



| Research Article / Araştırma Makalesi |

A Scale Development Study for Public Relations Process in School and Its Investigation in Terms of Various Variables

Okulda Halkla İlişkiler Sürecine Yönelik Bir Ölçek Geliştirme Çalışması ve Çeşitli Değişkenler Açısından İncelenmesi

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Keywords

1. public relations
2. school
3. public relation process
4. scale development

Anahtar Kelimeler

- 1.halkla ilişkiler
- 2.okul
- 3.halkla ilişkiler süreci
- 4.ölçek geliştirme

Received/Başvuru Tarihi
18.06.2020

Accepted / Kabul Tarihi
28.08.2020

Abstract

Purpose: The importance of public relations increases with social life. Public relations is a process that aims to regulate the relations between society and institutions and ensures mutual communication and cooperation. The public relations process, which has become more important with the rapid changes, has become a necessity for schools as well. The aim of the study was to develop a scale for the public relations process at school and examine the public relations process in the school in terms of various variables through the data collected with this scale.

Design/Methodology/Approach: The study is descriptive research designed as a relational survey method. For scale development, exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses were performed over different samples. Data were collected from 198 teachers for exploratory factor analysis (AFA) and 344 teachers for confirmatory factor analysis (CFA).

Findings: As a result of the analyses, a 39-item scale was obtained. Validity and reliability studies related to the scale were conducted and examined in terms of gender, branch, managerial experience, and school type. Since the data showed normal distribution, independent samples t-test was performed for gender, branch, and management experience variables. While no significant difference in terms of gender, there were significant differences regarding branch and management experience. The ANOVA test conducted for the type of schools variable showed that there were significant differences.

Highlights: It is thought that this developed scale will contribute to the field. It is thought that the application of the scale by testing it in different populations and samples will increase the interest and awareness of the field.

Öz

Çalışmanın amacı: Toplumsal yaşamla birlikte önemi daha da artan halkla ilişkiler; toplum ile kurumlar arasındaki ilişkileri düzenlemeyi hedefleyen karşılıklı iletişimi ve işbirliğini sağlayan bir süreçtir. Eğitim ortamlarında yaşanan hızlı değişimlerle birlikte önemi daha artan halkla ilişkiler süreci okullar için de bir gereksinim haline gelmiştir. Bu kapsamda, çalışmanın amacı okulda halkla ilişkiler sürecine yönelik bir ölçek geliştirmek ve bu ölçekle toplanan veriler üzerinden okuldaki halkla ilişkiler sürecinin çeşitli değişkenler açısından incelemektir.

Materyal ve Yöntem: Araştırma ilişkisel tarama modelinde yapılmış betimsel bir çalışmadır. Ölçek geliştirme sürecine ilişkin farklı örneklemeler üzerinden açıklayıcı ve doğrulayıcı faktör analizi yapılmıştır. Açıklayıcı faktör analizi (AFA) için 198, doğrulayıcı faktör analizi (DFA) için 344 öğretmenden veri toplanmıştır.

Bulgular: Analizler neticesinde elde edilen 39 maddelik ölçek geçerlik ve güvenilirlik çalışmaları yapılarak cinsiyet, branş, yöneticilik deneyimi ve görev yapılan okul türü değişkenleri açısından incelenmiştir. Veriler normal dağılım sergilediği için cinsiyet, branş ve yöneticilik deneyimi değişkenleri için bağımsız gruplar t-testi yapılmıştır. Cinsiyet değişkeni açısından anlamlı bir farklılık ortaya çıkmazken, branş ve yöneticilik deneyimi değişkenleri açısından anlamlı farklılıklar ortaya çıkmıştır. Görev yapılan okul türü değişkeni açısından yapılan ANOVA testi sonucuna göre anlamlı farklılıklar olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır.

Önemli Vurgular: Geliştirilen ölçeğin alana katkı sağlayacağı düşünülmektedir. Ölçeğin farklı evren ve örneklemelerde de test edilerek uygulanmasının alana yönelik ilgiyi ve farkındalığı artıracığı düşünülmektedir.

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INTRODUCTION

It is extremely important for organizations, which are constantly interacted with the environment to know the structure and features of the environment that they are in. Many factors such as the cultural and economic structure of the society, its tendency towards social change, its resources, development level in the technology and scientific field constitute the general environment of the school, and these variables affect the school directly or indirectly (Başaran, 2000). Schools, which are social organizations in that their input and output are human, are required to be in close contact with their environment. The school, which is an institution established to realize the goals of society, is an organization that has an informal aspects formal structure as well as formal ones, and in this respect, it is constant in interaction with its environment (Arr, 1996). Societies are unaware of the school's programs and goals due to the lack of public relations in schools (Morris & Vrabel, 1979). It is known that schools have a critical place in society in terms of public relations. In this context, the crucial point of public relations in terms of schools is to explain what has been done by telling the school and convincing the public about what has been done. Public relations have an important place in terms of providing support in the relations that schools establish with their environment (Yıldırım, 2007). In the past, schools were under the supervision of only educational circles, and other stakeholders were not too involved in the education process. Schools were provided with information sharing only when requested. However, with the developments in the 21st century, the situation has changed, and school administrators have had to interact with the internal and external stakeholders of the schools (O'Reilly & Matt, 2013). This situation has revealed the idea of public relations in schools, and schools have started to benefit from public relations practices in the context of reaching a wider audience.

As well as the concept of public relations is an implementation-specific to the period that we are in with regards to its basic qualities, it has been practiced for a long time. However, the emergence of public relations as a planned field has been realized as a result of the public and private organizations having to organize their relations with the environment and society. Today, the public has turned into a situation that is not content with what institutions and organizations provide but expects certain duties from them and wants to learn the reasons for these duties (Pira & Kocabaş, 2005; Sülüş, 2009). Therefore, as long as institutions continue their activities, they have to act in coordination with all groups that affect their decisions and are affected by their decisions (Şentürk & Selvi, 2019).

Although public relations go back a long way in thought, it is a new concept in the field of social sciences. It is accepted that public relations start with social life. There is no single definition of public relations that is agreed upon due to its implementation in many different fields (Yıldırım, 2007). With the development of modern management understanding, public relations has taken its place as an activity aiming to regulate the relations between institutions and society as an important element of social life. The focal point of public relations is constituted of humans and his/her environment. Many definitions have been made on public relations. However, with the rapid changes, it becomes obligatory to develop public relations activities. As a result, there has been an increase in studies conducted in the field of public relations, and different definitions have been developed in these studies (Karpas, 1999).

Public relations have been defined in different ways as; a process that helps to maintain the mutual communication process between the target audience and institutions by providing mutual understanding, acceptance, and cooperation (Yıldırım, 2007); the totality of the efforts of institutions to integrate with society (Sabuncuoğlu, 2001); planned and continuous efforts of institutions to ensure and maintain mutual goodwill and understanding with their environment (Election, 1998); the public adoption of the policies carried out by the management, announcing these policies to the public, creating a positive atmosphere for the management and managers as a result, and also knowing what the people think about the administration, their expectations from the administration and ensuring cooperation with the public in this direction (Tortop, 2006).

In a broader definition developed by Harlow (1976: 36) based on different definitions of public relations, it is stated as "Public relations is a privileged management function that helps to establish and maintain mutual communication, understanding, acceptance, and cooperation between an organization and its target audience, includes the management of problems and problems, responses to the public, helps to management to inform the public, defines and emphasizes the responsibility of management to serve for public benefit, also serves as an early warning system to help anticipate trends, assists management to take advantage of changes effectively, and uses moral communication techniques and researches as its primary means" (Hutton, 1999; p.200; Okay & Okay, 2015; p.2; Özer, 2018; p.1).

Okay and Okay (2015) defined public relations as a strategic management process aiming to achieve mutual understanding between organizations and their target audiences and achieving goals. On the other hand, Balta-Peltekoğlu (2016) stated that the concept of public relations has new meanings over time, the field of the concept has expanded further, and public relations have been given important responsibilities with the combination of business purposes and communication purposes.

Public relations is an integral part of the management process in achieving institutions to their goals and has become a management function that ranks high in decision-making mechanisms. Public relations and management can meet the public's need to be informed (Cutlip et al., 2000). Public relations constitute an important field of study to ensure the continuity of institutions both in the private and public sectors (Erdem & Akbaba, 2007). Herein, the main purpose of public relations is to ensure that the relations of institutions with their environment are positive and make the communication-interaction environment efficient (Çamdereli, 2000). Public relations include both the institution's relations with the society and its relations with other institutions and communities (Tortop, 2006; Balta-Peltekoğlu, 2013). Since schools are institutions that feature open

systems, they have to give more importance to public relations practices. Therefore, it is very important to realize these applications in a process in order to run schools more effectively.

Public Relations Process

The public relations process consists of four basic steps. These steps are; research (determination), planning (strategic and tactical planning), implementation (communication), and assessment steps. Steps towards public relations should definitely go through this process consisting of four steps. In this process, goals should be determined, strategies and tactics should be established (Balta-Peltekoğlu, 2016). When the public relations process is expanded based on four basic steps, it is approached as temporary problem identification, target determination, strategy determination, tactics determination, implementation, and control (evaluation) (Türk & Güven, 2007).

Cutlip et al. (2000) associated the public relations process with an iceberg. A large part (three quarters) of this iceberg is underwater (research, planning, assessment), and the remaining quarter is on the surface of the water (implementation). The first step of the public relations process constitutes the information gathering-research (situation analysis) process. At this step, it is investigated who is affected by the activities of the institution and how and this step is also very important for later steps (Balta-Peltekoğlu, 2016). For a systematic and planned implementation, it is necessary to collect information about the target audience first. The public relations activities to be carried out by the institution for its target audience are planned in line with the content of the data collected and the presentation of the problem. At this step, the strengths and weaknesses of the institution should be determined. A public relations practice that is attempted to be implemented without this step will not yield the desired results (Erciş, 2017).

The second step of the public relations process is the planning process. Planning aims to determine the future course of action in terms of public relations. There are two types of plans as strategic and tactical in public relations practices. In the first step of planning, information is collected from different sources instead of taking any decision. Then, in the light of the gathered information, strategic and tactical plans for the future are prepared. Strategic plans are the studies that determine which point the organization wants to reach in terms of public relations in the long term. Tactical plans, on the other hand, are the determination of what will be done in the short term within the framework of the basic policies followed by the organization. Tactical plans cover short-term decisions. The goals in tactical plans are more concrete, and what to do can be set out one by one (Erciş, 2017). Tactics are more specific than strategy and are based on the implementation of strategies (Korkmaz, 2010). Tactics are important tools in implementing strategies, and in this respect, they are reactive (Dikici, 2019). While strategies are intellectual processes about order and design, tactics are for action and implementation. Therefore, tactics are tools that realize the strategy and are its indispensable continuation (Eren, 2000).

Implementation, the third step of the public relations process, constitutes the tip of the iceberg, as Cutlip et al. (2000) also stated. This step is the most comprehensive and difficult step of public relations, and implementation is being initiated to achieve the determined goals (Erciş, 2017). The implementation step is the realization of the targeted actions with the determined budgets in the determining process after the research and planning steps (Aydoğan, 2018). During the implementation step, opposite negative consequences may occur, although it may be possible to inform, persuade the target audiences and influence their decisions (Türk & Güven, 2007).

The last step of the public relations process is the assessment step. At this step, the level of compliance of the practices carried out within the framework of the decisions made to the target and plan is determined (Güven, 2014). The purpose here is not to prove some things but to try to determine how and which application has taken place (Balta-Peltekoğlu, 2016). In the assessment step, problems such as the accuracy of the plans, the level of realization of the objectives, the level of affecting the target audience are tried to be eliminated (Erciş, 2017), besides the decisions regarding public relations, information that will shed light on the decisions of the organization may be included (Okay & Okay, 2015).

The effectiveness of public relations programs in schools primarily depends on the leadership of the school principal. The principal's ability to identify an applicable theme in the school's public relations activities is essential to ensure the active participation of staff and the community. Here, emphasis is placed on the importance of the public relations role of school staff, rather than the number of bulletins or parent programs prepared by schools. A strategic public relations plan is essential for schools to achieve their goals. In the public relations process, analysis of the needs, determining the targets, assigning the personnel for the process, implementation of the program, assessment of resources on behalf of the organization, and control of the program activities are important issues for the success of the program. Schools need to take a proactive approach to reach the public, as opposed to the "wait and see" or "counter the crisis" approach. Effective public relations programs in schools should be continuous (Norton, 2013).

It is seen that the number of studies on the public relations process in schools is limited, and these studies are devoted to public relations practices, especially in private schools (Kılıç, 2006; Ayçan-Yüksel, 2009; Yılgin, 2016; Mandacı, 2019; Önsal-Kuyumcu, 2019). In the relevant literature, there is no study involving scale development regarding the quality of the public relations process in schools. Considering that a scale developed on this subject will be important in obtaining valid and reliable information, it is aimed to develop a scale for the public relations process in schools in this study. Realization of public relations practices, which are not carried out currently by planned units in schools, within a process will make this process more effective.

For this reason, it is thought that this study will fill an important gap in the field. Moreover, the public relations process in schools was tried to be evaluated in terms of some variables.

METHOD

A correlational survey model was used in this study, which was carried out with the aim of developing a measurement tool that can be used to reveal the public relations process in school. While general survey models are survey models conducted on the whole of the scope that includes many different elements or a certain sample taken from it in order to reach a general opinion about the scope; correlational survey model is a model that aims to determine the existence or degree of variance between two or more variables (Karasar, 2013).

Study Group

In the process of developing the scale for the public relations process at school, two different data were collected from different teacher groups for explanatory and confirmatory factor analyses. First, a preliminary study was applied to 198 teachers to perform the exploratory factor analysis (EFA). Data were collected from 344 teachers for the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) for the factor structure obtained with EFA. The demographic information about the teachers reached for CFA is presented in the table below.

Table 1. Demographic Features of the Sample

Variance	Categories	n	%
Gender	Female	188	54.7
	Male	156	45.3
School Type	Preschool	23	6.7
	Primary School	82	23.8
	Secondary School	83	24.1
	General High School	59	17.2
	Vocational High School	73	21.2
	Others	24	7.0
Branch	Primary School Teacher	93	27.0
	Branch Teacher	251	73.0
Management Experience	Yes	186	54.1
	No	158	45.9

Considering the distribution of the sample group, it was seen that 188 of the participants were female (54.7%), and 156 (45.3) were male. When considering the distribution of the types of schools' participants work in, it was seen that 23 of the teachers who worked in preschool education institutions, 82 of them worked in primary schools, 83 of them worked in secondary schools, while 59 of them worked in general high schools, 73 of them worked in vocational high schools, and 24 of them worked in other educational institutions. It was seen that 93 of the teachers were primary school teachers and 251 were branch teachers, and 186 teachers had management experience, while 158 teachers did not have management experience.

Data Collection Tools

In this study, the public relations process scale at school was developed as a data collection tool and applied to the participants. Information based on the scale is given below.

Public Relations Process Scale in School

In the process of developing the data collection tool, four stages of scale development (Büyüköztürk, 2012) were followed respectively like defining the problem, article writing, expert opinion, and analysis. While conducting a new scale study, firstly, the relevant literature should be scanned after the problem situation is defined. In this process, it should be evaluated which questions are appropriate for the scale subject (DeVellis, 2014). In this framework, the relevant literature has been researched, and the questions related to the stages of the public relations process have been stated. In the first stage, it was paid attention that the question item was excessive. While creating the scale items, 68 questions were prepared based on the principle that the items are understandable and simple, and the items do not have more than one judgment statement (Ekici, Taşkın Ekici, & Kara, 2012). The 68 items in the item pool were given to 10 students who studied at the postgraduate level in the field of Educational Administration and Supervision and took the Public Relations at School course, and they were asked to examine the items. Within the framework of the feedback from the students, the item pool was reduced to 53 and revised. Later, 53 statements remaining in the item pool were presented to 3 academicians working in the field of educational administration and 3 academicians working in the field of the Turkish language in order to get an expert opinion. Content and face validity was ensured with expert opinion (DeVellis, 2014). In line with the suggestions, some items were changed in terms of expression. The scale, which was shaped according to expert opinion, was applied to a sample group of 20 people selected as a draft.

The five-point Likert-type rating scale was used to determine the level of agreement of the teachers participating in the statements in the scale, and the values here were expressed as "1" Never Agree, "2" Disagree, "3" Partially Agree, "4" Agree, and "5" Strongly Agree). There are no negative items on the scale.

Data Collection

The first data about the research were collected from teachers and administrators via Google forms between April and May 2018. The scale form was applied to the participants within the framework of the voluntary principle after making the necessary explanations by the researcher. Participants were asked to mark the option that they think is suitable for them. Since the data collection process was required for CFA one more time, the form was applied by the researcher on a different sample between November-December 2019 using Google forms. Since it was aimed to reveal the relationships between variables in this form, questions for demographic information were also included.

Data Analysis

In line with the answers received from the participants, first of all, validity and reliability studies were conducted for the scale. SPSS 15.0 statistical package program was used in the analysis of the data regarding the scale developed as a draft. Within the scope of validity and reliability analyses, principal component analysis was first preferred within the scope of EFA in order to determine the construct validity of the draft scale, which was validated with expert opinions. Factor analysis is a multivariate statistic that aims to find a small number of unrelated and conceptually meaningful variables by bringing together related variables (Büyüköztürk, 2003). Kaiser-MeyerOlkin (KMO) coefficient and Bartlett Sphericity tests were applied primarily to determine whether the obtained data and sample are suitable for principal component analysis. In order to interpret the factors in a more meaningful way, the frequently used Varimax rotation method, which aims to minimize the complexity of the factors by maximizing the variance of the loads in each factor (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2015), was preferred. While determining the number of factors, the lower limit of item eigenvalues was taken as 1.00. The variance explained in the scale development studies carried out in social areas is considered sufficient up to 30% as the lower limit in single factor scales. In multi-factor scales, the explained variance is expected to be higher (Büyüköztürk, 2003). Items that were available in more than one factor and the difference between their load values were below .10 were removed from the scale. The results related to the construct validity were also analyzed by calculating the correlation between the sub-dimensions of the scale. Within the scope of item analysis, the differences between the item average scores of the lower 27% and upper 27% groups formed according to the total scores of the test were tested with the independent groups t-test. After factor analysis and item discrimination procedures were implemented, reliability analyses were performed for the overall scale, the sub-factors included in the scale, and each item in the factors. In this framework, the Cronbach Alpha coefficient was calculated.

CFA was performed to test the model obtained after EFA. While EFA is used to determine the most appropriate number of factors based on the relationships between variables (Büyüköztürk, 2003; Brown, 2015), CFA is used to test a hypothesis determined for the relationship between variables (Büyüköztürk, 2003; Noar, 2003) and is an analysis used for specifying the fit between the obtained factors and the actual data. There are many fit indices to demonstrate the adequacy of the model tested with CFA (Büyüköztürk et al., 2004). Although there is no consensus on which fit indices will be accepted as standard (Şimşek, 2007), Cabrera-Nguyen (2010) suggested using more than one fit indices in studies on fit indices. When the goodness of fit indexes are considered, it is seen that χ^2/sd value that is the most frequently used index of fit is below 2, but if it is five or less, it is an acceptable value (Sümer, 2000; Şimşek, 2007), the RMSEA value is acceptable if it is close to .07. (Steiger, 2007). Also, it is understood that it is a good fit if the GFI value is 0.90 and above (Hooper et al., 2008); however, GFI value being greater than 0.85 and AGFI value being higher than 0.80 are considered as criteria for model fit (Schermelleh-Engel, Moosbrugger, & Muller, 2003). Having CFI and AGFI values close to the level of 1 strengthens fit (Çokluk, Şekercioğlu, & Büyüköztürk, 2012). For CFA conducted on this study, Chi-square fit test (χ^2/sd), Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Incremental Fit Index (IFI), Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI)) and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) fit indices were preferred among the multiple fit indices. SPSS AMOS 21 program was used in confirmatory factor analysis.

The scale, whose validity and reliability studies were completed, was applied to 344 teachers. In addition, information on variables such as the gender of the teachers, the presence or absence of management experience, the branch, and the type of school they work in were obtained from the personal information form. Kurtosis and skewness values and normal distribution graphics were examined in the analysis of normality tests of the scales. If the kurtosis and skewness values are between 2 values, it is accepted that the data are normally distributed (George & Mallery, 2010, Can, 2014). Since the kurtosis and skewness degrees of the scale were within these ranges (Table 5), it was decided to use parametric tests considering the normal distribution of the data in the study. Independent groups t-test was conducted for gender, branch, and management experience variables. One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used for the school type variable. In cases where the difference was significant, the Tukey test, one of the multiple comparison tests, was conducted to determine the source of the difference. When comparing the groups, the value of 0.05 was taken into account as the significance level.

FINDINGS

In order to reveal the construct validity of the scale relating to the public relations process at school, an exploratory and then a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted. Construct validities provided by exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis are given below.

Findings on Exploratory Factor Analysis

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value was determined as .955 in the EFA conducted to determine the factor structure of the scale, and it was observed that result of the Barlett Sphericity test was statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 7094.776$, $sd = 741$, $p < .001$). In cases that the KMO value is above 0,90, it is accepted that the data set is perfectly compatible with factor analysis (Kalaycı, 2008). Moreover, the Bartlett test result showed that the data set was suitable for factor analysis.

As a result of the factor analysis conducted via the Principal Component Analysis method and varimax rotation technique, it was seen that the scale consists of six sub-dimensions with an eigenvalue being greater than 1, but some items were overlapping. In the study, it was required to have a factor load of at least .40 in order for an item to be included in any factor. In addition, the difference between the load values in the factor in which the items were found and the load values in other factors were required to be .10 and above. After the items that did not meet these requirements (14 items) were removed one by one, a 39-item structure under five sub-dimensions was constituted. While the first sub-dimension explained 54.329% of the total variance, it was identified that the other sub-dimensions explained 5.619%, 3.893%, 3.457%, and 2.816%, respectively. Five sub-dimensions explained 70.115% of the total variance in the scale. The scale consisted of 39 factors as 16 items in the first factor (assessment), 10 items in the second factor (strategic planning), 5 items in the third factor (tactical planning), 5 items in the fourth factor (research-situation analysis), and 3 items in the fifth factor (implementation). It is seen in Table 2 below that the scale has factor load values between .481 and .805.

Table 2. Results of Exploratory Factor Analysis

Item No	Pre-Rotation Factor Loads	After-Rotation Factor Loads					Item-Scale r	t
		1. Factor	2. Factor	3. Factor	4. Factor	5. Factor		
2	.567				.805		.556	-8.882*
1	.590				.789		.577	-9.134*
3	.609				.632		.593	-9.072*
4	.723				.601		.711	-13.476*
8	.685				.500		.669	-12.796*
33	.775		.709				.757	-13.802*
32	.794		.687				.780	-14.281*
13	.749		.675				.734	-13.595*
27	.739		.670				.724	-11.106*
26	.815		.639				.802	-15.864*
28	.789		.632				.776	-15.525*
31	.800		.627				.785	-15.911*
29	.791		.606				.778	-15.624*
14	.741		.598				.726	-13.373*
15	.775		.581				.761	-13.652*
20	.582			.792			.571	-8.103*
19	.636			.779			.620	-11.787*
21	.687			.690			.673	-13.382*
18	.697			.632			.682	-11.586*
23	.613			.512			.596	-8.314*
35	.601					.677	.581	-9.565*
34	.639					.653	.619	-10.439*
36	.549					.481	.530	-7.856*
51	.794	.744					.777	-12.442*
49	.820	.744					.803	-14.503*
50	.726	.739					.707	-10.397*
44	.822	.727					.804	-15.594*
40	.823	.720					.806	-17.806*
41	.780	.712					.763	-15.692*
42	.796	.707					.778	-14.860*
53	.767	.700					.749	-14.913*
48	.821	.696					.803	-15.468*
45	.836	.691					.821	-15.767*
47	.829	.689					.811	-17.908*
43	.794	.680					.775	-15.206*
52	.739	.659					.720	-11.124*
46	.821	.654					.804	-14.854*
39	.689	.621					.669	-11.546*
38	.755	.606					.738	-13.677*
Eigenvalue		21.188	2.191	1.518	1.348	1.098		
Variance explained (%)		54.329	5.619	3.893	3.457	2.816		
Total variance (%)							70.115	

Correlations between item and total scale were analyzed to reveal the distinctiveness of the items. It was seen that these correlations have values between .530 and .821 in Table 2. It showed that the items exemplify similar behaviors when items-total correlations were found high and positive, and this revealed that the internal consistency of the test was high. If the item-total correlation is higher than .30, it shows that the distinctiveness of the items is good (Büyüköztürk, 2012). Accordingly, it was seen that the distinctiveness of the items in the scale was good. The total scores that the participants could get from the scale regarding item distinctiveness were also calculated. According to the scale total scores, the scores obtained from the answers of the participants in the lower and upper 27% groups were compared with the independent groups t-test, and the t values are given in Table 2. It can be stated that the difference in total scores of groups observed in favor of the upper group groups was significant, and within this scope, the distinctiveness of the items was at a good level.

Findings on Confirmatory Factor Analysis

39-item and 5-dimensional structures that emerged after EFA and the goodness-of-fit indices for the model were examined as a result of the analyzes.

CFA was conducted over a different study group to analyze the construct validity of the public relations process scale at school. Analysis result was $X^2 = 1433,034$; $sd = 676$ and $p < .000$. The values related to the goodness of fit were assessed by considering the values accepted in the literature, and their suitability was analyzed (Sümer, 2000; Schermelleh-Engel, Moosbrugger, & Müller, 2003; Şimşek, 2007). The modifications suggested by the AMOS program in the CFA model were analyzed. In line with these suggestions, the necessary modifications were made in order to obtain clearer values for the model among items that were very similar in terms of the properties measured, provided that each sub-dimension was limited within itself. The values before and after the modification are given in the Table 3 below.

Table 3. Results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Goodness-of Fit Values	Acceptable Value Range	Before Modification	After Modification	Result
X^2 /sd	$X^2 /sd \leq 3$	2.901	2.120	Acceptable
RMSEA	$RMSEA \leq .08$	.074	.057	Acceptable
GFI	$.90 \leq GFI$	.747	.820	Unacceptable
NFI	$.90 \leq NFI \leq .95$	.862	.902	Acceptable
CFI	$.90 \leq CFI$	.905	.945	Acceptable
AGFI	$.80 \leq AGFI$	.715	.792	Unacceptable
IFI	$.90 \leq IFI$	.905	.946	Acceptable

The fit index values in Table 3 showed a good fit and confirmed the factor structure of the PRPSS. The visual model obtained with CFA is given in Figure 1 below.

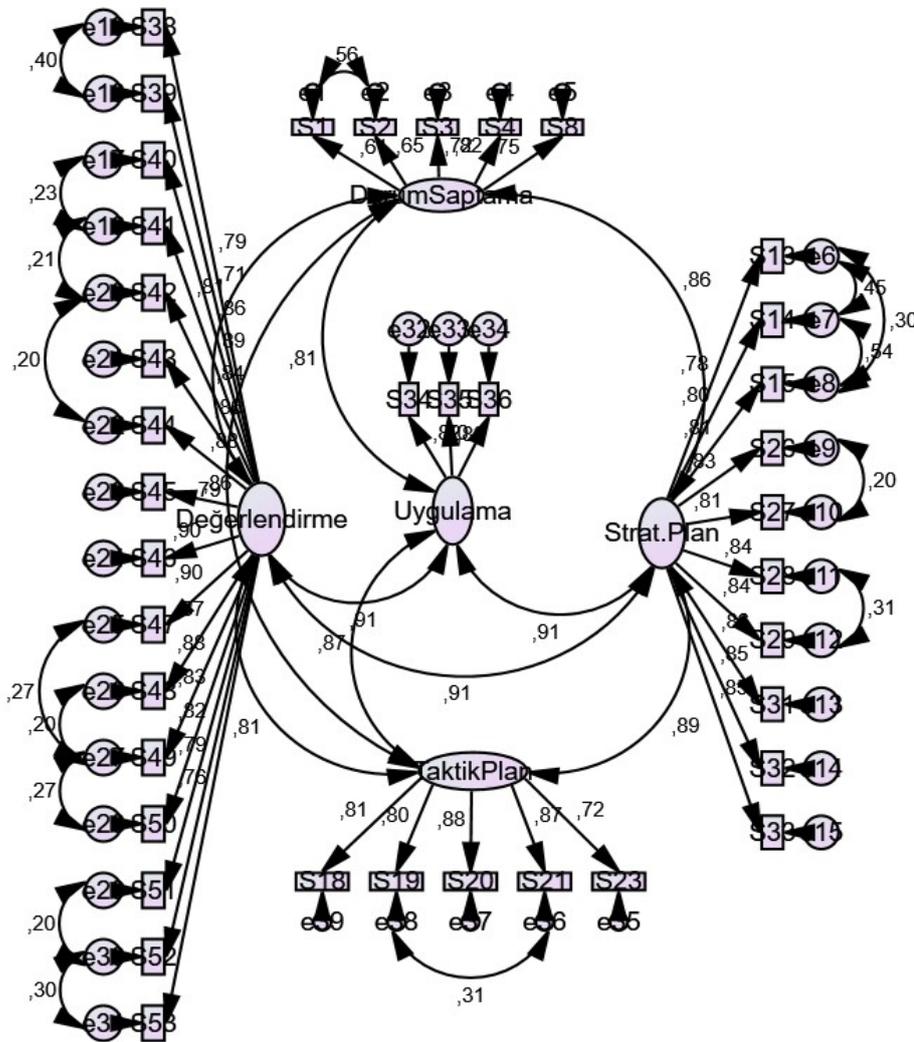


Figure 1. CFA Results of Public Relations Process Scale at School

Findings on Reliability Studies

Reliability test was conducted to reveal the reliability of the public relations process scale in the school. The reliability value of the scale was determined by Cronbach Alpha, and it was found that it got a very high value of .983. When the reliability values were considered in terms of sub-dimensions, it was identified as .848 in the research (situation analysis) dimension; .958 in the planning of strategies; .908 in the planning of tactics; .813 in the implementation dimension, and .975 in the assessment dimension. Cronbach Alpha coefficients above .70 obtained for both the whole scale and the sub-dimensions showed that the scale and its sub-dimensions were highly reliable. Assessing the correlations between dimensions, it was seen that there were significant relationships ranging from .668 to .874. A correlation coefficient of more than .70 is considered to be high, and between .70 and .50 is considered to be moderately related (Kalaycı, 2008). Table 4 below showed that the relationship between research (situation analysis) and planning of tactics and implementation sub-dimensions was moderate; also, the

relationship between other sub-dimensions was high and positive. Strong correlations between dimensions showed that dimensions make up the whole.

Table 4. Correlation values between factors after CFA

Factors	n	\bar{X}	df	Cronbach α	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5
Research- Situation Analysis	344	4.104	.638	.848	-				
Strategic Planning	344	3.748	.768	.958	.767**	-			
Tactical Planning	344	3.890	.728	.908	.690**	.833**	-		
Implementation	344	3.701	.759	.813	.668**	.795**	.743**	-	
Assessment	344	3.754	.752	.975	.721**	.874**	.782**	.821**	-
Total	344	3.811	.685	.983					

**p<.01

Findings on Study of Public Relations Process in the School in terms of Different Variables

Firstly, the perception level of teachers towards the public relations process in the school is given; then, findings on the opinions of teachers on demographic variables are stated under this title.

Examination of Perception Level of Teachers towards Public Relations Process in the School

The perception level of teachers towards the public relations process in the school and its sub-dimensions are given in the table below.

Table 5. Perception level of teachers towards public relations process in the school

Dimensions	N	\bar{X}	s	Kurtosis	Skewness
Research- Situation Analysis	344	4.104	.638	-.773	-.248
Strategic Planning	344	3.748	.768	-.546	-.161
Tactical Planning	344	3.890	.728	-.294	-.346
Implementation	344	3.701	.759	-.289	-.100
Assessment	344	3.754	.752	-.567	-.144
Overall Scale	344	3.811	.685	-.593	-.124

The perception level of teachers towards the public relations process in the school was seen as "I Agree" level (\bar{X} =3.811) in general of the scale. Considering sub-dimensions, the highest mean (\bar{X} =4.104) was seen in the research (situation analysis) stage, while the lowest mean (\bar{X} =3.701) was found in the implementation stage. It was found that the perception level of teachers towards the public relations process in the school was "I Agree" level in all sub-dimensions and in general of the scale. Skewness and Kurtosis values were analyzed in the scope of normality test concerning which tests were required to evaluate demographic variables. It was seen that Kurtosis values were between -.289 and -.773 while Skewness values were between -.100 and -.346 in the table above. Accordingly, it was decided to use parametric tests since data were distributed normally.

Examination of Teachers' Opinions on Demographic Variables

Teachers' opinions are discussed in terms of demographic variables under this title.

Findings on Gender Variable

T-test for independent groups was conducted to find out whether teachers' opinions towards the public relations process in the school and its sub-dimensions differed significantly in terms of gender variable or not. The results of the analysis are given in Table 6.

Table 6. Findings on Gender Variable

Dimensions	Gender	N	\bar{X}	s.s.	Sd	t	p
Research- Situation Analysis	Female	188	4.115	.631	342	.345	.730
	Male	156	4.091	.647			
Strategic Planning	Female	188	3.698	.762	342	-1.322	.187
	Male	156	3.808	.774			
Tactical Planning	Female	188	3.823	.751	342	-1.857	.064
	Male	156	3.969	.693			
Implementation	Female	188	3.670	.783	342	-.840	.402
	Male	156	3.739	.731			
Assessment	Female	188	3.733	.741	342	-.586	.559
	Male	156	3.780	.766			
Overall Scale	Female	188	3.780	.684	342	-.927	.355
	Male	156	3.849	.686			

It was seen that there was no significant difference in teachers' opinions towards the public relations process in the school and its sub-dimensions in terms of gender [$t_{(342)} = -.927, p > 0.05$]. Also, considering sub-dimensions, the gender variable did not create a significant difference.

Findings on Branch Variable

T-test for independent groups was conducted to find out whether teachers' opinions towards the public relations process in the school and its sub-dimensions differed significantly in terms of branch variable or not. The results of the analysis are given in Table 7.

Table 7. Findings on Branch Variable

Dimensions	Branch	N	\bar{X}	s.s.	Sd	t	p
Research- Situation Analysis	Class Teacher	93	4.193	.637	342	1.588	.113
	Branch Teacher	251	4.071	.636			
Strategic Planning	Class Teacher	93	3.943	.715	342	2.892	.004*
	Branch Teacher	251	3.676	.776			
Tactical Planning	Class Teacher	93	4.108	.666	342	3.435	.001*
	Branch Teacher	251	3.809	.734			
Implementation	Class Teacher	93	3.857	.703	342	2.320	.021*
	Branch Teacher	251	3.644	.773			
Assessment	Class Teacher	93	3.942	.702	342	2.849	.005*
	Branch Teacher	251	3.685	.759			
Overall Scale	Class Teacher	93	3.989	.634	342	2.975	.003*
	Branch Teacher	251	3.745	.692			

* $p < 0.05$

It was seen that there was a significant difference in teachers' opinions towards the public relations process in the school in terms of gender [$t_{(342)} = 2.975, p < 0.05$]. It was seen that opinions of class teachers were more positive in contrast with branch teachers, and this difference was significant. Also, considering sub-dimensions, it was found that there was a significant difference in all sub-dimensions except research (situation analysis) sub-dimension in terms of branch. Opinions of class teachers were more positive in all dimensions.

Findings on Management Experience Variable

T-test for independent groups was conducted to find out whether teachers' opinions towards the public relations process in the school and its sub-dimensions differed significantly in terms of management experience variable or not. The results of the analysis are given in Table 8.

Table 8. Findings on Management Experience Variable

Dimensions	Management Experience	N	\bar{X}	s.s.	Sd	t	p
Research- Situation Analysis	Yes	186	4.207	.613	342	3.277	.001*
	No	158	3.984	.646			
Strategic Planning	Yes	186	3.835	.772	342	2.284	.023*
	No	158	3.646	.754			
Tactical Planning	Yes	186	3.963	.729	342	2.053	.041*
	No	158	3.803	.718			
Implementation	Yes	186	3.733	.797	342	.832	.406
	No	158	3.665	.713			
Assessment	Yes	186	3.841	.769	342	2.335	.020*
	No	158	3.652	.720			
Overall Scale	Yes	186	3.894	.697	342	2.452	.015*
	No	158	3.713	.659			

* $p < 0.05$

According to the results of the T-test for independent groups, which was conducted to find out whether teachers' opinions towards public relations process in the school and its sub-dimensions differed significantly in terms of management experience variable or not, it was seen that there was a significant difference in opinions of teachers [$t_{(342)} = 2.452, p < 0.05$]. It was seen that the opinions of teachers who had management experience were more positive in contrast with teachers who had no management experience, and this difference was significant. Also, considering sub-dimensions, it was found that there was a significant difference in all sub-dimensions except the implementation sub-dimension step in terms of the management experience variable. It was seen that the opinions of teachers who had management experience were more positive in all dimensions.

Findings on School Type Variable

One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted to find out whether teachers' opinions towards the public relations process in the school and its sub-dimensions differed significantly in terms of school type variable or not. The results of the analysis are given in Table 9.

Table 9. Findings on School Type Variable

Dimensions	School Type	n	\bar{X}		Sum of Squares	Sd	Mean of Squares	F	p	Significant Difference
Research-Situation Analysis	Preschool	23	4.374	Between Groups	3.188	4	.797	1.955	.101	-
	Primary	82	4.178	Within Groups	128.412	315	.408			
	Secondary	83	4.068	Total	131.600	319				
	High School	59	4.044							
	Vocational Sch.	73	4.003				Levene (F=1.467, p=.212)			
	Total	320	4.099							
Strategic Planning	Preschool	23	4.213	Between Groups	11.463	4	2.866	5.038	.001	Preschool > high school, vocational s. Primary > vocational s.
	Primary	82	3.899	Within Groups	179.167	315	.569			
	Secondary	83	3.737	Total	190.630	319				
	High School	59	3.580							
	Vocational Sch.	73	3.547				Levene (F=5.047, p=.001*)			
	Total	320	3.740							
Tactical Planning	Preschool	23	4.157	Between Groups	8.724	4	2.181	4.203	.002	Primary > high school, vocational s.
	Primary	82	4.100	Within Groups	163.444	315	.519			
	Secondary	83	3.836	Total	172.168	319				
	High School	59	3.759							
	Vocational Sch.	73	3.715				Levene (F=2.963, p=.020*)			
	Total	320	3.885							
Implementation	Preschool	23	4.015	Between Groups	5.375	4	1.344	2.396	.050	-
	Primary	82	3.817	Within Groups	176.668	315	.561			
	Secondary	83	3.679	Total	182.043	319				
	High School	59	3.650							
	Vocational Sch.	73	3.543				Levene (F=5.108, p=.001*)			
	Total	320	3.702							
Assessment	Preschool	23	4.122	Between Groups	6.742	4	1.685	3.064	.017	Preschool > high school
	Primary	82	3.887	Within Groups	173.283	315	.550			
	Secondary	83	3.708	Total	180.025	319				
	High School	59	3.607							
	Vocational Sch.	73	3.655				Levene (F=3.161, p=.014*)			
	Total	320	3.753							
Overall Scale	Preschool	23	4.174	Between Groups	7.161	4	1.790	3.910	.004	Preschool > high school, vocational s.
	Primary	82	3.949	Within Groups	144.225	315	.458			
	Secondary	83	3.776	Total	151.386	319				
	High School	59	3.679							
	Vocational Sch.	73	3.671				Levene (F=4.617, p=.001*)			
	Total	320	3.807							

*p < 0.05

According to Table 9, It was seen that there was a significant difference in teachers' opinions towards the public relations process in the school in terms of school type variable [$F_{(4-315)}=3.910$, $p<0.05$]. Tukey test, one of the multiple comparison tests, was conducted to determine the source of the significant difference between opinions. It was seen that there was a significant difference in favor of opinions of teachers working in preschool institutions when compared with opinions of teachers working in general high schools and vocational high schools. It was found out that considering sub-dimensions, teachers' opinions did not reveal a significant difference in research (situation analysis) and implementation sub-dimensions in terms of school type variable; however, there was a significant difference in opinions of teachers in other sub-dimensions. It was seen that there was a significant difference in teachers' opinions in the strategic planning sub-dimension [$F_{(4-315)}=5.038$, $p<0.05$]. It was seen that the significant difference was in favor of opinions of teachers working in preschool institutions when compared with opinions of teachers working in general high schools and vocational high schools. Also, there was a significant difference in favor of opinions of teachers working in primary schools when compared with opinions of teachers working in vocational high schools. It was seen that there was a significant difference in teachers' opinions in the tactical planning sub-dimension [$F_{(4-315)}=4.203$, $p<0.05$]. According to the results of the Tukey test conducted to determine the source of the significant difference between opinions, it was found out that there was a significant difference in favor of opinions of teachers working in primary schools when compared with opinions of teachers working in general high schools and vocational high schools. Lastly, it was revealed that there was a

significant difference between opinions of teachers working in preschool institutions and general high schools in the assessment sub-dimension [$F_{(4-315)}=4.203$, $p<0.05$]. This difference was also found in favor of preschool teachers.

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this study, it was aimed at developing an assessment instrument especial for the public relations process in the school. Accordingly, the items that were thought to constitute the scale were written as a result of the relevant literature review. In the first stage, 68 items were determined, and these items were distributed to 10 students studying in the Department of Educational Administration and Inspection and taking the Public Relations course in the school. Then, the item pool was reduced to 53 within the framework of the feedback received. In the next stage, these items were submitted to expert opinion in order to provide content and face validity. After receiving expert opinion, the 53-item scale was applied to 198 teachers for exploratory factor analysis. After EFA made with the obtained data, it was seen that the scale was consisted of six sub-dimensions with eigenvalues greater than 1, but some items were overlapped. Thus, the overlapping items were removed one by one; in this line, 14 items were removed, and a structure consisting of 39 items with five dimensions was obtained. This structure, which was obtained after EFA, was applied to a different sample of 344 teachers, and then the CFA was made for the model. Taking the sub-dimensions that emerged into consideration, the dimension were named respectively from the first sub-dimension as "research (situation analysis)," "strategic planning," "tactical planning," "implementation," and "assessment." In order to reveal the reliability of the scale, Cronbach's Alpha values were examined in the context of the reliability test, and it was concluded that the reliability values of the scale were high. Since the Public Relations Process Scale in the School consisting of 39 items with five dimensions was a 5-point Likert-type rating scale, the highest score that can be obtained from this scale was 195, and the lowest score was 39. Since there is no reverse item in the scale, it can be said that when the scores obtained from the scale gets higher, the public relations process in the school becomes more effective.

It was seen that the item factor loads of the Public Relations Process Scale in School were between .481 and .805; accordingly, it was concluded that the factor loads of the construct were appropriate. In addition, it was concluded that since values of the item-total correlations in the scale were between .530 and .821, item discrimination and internal consistency of the test were also high. Moreover, the scores obtained from the responses of the participants in the lower and upper 27% groups according to the scale total scores were compared with the t-test for independent groups; by this comparison, a significant difference emerged in favor of the upper group, and it was concluded that the discrimination of the items was high. In order to determine the relationships between the sub-dimensions of the scale, it was concluded that the correlation values varied between .513 and .812, and there was no multiple correlation problem between the sub-dimensions. According to Field (2009), it is desirable that the correlation between the sub-dimensions of the scales is below .90.

In the second part of the study, teachers' opinions about the public relations process in school were examined in terms of various demographic variables. It was concluded that the perception levels of the teachers towards the public relations process in school were not higher than the level of "I agree." It was revealed that the highest mean was in the research (situation analysis) sub-dimension while the lowest average was in the implementation sub-dimension. It can be said that this result showed that the success in research -determining the situation- was not reflected in implementation. It was found that teachers' opinions did not make a significant difference in terms of gender variables. In the study conducted by Ciner (2003), it was stated that there was no difference between the opinions of male and female participants in the activities carried out in the field of public relations. However, it was concluded that teachers' opinions created significant differences in the variables of branch, management experience, and type of school.

In terms of the branch variable, opinions of the classroom teachers about the public relations process in the school were more positive than the opinions of the branch teachers. It was revealed that there was no difference only in the research (situation analysis) dimension. Classroom teachers spend more time with school administrators in schools. Therefore, they are in more interaction with the school administrators in the process of making certain decisions. Class teachers are also more in contact with the students, for whom they are responsible for their education and training, and their parents. This situation is also thought to create a difference in teachers' opinions. As stated by Bozkurt, Bayar, and Üstün (2018), public relations have an important place in the dynamic and constantly changing relationship of schools with their environment. It is thought that the classroom teachers have a positive opinion as they are more involved in this process through the students for whom they are responsible for their education and training.

It was concluded that teachers' opinions about the public relations process in school created significant differences in terms of management experience variable in other dimensions besides the implementation sub-dimension. It was found that the opinions of teachers with management experience were more positive than teachers who did not have management experience. In the research conducted by Yıldırım (2007), it was found that experienced managers emphasized the role of public relations in the efficient execution of educational services. However, in the same research, it was stated that only half of the administrators had education and knowledge about public relations. In the research conducted by Tan (2002), it was revealed that managers' management training created a difference in the organization dimension of public relations activities while their management seniority differed in the dimensions of recognizing the external target audience and acting according to the principles of public relations. As a result of these researches, it can be said that having management experience changes the

perspective on public relations. It can be said that having management experience creates an advantage in terms of considering different alternatives, especially in activities carried out for the external target audience.

It was concluded that teachers' opinions about the public relations process in school in terms of school type variable made significant differences in other dimensions except for the research (situation analysis) and implementation sub-dimensions. It was concluded that the significant differences were in favor of the opinions of preschool teachers and primary school teachers. Teachers working in preschool and primary schools evaluated the public relations process in school more positively than teachers working at other levels. Preschool education level and primary schools are institutions from which parents have more expectations. For this reason, public relations activities gain more importance. In the study conducted by Bayrak and Köksal (2017), it was emphasized that parents had high expectations from preschool education institutions. Similarly, primary schools are educational institutions where parents' expectations are higher than other levels, and the school administration and teachers are more in contact with parents. As stated by Kılıç (2006), primary education institutions concern with more segments of the society and they need environmental support both financially and educationally in a direct or indirect way. It is thought that the opinions of teachers working at these levels are more positive due to the more intense communication with parents and the relevant environment.

As a result of the findings; it can be said that the Public Relations Process Scale in School, which has been developed in the study, is a valid and reliable measurement tool in terms of evaluating the systematic approach to activities in the public relations process in schools and can fill the deficiency for a measurement tool in the field. The developed scale can be used by testing in different populations and samples. Also, the scale was developed in Turkish. Adaptations to different languages and cultures can be made. In addition, the difference in practices regarding public relations among educational levels can be supported by qualitative research. It can be said that it will make the process more effective to provide administrators working in educational institutions with in-service and pre-service trainings for public relations, especially before or during their management process.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding

The author received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Statements of publication ethics

I hereby declare that the study has not unethical issues and that research and publication ethics have been observed carefully.

Researchers' contribution rate

The study was conducted and reported by the researcher.

Ethics Committee Approval Information

"Certificate of Ethical Approval" undertaken for this study is received from the Social Sciences, and Educational Sciences Ethics Committee of Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University with the meeting numbered 04 and 2020/70 protocol on the date of 04.05.2020.

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Attachment: Dimensions of the scale and scale items

Boyut	Maddeler Maddenin başına şu ifadeyi koyarak cevaplandırılm: Okuldaki halkla ilişkiler etkinliklerinde	Katılma Düzeyi				
		1	2	3	4	5
Durum Saptama	Sorundan kimlerin etkilendiği belirlenmektedir.					
	Öncelikle sorunun ne olduğu ortaya konulmaktadır.					
	Kuruma gelen raporlar, şikâyetler, öneriler dikkate alınmaktadır.					
	Çevreyi izleme araştırmaları yapılmaktadır.					
Stratejilerin Planlanması	Kurum çalışanlarının özellikleri dikkate alınmaktadır.					
	Alternatif iletişim araç ve teknikleri belirlenmektedir.					
	İletişim araçları ve teknikleri belirlenmektedir.					
	Hedef kitle analizi yapılmaktadır.					
	Hangi medya aracının kullanıma uygun olduğu belirlenmektedir.					
	Hangi halkla ilişkiler yöntemlerinin kullanılacağı belirlenmektedir.					
	Etkinliğe ayrılan bütçe ve dağılımının nasıl yapılacağı belirlenmektedir.					
	Hedef kitle analizi sonucunda elde edilen bilgiler ışığında stratejiler geliştirilmektedir.					
	Kurumun diğer planlarıyla bütünlük içerisinde olmasına dikkat edilmektedir.					
	Hedef kitlenin beklentilerine yönelik çalışmalar yapılmaktadır.					
Taktiklerin Planlanması	Hedef kitlenin kuruma yönelik takındıkları tutum ve tavırlar incelenmektedir.					
	Etkinliğin gerçekleştirileceği yer konusu belirlenmektedir.					
	Görevli personel (yetki ve görev dağılımı) belirlenmektedir.					
	Görev tanımları ortaya konmaktadır.					
	Maliyet analizi yapılarak gerekli bütçe hazırlanmaktadır.					
Uygulama	Uygun mesajlar medya organlarına gönderilmektedir.					
	Katılımcılar hazır bulunmaktadır.					
	Etkinlikler belirtilen zaman aralığında yapılmaktadır.					
Değerlendirme	Etkinlikler arasında boşluklar oluşmamaktadır.					
	Hedef kitlede ve medyada oluşan değişimler gözlenmektedir.					
	Hedef kitleyle istenilen iletişimin kurulup kurulmadığı değerlendirilmektedir.					
	Öngörülen maliyetin yeterli olup olmadığı değerlendirilmektedir.					
	Dönütler üzerinde değerlendirmeler yapılmaktadır.					
	Etkinlikler sonrasında paydaşların görüşleri alınmaktadır.					
	Etkinliklerin sonrasında katılımcıların dönütleri dikkate alınmaktadır.					
	Etkinliklerin sonrasında öğrencilerin dönütleri dikkate alınmaktadır.					
	Etkinliğe katılanların tepkileri alınmaktadır.					
	Yapılan uygulamanın planlama doğrultusunda yapılıp yapılmadığı değerlendirilmektedir.					
	Plan çerçevesinde yapılan uygulamanın verdiği sonuçlar saptanmaktadır.					
	İstenen amaçları gerçekleştirip gerçekleştirmediği tespit edilmektedir.					
	Gerçekleştirilen etkinliğin etki düzeyi belirlenmektedir.					
	Etkinliğe katılanların sayısı ve özellikleri değerlendirilmektedir.					
	Süreç ilk aşamadan itibaren tüm ayrıntılarıyla değerlendirilmektedir.					
Görevli personel yetki ve sorumluluklarını yerine getirmektedir.						
Etkinliklerin sunumu etkili bir şekilde yapılmaktadır.						