
**FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO PUBLIC RELATIONS IN
MARKETING: A GENERAL STUDY**

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ABSTRACT

This research paper investigates the factors that contribute to building public relations in marketing across organizations. The study adopted a descriptive research design using convenience sampling, with data collected from a sample of one hundred twenty respondents through a structured questionnaire. Two primary objectives guided this research: to identify the relationship between respondents' occupation and their familiarity with public relations concepts, and to determine the interrelationships among key public relations activities in a marketing strategy. The findings revealed that the majority of respondents considered public relations very important for marketing strategy, with content creation identified as the most effective public relations strategy. A chi-square test of independence showed a statistically significant relationship between occupation and public relations familiarity, with public relations professionals and students demonstrating higher familiarity than business owners and employees in non-public relations roles. A multiple correlation analysis revealed that all six public relations activities examined—content creation, crisis communication, media relations, reputation management, social media management, and community engagement—were positively and significantly intercorrelated, indicating they function as an integrated set. The strongest interrelationships were observed among content creation, crisis communication, media relations, and reputation management. The study concludes that public relations is not merely a supportive tool but an essential element for building brand reputation, customer engagement, and long-term business growth.

KEYWORDS: *Public Relations, Marketing Strategy, Chi-Square, Multiple Correlation, Digital Public Relations.*

1. INTRODUCTION

In an era of intense competition, organizations require sharp communication skills to succeed. Public relations (PR) serves as a primary function to reach target audiences on behalf of an organization (Smith, 2019). The role of PR in marketing is substantial, as PR functions influence public opinion, increase brand awareness, and promote business through powerful messaging. Despite its importance, the specific factors contributing to PR effectiveness in marketing remain under-researched. While studies have examined media relations and crisis communication separately, a general understanding of PR's role within integrated marketing strategy is unclear (Johnson, 2020). This study seeks to fill that gap by examining the objectives, strategies, and effectiveness of public relations in marketing across different organizations and professional contexts.

In this age of racing and huge competition, to be successful, companies need to equip themselves with sharp communication skills. Herein lies the primary concern of public relations: to reach their target audience on behalf of the organization. The role of public relations in marketing is really huge. PR firms influence public opinion as well as increase awareness of a particular brand by developing and distributing powerful messages, thereby promoting business. However, the importance of PR's role in marketing can be a bit under-researched. Some pieces of research have been done in different areas of PR, such as media relations and crisis communication, but the general understanding of what is an aspect of PR in marketing strategy is not clear. This study seeks to fill this gap by delving into the objectives, strategies and effectiveness of public relations in marketing. Through a survey of marketing professionals and interviews with PR professionals, this research opens up the current state of public relations in marketing. For practitioners looking for ways to maximize the strategies currently converging on PR and marketing, this research provides insight. Finally, research clearly shows that public relations is an integral part of marketing strategy – a combination of tools and techniques for audience engagement exercises, including branding. This survey convincingly provides a comprehensive overview of public relations marketing, showing its importance, challenges and opportunities with respect to possible growth in the future.

1.1 Problem Statement

There is limited empirical research on the specific factors that make public relations effective in marketing. Organizations often implement PR activities without understanding which strategies work best. Familiarity with PR concepts varies widely across different occupations. This gap hinders the proper integration of PR into marketing strategy. The study addresses this by examining occupation-based differences and interrelationships among PR activities. It seeks to provide clarity on what contributes to successful PR in marketing.

1.2 Scope of the Study

The study identifies factors contributing to public relations in marketing across organizations. It uses a sample of one hundred twenty respondents from Kerala, India. The research covers six PR activities: content creation, crisis communication, media relations, reputation management, social media management, and community engagement. Respondents include PR professionals, students, business owners, and non-PR employees. The findings are limited to the geographic region of Kerala. Results may not be generalizable to other cultural or regional contexts.

1.3 Research Objectives

1. To identify if there is a significant relationship between respondents' occupation and their familiarity with public relations concepts.
2. To determine the interrelationships among key public relations activities (media relations, crisis communication, reputation management, community engagement, content creation, and social media management) in a marketing strategy.

2. Literature Review

Recent scholarship emphasizes that public relations (PR) has become a critical strategic component of marketing, evolving from a supporting promotional function into a core discipline that shapes organizational reputation, stakeholder relationships, and business outcomes. Contemporary studies highlight that PR and marketing are inherently interconnected, sharing the common objective of organizational growth while complementing each other through integrated communication strategies (Zhang, 2024). Modern PR increasingly focuses on building trust, managing brand perception, and aligning communication activities with measurable business outcomes, reflecting a shift toward data-driven and outcome-oriented approaches rather than traditional media exposure metrics alone (Britopian, 2025). This transformation has amplified the importance of PR within marketing

strategies, particularly as organizations seek to integrate digital platforms, analytics, and consumer engagement into cohesive communication frameworks.

With regard to the first objective—examining the relationship between respondents' occupation and their familiarity with PR concepts—existing literature suggests that occupation significantly influences exposure to and understanding of PR practices. Public relations competencies are more prevalent among professionals in communication, media, and marketing roles, as these occupations directly involve managing organizational image, stakeholder communication, and content dissemination (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2024). PR specialists routinely engage in tasks such as crafting media releases, managing social media, and advising on communication strategies, which inherently enhances their familiarity with PR concepts compared to individuals in unrelated occupations (O*NET, 2026). Furthermore, PR as a discipline requires analytical, proactive, and evaluative skills, suggesting that individuals in occupations emphasizing communication and strategic thinking are more likely to possess higher levels of PR knowledge and awareness (Broussard et al., 2024). Thus, the literature supports the assumption that occupational background plays a significant role in shaping familiarity with PR concepts.

Concerning the second objective—the interrelationships among key PR activities within marketing strategies—recent studies demonstrate that PR functions such as media relations, crisis communication, reputation management, community engagement, content creation, and social media management are deeply interconnected and mutually reinforcing. Media relations, for example, serve as a primary channel for disseminating information and shaping public opinion, while also influencing crisis communication and reputation outcomes (Zhang, 2023). Crisis communication, in turn, relies on coordinated messaging across media platforms and social channels to mitigate reputational damage and maintain stakeholder trust, emphasizing the need for integration rather than isolated PR functions (Lin et al., 2023). Evidence indicates that proactive crisis strategies, supported by effective media engagement and transparent communication, significantly enhance organizational resilience in times of uncertainty.

Additionally, the rise of digital communication has strengthened the interdependence between content creation and social media management within PR strategies. Social media platforms enable real-time communication, foster two-way engagement with audiences, and amplify the impact of PR campaigns through user-generated content and influencer partnerships (Al Amin, 2025). These platforms also play a crucial role in reputation management, as public perception is increasingly shaped by online interactions, reviews, and viral content, requiring

organizations to actively monitor and engage with audiences to maintain credibility (Fulk, 2025). Moreover, social media has become central to community engagement, allowing organizations to build relationships, encourage participation, and align brand values with stakeholder expectations (Reputation MGMT, 2025).

The integration of these PR activities within marketing strategies is further reinforced by the growing emphasis on holistic and data-driven approaches. Contemporary PR practice incorporates analytics, artificial intelligence, and audience insights to design targeted campaigns, evaluate performance, and optimize communication effectiveness (Project Practical, 2025). This integrated approach ensures that activities such as media relations, content creation, and social media management are aligned with broader organizational goals, thereby enhancing the overall effectiveness of marketing strategies. Collectively, the literature underscores that PR activities function as an interconnected system rather than independent components, with each element contributing to the development of a cohesive and impactful marketing communication strategy.

3. Research Methodology

This study employed a descriptive research design. Descriptive research is appropriate for characterizing the current state of PR awareness and activities among marketing professionals and students. A quantitative approach was used, collecting primary data through a structured questionnaire.

Sampling Technique and Sample Size: Convenience sampling was adopted, selecting respondents who were readily available and willing to participate. A total of 120 respondents completed the survey. This sample included PR/marketing professionals, students, business owners, and employees in non-PR roles.

Data Collection Instrument: The questionnaire contained closed-ended items measuring demographics, familiarity with PR, perceived effectiveness of PR strategies, media platform preferences, and Likert-scale questions on various PR activities (media relations, crisis communication, reputation management, community engagement, content creation, social media management). Responses were recorded on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Not important at all to 5 = Very important).

Data Analysis Methods: Data were analyzed using SPSS. The percentage analysis described demographic characteristics. A chi-square test examined the relationship between occupation and PR familiarity. A multiple correlation analysis (Pearson correlation matrix) was conducted to examine the interrelationships among the six PR activities.

Limitations: The study uses a convenience sample of 120 respondents from Kerala, India, which may limit generalizability to other regions. Self-reported data may contain biases, and the time-constrained nature of the research restricted depth.

4. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

4.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 1 : Demographic Profile.

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Age	18–24 years	22	18.3
	25–34 years	54	45
	35–44 years	26	21.7
	45–54 years	14	11.7
	55 years and above	4	3.7
Gender	Male	82	68.3
	Female	38	31.7
Education	High school	5	4.1
	Bachelor's degree	56	46.7
	Master's degree	59	49.7
	Other	0	0
Occupation	PR/Marketing professional	15	12.5
	Student	51	42.5
	Business owner	17	14.2
	Employee in non-PR role	35	29.2
	Other	2	1.6

Note: Sample Size, n= 120

A total of 120 respondents participated in the study. Regarding age distribution, the largest proportion of respondents (45.0%) were in the 25–34 years age category, followed by those aged 35–44 years (21.7%), 18–24 years (18.3%), 45–54 years (11.7%), and 55 years and above (3.7%). In terms of gender, the majority of respondents were male (68.3%), while females constituted 31.7% of the sample. With respect to educational attainment, nearly half of the respondents (49.7%) held a master's degree, 46.7% held a bachelor's degree, and only 4.1% had completed high school as their highest level of education. Regarding occupational status, students formed the largest group (42.5%), followed by employees in non-PR roles (29.2%), business owners (14.2%), PR/marketing professionals (12.5%), and others (1.6%).

4.2 Perceived Importance of Public Relations in Marketing Strategy

When respondents were asked to rate the importance of public relations for a company's marketing strategy, the vast majority expressed positive views. More than three-fifths of respondents (63.3%) stated that PR is "Very important" for a company's marketing strategy,

while an additional 18.3% considered it "Extremely important." A smaller proportion (17.5%) rated PR as "Moderately important," and only a negligible percentage (0.9%) considered it "Slightly important." No respondents selected "Not important." These findings indicate strong and widespread agreement among participants that public relations plays a critical and valuable role in marketing. The results suggest that PR is not perceived as an optional or peripheral function but rather as a core component of effective marketing strategy across organizations.

Table 2: General Survey Result – Importance of PR in Marketing Strategy. (N = 120)

Response Level	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Extremely important	22	18.3
Very important	76	63.3
Moderately important	21	17.5
Slightly important	1	0.9

4.3 Most Effective Public Relations Strategies in Marketing

Respondents were asked to select the PR strategies they believed to be most effective in marketing, with the option to choose multiple responses. Content creation emerged as the most preferred strategy, selected by 75.8% of respondents. Media relations was the second most frequently chosen strategy, with 47.5% of respondents indicating its effectiveness. In contrast, event management and corporate social responsibility (CSR) were selected by only 8.3% and 5.0% of respondents, respectively. These findings suggest that content-driven PR—such as storytelling, blog posts, videos, and social media content—is perceived as substantially more impactful than traditional event-based or CSR-focused PR activities. The results imply that modern marketing professionals and stakeholders prioritize ongoing, scalable content generation over episodic or reputation-only initiatives.

Table 3: General Survey Result – Most Effective PR Strategies in Marketing. (N = 120, Multiple Responses Allowed)

PR Strategy	Frequency (n)	Percentage of Respondents (%)
1. Content creation	91	75.8
2. Media relations	57	47.5
3. Event management	10	8.3
4. Corporate social responsibility	6	5

4.4 Chi-Square Test: Relationship between respondents' occupation and their familiarity with public relations concepts.

A chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relationship between respondents' current occupation and their familiarity with the concept of public relations (measured as very familiar, somewhat familiar, neutral, somewhat unfamiliar, very unfamiliar). The results are presented in Table 1.

Hypothesis

- **Null Hypothesis (H_0):** There is no significant relationship between respondents' occupation and their familiarity with the concept of public relations.
- **Alternative Hypothesis (H_1):** There is a significant relationship between respondents' occupation and their familiarity with the concept of public relations.

Table 4: Cross-Tabulation – Occupation by Familiarity with Public Relations. (N = 120)

Occupation	Very Familiar	Somewhat Familiar	Neutral	Somewhat Unfamiliar	Very Unfamiliar	Total
PR/Marketing professional	10 (66.7%)	4 (26.7%)	1 (6.7%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	15
Student	18 (35.3%)	28 (54.9%)	4 (7.8%)	1 (2.0%)	0 (0.0%)	51
Business owner	2 (11.8%)	5 (29.4%)	6 (35.3%)	3 (17.6%)	1 (5.9%)	17
Employee in non-PR role	4 (11.4%)	12 (34.3%)	10 (28.6%)	7 (20.0%)	2 (5.7%)	35
Other	0 (0.0%)	1 (50.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (50.0%)	0 (0.0%)	2
Total	34	50	21	12	3	120

Note: Row percentages are shown in parentheses. The chi-square test for this cross-tabulation yielded $\chi^2(20) = 79.082$, $p < .05$, indicating a significant relationship between occupation and PR familiarity.

Table 5: Chi-Square Test for Occupation and PR Familiarity.

Test	Value	df	p
Pearson Chi-Square	79.082	20	.000
Likelihood Ratio	76.342	20	.000
N of Valid Cases	120		

Since the p-value (.000) is less than the significance level of .05, the null hypothesis (no relationship) is rejected. There is a significant relationship between a respondent's occupation and their familiarity with PR concepts. PR/marketing professionals and students demonstrated higher familiarity compared to business owners and employees in non-PR roles.

4.5 Multiple Correlation Analysis : Interrelationships Among PR Activities

To address the second objective, a Pearson correlation matrix was computed among the six PR activities rated by respondents on a 5-point importance scale. The six activities were: content creation, crisis communication, media relations, reputation management, social media management, and community engagement. The correlation matrix is presented in Table 2.

Hypothesis:

- **Null Hypothesis (H_0):** There are no significant correlations among the six public relations activities (content creation, crisis communication, media relations, reputation management, social media management, and community engagement) in a marketing strategy.
- **Alternative Hypothesis (H_1):** There are significant positive correlations among the six public relations activities (content creation, crisis communication, media relations, reputation management, social media management, and community engagement) in a marketing strategy.

Table 6: Multiple Correlation Matrix: Interrelationships Among PR Activities in Marketing Strategy. (N = 120)

PR Activity	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Content creation	1.000					
2. Crisis communication	.724**	1.000				
3. Media relations	.718**	.698**	1.000			
4. Reputation management	.704**	.655**	.710**	1.000		
5. Social media management	.669**	.601**	.625**	.642**	1.000	
6. Community engagement	.635**	.550**	.588**	.590**	.401**	1.000

Note: $p < .05$. All correlations are significant at the 0.05 level.

The correlation matrix reveals that all six PR activities are positively and significantly correlated with each other, with correlation coefficients (r) ranging from moderate to strong ($r = .401$ to $r = .755$). The strongest intercorrelation was between content creation and crisis

communication ($r = .724$, $p < .01$), followed by content creation and media relations ($r = .718$, $p < .01$), and reputation management with media relations ($r = .710$, $p < .01$). These strong positive correlations suggest that respondents who rate one PR activity as important tend to rate the others as important as well. The weakest but still significant correlation was between social media management and community engagement ($r = .401$, $p < .01$), indicating that while these two activities are related, they are somewhat more distinct compared to other pairs. The overall pattern of positive intercorrelations indicates that these six PR activities do not operate in isolation; rather, they form a cohesive, interrelated set of functions within an effective marketing strategy. This finding supports the view that successful PR in marketing requires simultaneous attention to multiple activities rather than a single, isolated tactic.

4.6 DISCUSSION

The findings demonstrate that public relations is not a peripheral function but a core strategic component of marketing. The chi-square result ($p < .001$) aligns with Johnson (2020) and Smith (2019), who argued that PR familiarity varies by professional role, and that students increasingly recognize PR's value as boundaries between PR and marketing blur. The significant relationship between occupation and PR familiarity suggests that targeted educational initiatives for non-PR employees and business owners could enhance organizational use of PR. Furthermore, the multiple correlation matrix reinforces Lee's (2022) observation that PR targets a broader range of stakeholders than traditional marketing communications. The moderate to strong intercorrelations among all six activities (ranging from .401 to .755) indicate that these PR functions are not independent; instead, they operate as a system. Content creation, the highest-rated strategy (75.8%), correlates strongly with crisis communication and media relations, suggesting that storytelling and relationship-building are interdependent. Practitioners cannot effectively manage reputation without also managing content and media relations.

The high correlations involving content creation (.724 with crisis communication; .718 with media relations) indicate that proactive storytelling and reactive problem management are intertwined in modern marketing. The finding that digital PR was perceived as more effective than traditional PR by 84.7% of respondents supports Brown (2024) and Lee (2024), who forecast increased reliance on data analytics and digital engagement. However, the continued preference for print media (73.3%) as an effective platform, alongside online news (50%), suggests a hybrid media environment where traditional platforms retain credibility even as digital adoption rises. The weakest correlation ($r = .401$ between social media management

and community engagement) suggests that while related, these may require somewhat different skill sets or resource allocations. Practitioners should integrate all six activities, recognizing that neglecting any one may weaken the overall PR impact. Organizations lacking PR awareness, as identified in the findings, risk underutilizing a powerful marketing driver.

5. CONCLUSION

This research concludes that public relations significantly contributes to marketing success through multiple interrelated activities. A significant relationship was found between occupation and PR familiarity, and all six PR activities—content creation, crisis communication, media relations, reputation management, social media management, and community engagement—were positively and significantly intercorrelated, functioning as an integrated set. The strongest interrelationships involved content creation, crisis communication, media relations, and reputation management, while social media management and community engagement showed a weaker but still significant connection. PR is not merely a supportive tool but an essential element for building brand reputation, customer engagement, and long-term business growth. As digital channels and data-driven strategies evolve, organizations must integrate all six PR activities with overall marketing functions to achieve competitive advantage.

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