-9).

Freq / Percent Attitude	Frequency	Valid Percent
Agree	<u>11</u>	<u>55</u>
Neutral	<u>4</u>	<u>20</u>
Disagree	<u>3</u>	<u>15</u>
Strongly agree	<u>2</u>	<u>10</u>
Strongly disagree	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>20</u></b>	<b><u>100</u></b>

Table 4-9. Respondents' attitudes towards the statement "Our PR program prepares future PR graduates to the requirements of social media-related industry".

how to develop them, and implementing the theoretical foundation of electronic marketing in the workplace.

*Mostly Practical:*

Only 20% of the courses focused on the application of knowledge, practice, and skills. The courses focused on for example constructing a social media solution to an applied project, demonstrating the appropriate use of social media analytics in order to make informed decisions in support of an applied project, and carrying out a social media campaign.

Discussing the courses description provided by the content analysis, Courses were classified as theoretical, practical or both. Most courses were classified as theoretical, while an equal number of courses were classified as theoretical & practical, and practical. The results support a claim made by Wright & Hinson that practitioners criticize educators for not quickly updating the PR curriculum by teaching students how to use new technologies that are emerging in the industry (Wright & Hinson in 2008).

**Research Question 2: Is there a gap between PR education and industry as perceived by PR professionals and PR Faculty Members?**

**A. PR Professionals**

Survey Question 10: To what extent do you agree that there is a gap between PR education and industry?

When asked about their attitude regarding the statement that there is a gap between PR education and industry, the majority of respondents (55%) "Agreed", 25% of respondents were "neutral", and finally 15% of respondents "strongly disagreed". One respondent skipped the question. (Table 4-7)

<b>Freq / Percent Attitudes</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
Agree	11	55
Neutral	5	25
Strongly disagree	3	15
Skipped	1	5
Strongly agree	0	0
Disagree	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4-7. Attitudes of respondents towards the statement: "There is a gap between PR education and industry"

### ***C. Content Analysis***

#### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

<b>Course Description</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Mostly Theoretical	<u>3</u>	<u>60%</u>
Mostly Practical	<u>1</u>	<u>20%</u>
Practical & Theoretical	<u>1</u>	<u>20%</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>5</u></b>	

Table 4-6. Content Analysis Courses Classification

The researcher classified the courses as mostly theoretical, mostly practical, or both based two factors; the hours devoted to labs or theoretical classes provided in the course syllabus distribution of class hours, or on the course outcomes (If the majority of outcomes are related to the application of knowledge or practice, or the opposite).

#### ***Mostly Theoretical:***

Forty percent of the courses (n=2) were considered theoretical due to the focus on theoretical information such as history, concepts, and advantages. The courses focused on for example defining the concept of modern public relations, explaining modern public relations models, and the usage of social media and internet in advertising, recognizes the opportunities of utilizing online technologies and modern means of communication in the marketing process, distinguishing between functions and uses of traditional public relations and their use over the internet, describing how brand communication works, explain strategic research, and explaining the IMC process and the multiple tools of IMC campaigns.

#### ***Practical & Theoretical:***

Forty percent of the courses were considered a mix of practice & theory. The courses focused on for example understanding how to manage corporate website, understanding how to incorporate the website in PR campaigns, discussing new PR communication strategies through the internet, analyzing the effectiveness of corporate website, practice interactive communication through the website, Comparing the elements of design of the Internet and mobile according to their different types, applying the theoretical aspects of designing social media website and applications, evaluating the quality of websites and

**B.2 PR Faculty Members**

**Survey Question 1: How important are the following knowledge components in preparing successful PR graduates?**

Among the knowledge areas listed, the top three most important skills reported were first, New media by an average mean of (4.95/5), followed by PR Management and campaigns by an average mean of (4.85/5). On the other hand, the least important knowledge areas reported were Sociology and PR history by an average mean of (3.50/5). (Table 4-4)

Attitude Statement	Very important		Important		Neutral		Somewhat important		Not important		Mean	Std. Deviation	%
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%			
New Media	95	19	1	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	4.95	0.22	99.0
PR Management and campaigns	17	85	3	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	4.85	0.37	97.0
PR & Media Ethics	16	80	3	15	1	5	0	0	0	0	4.75	0.55	95.0
Communication and public relations theories	13	65	7	35	0	0	0	0	0	0	4.65	0.49	93.0
Use of research and forecasting	15	75	4	20	0	0	1	5	0	0	4.65	0.75	93.0
Public Speaking	13	65	5	25	1	5	1	5	0	0	4.50	0.83	90.0
Organizational Communication	9	45	9	45	1	5	1	5	0	0	4.30	0.80	86.0
Marketing	6	30	14	70	0	0	0	0	0	0	4.30	0.47	86.0
Management (in general)	6	30	12	60	0	0	2	10	0	0	4.10	0.85	82.0
Organizational behavior	7	35	9	45	2	10	2	10	0	0	4.05	0.94	81.0
Cross cultural communication	3	15	10	50	5	25	2	10	0	0	3.70	0.86	74.0
Sociology	3	15	7	35	7	35	3	15	0	0	3.50	0.95	70.0
PR history	3	15	9	45	4	20	3	15	1	5	3.50	1.10	70.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>												

Table 4-4. Importance of the knowledge areas that should be gained by PR Professionals from PR Faculty Members' viewpoint

**Survey Question 4: To what extent do you agree with the following statement?**

This survey question measured the attitudes of respondents towards the statement: Your College's study plan should incorporate social media as a knowledge component in PR education. The majority of respondents (85%) strongly agreed, while the remaining 15% agreed (Table 4-5).

Freq / Percent Attitude	Frequency	Valid Percent
Strongly agree	17	85
Agree	3	15
Neutral	0	0
Disagree	0	0
Strongly disagree	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4-5. The attitudes of respondents towards the statement: Your College's study plan should incorporate social media as a knowledge component in PR education

content (Graphics & videos).														
Keeping the management informed, the team motivated and customers excited and engaged (Organizational Communication).	<u>5</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3.90</u>	<u>0.79</u>	<u>78.0</u>	
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>20</u></b>													

Table 4-2. Importance of the skills that should be gained by new PR Professionals from PR Faculty Members' viewpoint.

## **B. KNOWLEDGE AREAS**

### **B.1 PR Professionals**

*Survey Question 3: How important are the following knowledge areas that should be gained by new PR professionals performing social media tasks, in getting employed in PR agencies?*

Among the knowledge areas listed, the top three most important skills reported were first, New media by an average mean of (4.65/5), followed by PR management & campaigns by an average mean of (4.40/5). On the other hand, the least important knowledge areas reported Sociology by an average mean of (3.50/5), and PR history by an average mean of (2.90/5). (Table 4-3)

Degree of Importance Statement	Very important		Important		Neutral		Somewhat important		Not important		Mean	Std. Deviation	%
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%			
New Media	<u>13</u>	<u>65</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4.65</u>	<u>0.49</u>	<u>93</u>
PR Management and campaigns	<u>11</u>	<u>55</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>4.40</u>	<u>0.94</u>	<u>88</u>
PR & Media Ethics	<u>12</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4.30</u>	<u>1.03</u>	<u>86</u>
Marketing	<u>10</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4.25</u>	<u>0.91</u>	<u>85</u>
Management (in general)	<u>9</u>	<u>45</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4.20</u>	<u>0.89</u>	<u>84</u>
Organizational behavior	<u>7</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4.10</u>	<u>0.85</u>	<u>82</u>
Public Speaking	<u>10</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>4.00</u>	<u>1.26</u>	<u>80</u>
Cross cultural communication	<u>7</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>45</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>3.95</u>	<u>1.19</u>	<u>79</u>
Communication & PR Theories	<u>8</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>3.80</u>	<u>1.40</u>	<u>76</u>
Use of research and forecasting	<u>4</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>45</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3.75</u>	<u>0.91</u>	<u>75</u>
Sociology	<u>4</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>3.50</u>	<u>1.19</u>	<u>70</u>
PR history	<u>1</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2.90</u>	<u>1.17</u>	<u>58</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>20</u></b>												

Table 4-3. Importance of the knowledge areas that should be gained by new PR professionals from PR Professionals' viewpoint

**A.2 PR Faculty Members**

*Survey Question 19: Concerning assessment, how important are the following skills that should be gained by PR graduates, in achieving the social media course outcomes?*

Among the fourteen skills listed, the top three most important skills reported were first, Creativity (Understanding the creative process that provides creative content that engages with your customer) by an average mean of (4.45/5), followed by Writing skills (Understanding the art and science of headline writing, writing engaging introductions and structuring your text for easy reading online) by an average mean of (4.40/5). On the other hand, the least important skill reported by an average mean of (3.80/5) was Organizational Communication (Keeping the management informed, the team motivated and customers excited and engaged) by an average mean of (3.90/5) (Table 4-2)

Attitude Statement	Very important		Important		Neutral		Somewhat important		Not important		Mean	Std. Deviation	%
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%			
Understanding the creative process that provides creative content that engages with your customer (Creativity).	12	60	5	25	3	15	0	0	0	0	4.45	0.76	89.0
Understanding the art and science of headline writing, writing engaging introductions and structuring your text for easy reading online (Writing skills).	10	50	8	40	2	10	0	0	0	0	4.40	0.68	88.0
Learning the ins and outs of social media metrics and judging which ones are meaningful for your business (Analytical skills).	11	55	4	20	5	25	0	0	0	0	4.30	0.86	86.0
Managing a crisis through social media.	10	50	6	30	4	20	0	0	0	0	4.30	0.80	86.0
Creating, observing and responding to conversations within your brand community (Community management).	9	45	6	30	5	25	0	0	0	0	4.20	0.83	84.0
Understanding how content works on a social web.	7	35	10	50	3	15	0	0	0	0	4.20	0.70	84.0
Being flexible enough to tailor the content to the audience (Flexibility).	8	70	7	35	5	25	0	0	0	0	4.15	0.81	83.0
Understanding the latest digital marketing trends and be on top.	5	25	13	65	2	10	0	0	0	0	4.15	0.59	83.0
Having conversational skills and empathy (a customer-service mindset).	7	35	8	40	5	25	0	0	0	0	4.10	0.79	82.0
Understanding how search, content and social media all works together (Strategy Planning).	7	35	8	40	5	25	0	0	0	0	4.10	0.79	82.0
Understanding which media format resonate with a specific niche.	7	35	40	8	5	25	0	0	0	0	4.10	0.79	82.0
Understanding the essential for optimizing content for SEO	5	25	12	60	2	10	0	0	1	5	4.00	0.92	80.0
Designing and creating visual	5	25	9	45	6	30	0	0	0	0	3.95	0.76	79.0

Among the fourteen skills listed, the top three most important skills reported were first, Social Media Crisis Management by an average mean of (4.65/5), followed by Flexibility (being flexible enough to tailor the content to the audience) by an average mean of (4.55/5). On the other hand, the least important skills reported by an average mean of (3.80/5) were designing and creating visual content (Graphics & videos), and understanding the essential for optimizing content for SEO. (Table 4-1)

Degree of Importance Statement	Very important		Important		Neutral		Somewhat important		Not important		Mean	Std. Deviation	%	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%				
Managing a crisis through social media.	14	70	5	25	1	5	0	0	0	0	4.65	0.59	93	
Being flexible enough to tailor the content to the audience (Flexibility).	12	60	7	35	1	5	0	0	0	0	4.55	0.60	91	
Understanding the art and science of headline writing, writing engaging introductions and structuring your text for easy reading online (Writing skills)	11	55	9	45	0	0	0	0	0	0	4.55	0.51	91	
Having conversational skills and empathy (a customer-service mindset).	13	65	5	25	1	5	1	5	0	0	4.50	0.83	90	
Understanding how content works on a social web	11	55	8	40	1	5	0	0	0	0	4.50	0.61	90	
Learning the ins and outs of social media metrics and judging which ones are meaningful for your business (Analytical skills)	11	55	7	35	2	10	0	0	0	0	4.45	0.69	89	
Understanding how search, content and social media all works together (Strategy Planning)	11	55	7	35	2	10	0	0	0	0	4.45	0.69	89	
Understanding the latest digital marketing trends and be on top	10	50	9	45	0	0	1	5	0	0	4.45	0.60	89	
Keeping the management informed, the team motivated and customers excited and engaged (Organizational Communication)	10	50	9	45	1	5	0	0	0	0	4.45	0.60	89	
Understanding the creative process that provides creative content that engages with your customer (Creativity).	8	40	12	60	0	0	0	0	0	0	4.40	0.50	88	
Creating, observing and responding to conversations within your brand community (Community management).	10	50	7	35	3	15	0	0	0	0	4.35	0.75	87	
Understanding which media format resonate with a specific niche	9	45	9	45	2	10	0	0	0	0	4.35	0.67	87	
Designing and creating visual content (Graphics & videos).	8	40	4	20	5	25	2	10	1	5	3.80	1.24	76	
Understanding the essential for optimizing content for SEO.	4	20	8	40	8	40	0	0	0	0	3.80	0.77	76	
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>													

Table 4-1. Importance of the skills that should be gained by new PR professionals from PR Professionals' viewpoint.

knowledge in real world setting, which is required for undergraduate students in order to be able to benefit of the knowledge they acquired during their undergraduate level and to be able to apply this knowledge in their career later.

## **FINDINGS**

### Sample Characteristics

#### **PR Professionals**

The majority of PR Professionals were females, between the ages of 25 and 30, who had earned a Bachelor's degree, and work in a PR department within an organization. Regarding PR Professionals' current job role, the majority worked in the private sector, for more than 5 to 10 years. In addition, the majority of job titles were social media manager, community manager, account manager, project manager, PR and brand executive, journalist, and finally senior administrator. Concerning the availability of social media related qualifications, the majority indicated having social media related qualifications, which are industry qualifications.

#### **PR Faculty Members**

On the other hand, the majority of PR Faculty Members were males, between the ages of 31 and 40, who had earned a Ph.D. degree, and worked as Associate Professors in University of Sharjah, for more than 15 years. Regarding the university from which respondents earned their highest degree, The majority of respondents earned their highest degree from Cairo University.

### **Surveys & Content Analysis Findings**

#### **Research Question 1: What are the qualifications (A: skills and B: knowledge areas) that should be available in PR fresh graduates working in social media from PR professionals and faculty member's view point?**

The researcher will first present the results related to the skills, as provided by first PR Professionals and PR Faculty members, then the knowledge areas as provided by first PR Professionals then the PR Faculty Members, followed by the results provided by the content analysis.

#### **A. SKILLS**

##### **A.1 PR Professionals**

Survey Question 2: How important are the following skills that should be gained by new PR professionals performing social media tasks, in getting employed in PR positions?

communication professors who are unfamiliar with the field, a consensus has yet to be reached about what should be taught. The gap available between PR academia and industry is declared as understandable, given the perceived no usefulness of academic output in the development of public relations as a profession in general and individual success in a career in specific. The results of the previous studies is compared to the results of the current study in order to identify the correlation among both. The review of literature allowed the researcher to identify the aim of the current study which is to determine to what extent social media education in UAE universities, is efficient in fulfilling the needs of modern public relations industry in the UAE. The research methods used in the previous studies are surveys (phone, and online), interviews (in-depth, face-to-face, and focus groups), case studies and content analysis. The most common research methods used among the previous studies are surveys, followed by content analysis, interviews and the least method used is case studies. Compared to the methodology used in the previous studies, the researcher relies on several methods in the current study. Finally, the review literature helped the researcher in formulating the research questions of the current study.

### ***Theoretical Framework***

The notion of social media education cannot be examined without reviewing the literature and theories dealing with learning methods. The theoretical framework of this paper includes Experiential Learning Theory.

After reviewing the theory and previous studies, the researcher assumes that the principles of experiential learning theory can be applied to public relations education. Experiential learning theory defines learning as "the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience". Knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming experience, in which individuals first take in information and then interpret and act on that information. The process includes the information acquired through formal learning and past experience, the application of knowledge to real world setting and finally, the analysis of knowledge and activity to create new knowledge. These claims can back the current study as its framework, in which the education methods of social media in Public relations in UAE universities can be assessed. The reason for choosing the researcher this theory as the thesis theoretical framework is that it blends theory and practice, helping provide rich learning experiences for students through focusing on the application of

urged educators to “become more sophisticated and request the participation of practitioners to determine if students are reaching the goals set for their entry into the profession” (Turk, 2006, p.49).

In relation to the relationship among both, Professionalism and Public relations education, a conceptual foundation shared by much of the literature on academia industry relationships, whether explicitly or implicitly, is the fundamental notion that the academy and the industry are distinct entities that, although having the same object as their focus (public relations), are of distinct philosophical positions in their orientation to that object (Cornelissen, 2000). The orientation of academia is to examine and provide abstract knowledge and relations among constructs at a broad-based level, but the practitioner’s orientation is more limited and particular in scope, devoted to finding immediately applicable solutions for current problems (Botan, 1993; Moncur, 2006). Hence, the reason for the gap in the relationship between the two parties is due to a divergence in beliefs as to which orientation or level of knowledge is the most beneficial in improving the central object of public relations. Specifically, the academia–industry relationship issue is framed as either a knowledge transfer problem or a knowledge separation issue (e.g., Van de Ven & Johnson, 2006).

### **Comment on the Review of Literature**

The previous literature has shown that there is a consensus on the skills required to be available in PR professionals from hard skills to soft skills and other communication skills. In addition, there is an agreement that the increase in internet usage and online communications technologies will continue to change the skills that educators will need to teach PR students. Therefore, there is a recommendation to include new technologies in every Public Relations curriculum. The conclusion reached from most of the previous studies asserts that while public relations academicians and professionals have succeeded in creating connections that benefit PR undergraduate education and the profession, "practitioner support of public relations education has been inadequate." A reason provided in the literature indicates that the reason for the gap in the relationship among the two parties is due to divergence in beliefs as to which orientation or level of knowledge is the most beneficial in improving the central object of public relations. Other explanations provided argues that because public relations is a relatively new field and because a number of undergraduate public relations courses are taught by journalism or

the “real world” operates (McDonough, Rodriguez, & Prior-Miller, 2009). Educators are familiar with the pressure to teach students the most relevant knowledge and skills to be industry-ready; “yet it always seems that the college curriculum is ‘behind the curve’ in terms of what the industry is looking for” (Swanson, 2011, p. 15). Practitioners believe the public relations curriculum is out of touch with today’s industry, and educators are not teaching students the skills they will need to advance in the modern communications world (Todd, 2009).

### *Social Media as a PR Tool*

In terms of the new technology used in the public relations industry, Public relations academics and practitioners have predicted that the increase in Internet usage and online communications technologies will continue to change the way PR professionals communicate with publics, as well as the skills that educators will need to teach PR students (Leuven, 1999; Gower & Cho). With the unquestioned need to use of new technologies for public relations purposes, several authors have recommended that this be included in every public relations curriculum. Sparks and Conwell (1998) recommended the integration of current technology into traditional teaching methods. Griffin and Pasadeos (1998) contended that more computer skills courses were needed. The commission asserted that while public relations academicians and professionals have succeeded in creating connections that benefit PR undergraduate education and the profession, “practitioner support of public relations education has been inadequate.” (Turk, 2006, p. 17).

### *The Relationship between the PR Academia and PR Industry*

In terms of practical education, Daugherty (2003) emphasized the professional educational aspects of public relations education. Her study aimed at enabling students to develop skills to meet the challenges of a demanding workplace. In doing so, she introduced the service-learning approach that entails the application of classroom concepts in a real-life setting.

In terms of Public relations education assessment, several researchers have examined the increasing call for program assessment. The 2006 commission suggested that PR educators employ a variety of assessment tools, such as capstone courses, entrance/exit examinations, internship evaluations, and portfolio reviews to determine whether students have learned the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in the PR industry. To this end, the commission

consisted of both a priori and emergent coding schemes (Crittenden & Wilson, 2005).

### Validity and Reliability

The researcher conducted Face Validity through distributing the two surveys: PR professionals and PR Faculty Members questionnaires in English and Arabic languages on seven faculty members<sup>1</sup> in the College of Communication. In addition, the supervisor and a faculty member in the College of Communication reviewed the content analysis sheet. On the other hand, two coders tested the reliability of content analysis; a faculty member<sup>2</sup>, and another colleague<sup>3</sup> from the College of Communication. The researcher conducted an inter-coder reliability test, which measure the agreement between raters. The researcher concluded the level of agreement to be acceptable by 85.4%.

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

### PR Professionals

Students learn about the public relations practice through their classes. Public relations students enroll in a standard set of courses including introduction to public relations, public relations writing, public relations management, and/or campaigns classes. This type of socialization provides the academic rationale to the practice. According to the 2006 Professional Bond Report, other fields such as accounting, medicine and law have developed greater professionalism through educational standards. Public relations need to do the same in establishing educational standards (Turk, 2006, p. 25).

### Skills required to become a PR professional: Hard skills & Soft skills

In terms of the skills required, educators and industry professionals agree on the knowledge and skills undergraduate students should be taught to become effective entry-level practitioners, as the Commission on Public Relations Education reported in 2006 (Turk, 2006). At other times, employers complain that recent college graduates do not possess the knowledge and skills necessary to hit the ground running as effective professionals and they lack a sense of how

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Dr. Khairat Ayyad, Head of PR department

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Mr. Emenyeonu Ogadimma, Lecturer

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D. Enji Farouk, Assistant Professor

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<sup>3</sup> Ms. Nagham Ossama, Teaching Assistant at the College of Communication, UoS

the hiring practices related to entry-level positions and the current state of PR curriculum which are not evident in previous studies, which may aid in determining these gaps.

### *The Population*

The study population consists of the PR professionals and PR faculty members in UAE.

### *The Sample*

A purposive sample of subjects was recruited for surveying all the PR professionals in organizations from various sectors in the UAE: Governmental, Private, and Non-profit. The PR professionals who were surveyed are the manager, the social media coordinator, Director of PR, PR & Brand Executive, PR manager, Head of PR department, and senior administrator. The sample of PR professionals covered diverse industries in UAE: Sports, Construction, Banking and Finance, petrochemicals, telecommunication, tourism, Advertising and media, Airline and Management consulting, in addition to the sample of all the PR professors in the PR departments, in Mass Communication colleges in seven universities in the UAE. The five universities are: American University of Sharjah, University of Sharjah (Sharjah & Khorfakkan branch), United Arab Emirates University, Zayed University, and Ajman University for Science and Technology.

### *Data Collection Tool*

The researcher collected the data that serve the research using an e-mail survey and content analysis.

### *Measurement & Procedure*

The researcher developed two questionnaires; PR Faculty members and PR professionals' surveys. The survey was available in both English and Arabic to accommodate practitioners and faculty members in UAE, known with its diverse cultural backgrounds. The researcher created the surveys using Survey monkey software. The researcher sent the surveys to 50 PR professionals and 34 Faculty members via email address. However, a total of 40 respondents; 20 PR practitioners and 20 PR faculty members, responded and completed the two questionnaires.

On the other hand, the researcher conducted a qualitative content analysis of UAE universities undergraduate course syllabi from courses focused on social media as a primary topic or as a subtopic. The content analytic process

5. What are the topics that should be included in Social Media courses as compared to topics already exists in within PR courses syllabi?
6. What are the aspects of the available syllabi that cover Social Media in UAE universities, as provided by the content analysis?

### ***The Significance of the Study***

The significance of the current study is it can aid in determining what areas of Public Relations education need to be emphasized or revisited in order to make students more marketable upon graduation in the social media field. Among the literature reviewed, a study on the PR curriculum or education in the Gulf Region wasn't provided. The only study conducted on similar topic, was in Egypt. As a result, the current study is considered significant since it is conducted in the UAE. Second, the focus is not on Public relations generally, but on the education of social media in PR curriculum. Third, the researcher didn't conduct the study in one university. However, the study covered a number of well-known accredited universities in the UAE accompanied with a number of well-established organizations from various sectors and industries across the UAE.

### ***Research Objectives***

1. To identify the knowledge areas and skills which are most frequently cited as necessary for employment in public relations agency social media entry-level job postings as described by practitioners who hire at the entry-level.
2. To determine the degree of consensus, if any, exists regarding professional standards among educators and practitioners in the field.
3. To understand the aspects of the available syllabi that cover Social Media in UAE universities, through conducting content analysis.
4. To compare what is provided by PR faculty members in PR programs and what should be provided based on PR Faculty Members and PR Professionals attitudes and recommendations.

### ***Methodology***

#### ***Research Design***

In the current study, the researcher conducted a qualitative content analysis in addition to a quantitative email survey method in order to collect the research information. Combining content analysis and survey data provided insight of

## **Social Media in PR Education and the Market an Audience Comparative Analysis in the UAE**

### ***Introduction***

Social media has grown explosively and became outstanding in recent years. Given its widespread and growing acceptance, it would seem logical to suggest that the PR curriculum should integrate this content in order to provide students with a competitive skill set. The intellectual and professional skills needed to build a career in public relations have changed markedly in the past decade. Therefore, PR education should reflect the current environment through providing new content and necessary skills.

### ***Statement of the Problem***

As indicated by the review of literature, an increased focus on theory is perceived as opposed to practice. Therefore, a need to blend the theory and practical skills is required for an effective public relations education, which in turn presents another challenge. What should universities focus when educating future public relations professionals? Consequently, a gap exist among the expected level of new PR professionals in the public relations field; social media related jobs in specific, and the knowledge obtained during undergraduate communication studies. **The current study aims to determine to what extent social media education in UAE universities, is efficient in fulfilling the needs of modern public relations industry in the UAE.**

### ***Research Questions***

Therefore, the researcher developed the following research questions to determine the status of social media education in PR as perceived by PR faculty members and PR professionals.

1. What are the qualifications (skills and knowledge areas) that should be available in PR fresh graduates working in social media from PR professionals and PR faculty member's viewpoint?
2. Is there a gap between PR education and industry as perceived by PR professionals and faculty members?
3. What are the teaching methods that can be used in social media education in PR? Is experiential learning one of the teaching methods used?
4. Is there any coordination between PR faculty members and professionals? In what ways is this coordination achieved?

## **Social Media in PR Education and the Market - an Audience Comparative Analysis in the UAE**

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### **Abstract**

**S**ocial media has grown explosively and became outstanding in recent years. Organizations, public or private, have realized the importance of social media as a powerful tool for establishing relationships with citizens or consumers. Increasingly, organizations want to hire some professionals as an attempt to manage and utilize social media effectively for their businesses or projects. Universities need to prepare a curriculum for students who want these jobs. As a consequence, this study aims to determine to what extent social media education in UAE universities, is efficient in fulfilling the needs of modern public relations industry in UAE. It includes 40 participants; 20 PR professionals from various industries across the UAE and the other 20 are faculty members from five universities in the UAE, using purposive sampling. In addition, the researcher conducted a qualitative content analysis of Social Media related courses syllabi in five universities in the UAE. The researcher used "Experiential Learning" theory to support the theoretical aspect of the current study.

The most important results:

- The overall survey results indicated a clear consensus among educators and practitioners of the existence of a gap between PR academia and PR industry.
- The overall survey results indicated a clear consensus among educators and practitioners about the degree of importance of knowledge components.
- However, the views and opinions of public relations educators and practitioners differed on the skills that should be taught and their degree of importance.
- Comparing the results of the surveys to the content analysis, it showed that no much consensus among the two groups' views and what is being taught now in PR curriculums exist.

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