

## **CHAPTER 1 : INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

Geographically, South Africa lies a bit east of the meridian and a bit south of the Equator. Culturally, it has a history of close connection with Europe through its colonial heritage. It shares this European cultural heritage through colonialism with many of the states on the African continent. This also links it with Canada, New Zealand, Australia and with India. It is also linked with India in that it has millions of citizens, whose forbears were brought to South Africa from India as slaves, and who today form a strong cultural sector of South Africa's multi-cultural society. The mining riches of South Africa have enabled it to build an economy whose infrastructure is of the first world, while its change to democracy in 1994 has brought into prominence the largely third-world nature of the majority of its citizens, the latter point allying it closely to the rest of Africa.

South Africa does, also, have certain links with the United States of America (USA). Its first-world economy has its roots in both European and American economic practices. In certain respects, South Africa emulates American business and is somewhat directed through its purchase of American technology. Not surprisingly, therefore, although South African education has been firmly based on that of Europe - particularly that of the United Kingdom - in the twentieth century, its tertiary education has, in addition to university degrees similar to those of Europe, also offered diploma education akin to that offered in USA in public relations. Added to this situation is the drive for the African Renaissance, in which the South African President Thabo Mbeki is taking a leading role. South Africa is thus uniquely placed to help in the struggle for development of underdeveloped African countries, both by virtue of its modern economy and its infrastructure. In education, too, it is well placed, and is currently instituting changes so that it can offer tertiary education on a greater scale than heretofore. Already its tertiary education accommodates students from other African countries on a regular basis, and a number of these students are studying public relations. The influence of both Europe and the USA on South Africa has resulted in public relations education being very well served with regard to the nature and scope of its offerings.

However, public relations itself has fundamental difficulties, and these are not being ameliorated by the tremendous growth in public relations practice and its extension into new areas with the internationalisation of public relations through globalisation. It can rather be said that the present situation increases pressure for settling these underlying problems. While there is movement in several countries towards *outcomes-based* education and South Africa is currently wrestling with its implementation, far from outcomes-based education proving to be a panacea for the shortcomings of public relations, this study holds that it might exacerbate the difficulties, for it will be difficult to reach agreement on the specification of outcomes as required for outcomes-based education, in a field about whose function and scope there is little unanimity.

Thus it is important that the underlying problems of public relations be considered, and that the potential of the outcomes-based model be examined so as to gauge its potential for application to public relations education. This will not be solely in the interests of South African public relations education, for the fundamental nature of the problems of public relations will also render the study of the Curriculation of Public Relations Education useful on a generic basis.

There are both underlying problems in public relations and overt problems. Underlying problems include there not being broad agreement on what public relations is, or on its fundamental purpose or scope (Hutton 1999:199-200). From its beginning there has been much negative criticism. As one phase-trend in public relations gave room for a later phase-trend which sought to serve the public with open and honest communication (Pearson 1992:116), the difficulty of lack of public trust did not disappear, for some organisations continued to adopt techniques of public relations which primarily served their own mission more than it did any public.

Overt problems of public relations include its lack of scientific status and professionalism, and also a lack of due recognition by industry. Grunig (2000:26) mentions the closest claim which public relations can make to professionalism - that if the practitioner is a member of the dominant coalition of an organisation he/she will be able to influence the choice of a public relations model. The lack of due recognition by

industry reduces the chances of such influence.

The International Public Relations Association (IPRA) in their Gold Paper No.7 (1990:6) recognises two schools of thought about education and training for public relations : one that it is preparation for a technician level post and the other that it is preparation for management. One is not a follow-on course from the other, for the programmes are disconnected and they differ enormously. The two different kinds of education programme are the result of two vastly different approaches to education. Here begins, one could argue, a basis for confusion in industry and in the field as a whole, for two different approaches to education means two different perspectives have been adopted for the curriculum of public relations education.

Education in Europe is seen as preparation for management level public relations practice, with students being required to obtain a degree at university. The emphasis is on theory so that students are also prepared for undertaking research. Europe has consequently made great contributions to the development of communication research, such as critical research, which is founded upon in-depth theoretical knowledge (Hofstadler 1989:17; Nessmann 1995:151-160).



Education in the USA, however, is seen as preparation for a technician level post in public relations practice (Nessmann 1995:151-160). Adams (1993:12-13) states that a survey of high level practitioners in 1993 showed that the majority believe educators should focus less on theory and research methods and should focus more on practical issues, while White (1995:1-11) points out that the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) has not recommended that public relations must be combined with communication theory, despite this being determined by an IPRA international report published in 1983. Hazleton and Cutbirth (1993:192) see the education model of the USA as one in which understanding is achieved by performance rather than by contemplation. As will be shown later, such an approach holds weaknesses, according to Dunne (1999).

The foregoing two different approaches to public relations education inevitably result in

a different approach to curriculum. In addition, Hazleton and Cutbirth (1993:187-196) point out that secondary education in the USA specialises to a much lesser degree than does its counterpart in Europe. Consequently, tertiary education in Europe is more specific and more in-depth than it is in the USA. Hence the recognition by IPRA of public relations education aimed at technician level in one approach but at management level in another approach.

## 1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The problem is that *outcomes-based education* (which is based on intended outputs and the designed demonstration of those outputs for the measurement of competence) requires re-curriculum of public relations education in South Africa. The adoption of a particular curriculum approach such as *outcomes-based education* would be problematic in the general sense because of issues in the field but will be particularly problematic in the South African context. This is because South Africa's tertiary education system offers public relations education and training at both universities and technikons, but from different educational approaches. The public relations education at universities follows the European model of education, and public relations education and training at technikons and technical colleges follows the USA model of education. This is problematic for the practice of public relations for it means that graduates may be qualified to operate as technicians and do not have a background appropriate for managerial positions, while other graduates may lack the practical experience for a technician post and may have a background which is more suited to a managerial position once appropriate experience has been obtained. In view of the fact that *outcomes-based education* requires competence to be acquired in three spheres, being foundational competence, practical competence and reflexive competence, it is important that the curriculum of public relations education be examined with a view to compiling a list of guidelines and recommendations for its curriculum according to the *outcomes-based education* model. In this way, weaknesses can be exposed in either of the two approaches to public relations education being utilised, and this might also be of benefit in the generic sense. It will also be important to take into account the impact of the educational context on the curriculum of public relations, for it is, in the

first place, the broader environment which gives rise to the approach to education which is adopted, as is shown by the different approaches utilised in Europe and in USA.

The requirement of *outcomes-based education* of competence in the three spheres of foundational competence, practical competence and reflexive competence appears comprehensive. It is possible that in seeking to compile a list of guidelines to meet these requirements, a contribution may also be made toward promoting the solution of problems which underlie the field. For instance, compilation of guidelines which facilitate implementation of education and training which provides competence which is comprehensive for the field, could promote technikon graduates being well-equipped to undertake research in order to help build a body of theory for the field. The issues of lack of definition, of fundamental purpose or scope of public relations might thus soon be engaged. The two different approaches to public relations education which are being utilised in South Africa at present exacerbate the situation. For example, industry in South Africa does not have a firmly-established approach to public relations, viewing its strategic role with scepticism and seeing it as a technical function (Claassen and Verwey 1997:59). This means that university graduates, who are educated for a strategic role, are not likely to receive due recognition. It may not only be university graduates who are so affected, but also graduates of the technikons who since 1995 have been able to choose to do a fourth year after completing their diploma, in order to gain a first degree.

Due to the fact, therefore, that South African tertiary education is utilising two approaches to public relations education which seem to oppose one another and, among other difficulties, create problems in industry, focusing on guidelines for curriculum could help to resolve the following issues:-

- (1) The confusion in South African industry with regard to the recognition of the abilities of public relations graduates can be alleviated.
- (2) The path can be opened for the accreditation of public relations graduates to be instituted.

- (3) The chances of graduates gaining managerial positions and of becoming members of the dominant coalition of an organisation and of being able to utilise the Excellence Model of public relations practice will be promoted.
- (4) Research is more likely to be theoretically-grounded and is likely both to increase in volume and to make a worthy contribution to development in South Africa.
- (5) The chances of the fundamental problems of the field of public relations being engaged will be enhanced and this could make significant contributions to the field on a generic scale.
- (6) The fulfilment of the requirement of The White Paper (1997) that South African tertiary education carry out its function with economy and efficiency will be facilitated.

### **1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**



#### **1.3.1 Primary purpose**

The primary purpose of the study is to develop outcomes-based guidelines for the curriculum of technikon level public relations education in South Africa.

Flowing from this primary purpose are sub-questions which are to be addressed in the study. These are set out in the following section.

#### **1.3.2 Sub-questions**

The sub-questions which need to be addressed in order to meet the primary purpose of the study can be seen as secondary research goals. These are:-

- To analyse and assess current approaches to tertiary level public relations education in various contexts.

- To identify the weaknesses and strengths in current curriculum perspectives adopted for tertiary level public relations education.
- To analyse the impact of the educational context on the curriculum of technician level public relations courses.
- To develop a theoretical framework for understanding the context of tertiary level public relations education.

#### 1.4 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

As education fulfils an exceedingly important function in society - that of developing its members in order that they are able to contribute meaningfully to society and strive effectively to reach their potential - it does, at first sight, seem that an appropriate theoretical perspective would be Functionalism.

In its main assumptions, Functionalism sees social reality as a system. According to Littlejohn (1983:31) *"A system can be defined as a set of objects or entities which interrelate with one another to form a unique whole."* Thus the parts of a system are interdependent, and the value of each part arises from its relationship to other parts. The concept of function of any part is used to gauge the role it plays in the running of the system and the maintenance of the system's structure. Hence this approach is also called structural functionalism (McQuail 1987:68-69). The system will remain in a state of equilibrium while each part properly fulfils its function.

Functionalism offers a perspective which would regard society as a system and education as one of its subsystems. As the parts of the system are interdependent, the value of the subsystem of education would be seen as arising from its relationship to other parts of the system. For example, education would be seen as essential for business and the economy. Education's ability to promote independence for society's members by enabling them to qualify themselves for employment, would be seen as functional for the whole system.

However, for survival the system must make necessary adjustments. Should a part operate in a way negative to smooth running or necessary adjustment, its contribution is termed a *dysfunction* and the maintenance of the system will be affected (Merton in Fauconnier (1975:83). Any part that does not play a part, may just as well be discarded because of what is termed its non-function. Survival is the goal of any system, with the activities of the various parts being subjugated to this end. A system is distinguishable from its environment - which functionalists see as comprising other systems. Thus the system reacts to the surrounding systems, and is self-regulating. This self-regulation takes place by means of feedback. Maintenance of structure is important to the functionalist, who sees the structure of reality as a smooth-running unit which should be perpetuated. "Problems", to the functionalist can only be whatever disturbs the equilibrium of the system - and then adjustment by feedback control is seen as acceptable reinstatement (Jansen 1989:20). Because the significance of any part is its function in relation to the other parts of the system, the human being is seen as one of the parts of the system. The part the human being plays is seen as functional/dysfunctional for the system. Thus the maintenance of the system takes precedence over the individuals in communication. Functionalism posits a desirable state of affairs and uses control mechanisms to ensure adherence to expected behaviour. It should be noted that, because the human being is seen as part of the system, the structure of reality is placed, according to Functionalism, external to the human being (Jansen 1989:21).

While it might, as said above, seem at first sight that Functionalism offers an appropriate theoretical perspective for this study, especially as it could accommodate seeking areas where improvement can be effected and efficiency improved without taking too much cognisance of the human beings involved, closer examination reveals that there are three good reasons why Functionalism should not be seen as an appropriate theoretical perspective for this study:-

- (1) Smith (1973:1) states that social science began with a positivist approach and Abrahamson (1978:20-23) states that Durkheim took a stance of Functionalism when he looked at the part played by social order and social facts; Fletcher



(1956:31-32) explains that Malinowski and Radcliffe-Brown were more influenced by the functional element than the historical but that Durkheim emphasised that we should explain historically how social facts came to be what they are and also give an analysis of their functions.

However, it must needs be observed at this point that, should this study adopt a Functionalist perspective and try to follow Durkheim's belief that present social facts should be explained historically, it could easily become bogged down in historical explanations of social facts and causes of our current education environment, and this could very easily soon be coloured by a political slant. This is unlikely to be meaningful for this study and so this is the first reason for the rejection of Functionalism as an appropriate theoretical perspective.

(2) Merton (1968:91-92) refers to Myrdal's claim that if something has a function it is good or at least essential, and that function can only hold meaning in terms of purpose. Myrdal states, further, that if function is undefined the interest of society is the presumed function. Thus, claims Myrdal, Functionalism must acknowledge as objective the maintenance of the societal system, or the status quo. This point - the maintenance of the status quo as objective - is the second reason for the rejection of Functionalism as an appropriate theoretical perspective. It can readily be seen that a theoretical perspective which seeks to maintain the status quo would be too inflexible for this study.

(3) If it is accepted that the objective does not include the maintenance of the status quo, it is clear that the study is orientated toward adaptation to change. Thus the third reason for rejecting Functionalism as an appropriate theoretical perspective for this study is closely linked with the second reason in that a theoretical perspective is needed which embraces change.

Yet it is more particularly the tendency referred to above by Jansen (1989:20-21) whereby Functionalism sees whatever disturbs the equilibrium of a system as a problem which should be adjusted by feedback control, that renders Functionalism too narrow

a perspective for this study. For Functionalism does not encourage progress, whereas this study seeks answers both to improve the curriculum of public relations education and for constructive adaptation to change.

Functionalism being said to hold too narrow a perspective for this study, it is evident that this study needs a perspective of broad vision. Verwey (2000:51-68) emphasises that the global trends of tremendous growth and fast developing technology require new broad-based competence in a number of fields for the practice of public relations in the new century. Boulding (Buckley 1968:4) states that since specialisation breaks knowledge up into sub-groups, the sharing of knowledge has become difficult. However, Boulding states, (vide) General Systems Theory has as one of its main objects the inter-disciplinary sharing of knowledge, which renders it a very useful perspective.

In addition, this study needs a perspective which can deal with phenomena in a complex relationship. This is because it will have to accommodate the broader environment and its constituents in their relationship with public relations education. The relationship of these elements must be shown, which includes their interrelationship and interaction. In this way, the context of curriculum, education and professional practice can be illuminated. All of these can be dealt with in a systems perspective, for Von Bertalanffy (1968:32-36) states that General Systems Theory can formulate principles for complexes of elements which stand in interaction. Thus system/environmental interaction is a property of particular relevance to this study, particularly because this naturally draws in the property of interrelationship among components of the system. Through the effects of interrelationship a system gains its own identity, for changes in any one component will affect all of the other components, and the outcome at any fixed point in time on the system as a whole - with components continually affecting one another with continual series of impacts - will render the system unique. This focuses attention on possible multi-effects of either shortcomings or benefits, and also on the need for circumspection. Whereas Functionalism posits the need for change in order that its parts may adapt so as to maintain the status quo, General Systems Theory accommodates adaptability and change, whereby the system can for example,

restructure itself with growth.

This uniqueness of a system because of the impact of the interrelationship of the various components upon one another, as described above, also yields a property of holism and non-summativity, for the system as a whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Fisher (1978(a):198) says it is the interconnected elements of structure, function and evolution which give rise to the effect of holism and non-summativity.

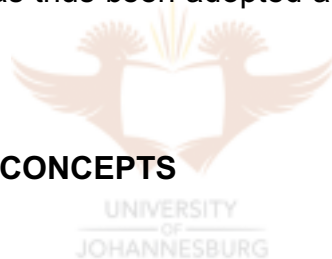
It can be seen that the properties of system/environmental interaction and interrelationship constitute a dynamic relationship among components of a system, accommodating change. Functionalism also accommodates change, but change which restores the system's status quo. Functionalism uses control by means of feedback. General Systems Theory also allows for change in response to feedback, but preserving the status quo of the system is not seen as all-important. Feedback is utilised as a guide for self-regulation and control in order to maintain the balance of the system while, as said above, change and adaptation for growth can also be accommodated. Thus where Functionalism sets out to maintain the status quo of a societal system and its subsystems, such as education, General Systems Theory provides for changes, such as the introduction of an *outcomes-based education* model, with which this study is concerned.

The maintenance of balance in the system including adaptation of structure so as to facilitate growth, has provided a basis of operation which can be applied to an organisation as a system. Thus General Systems Theory has given rise to Organisational Theory. The organisation is viewed as a system, and it is a system which holds the system's property of *openness*. *Openness* is the exchange of matter, energy or information between the system and its environment. Such operation provides for the intake of raw products, their manufacture into a finished product, and the exchange of the product with the environment, in other words, in the marketplace. Robbins (1990:11-19) makes out a strong case for the application of systems theory to organisations.

Higher education institutions can also be shown to be organisations. Moreover, the changing environment of a social system, universal changes in education and the many other effects of globalisation all exert pressure upon such an organisation to operate as an *open* system.

A further point marks the systems perspective as appropriate for this study. This is the fact that *outcomes-based* education is closely linked with the environment : industry and other stakeholders are included in the adoption of educational outcomes. When there are changes in the environment which call for adaptation in education, the systems perspective is integrative of the broad environment and of education, providing a holistic overview. This integrating property of systems theory also shows that the influence of the broader environment cannot be separated from the supra-system which houses public relations education.

General Systems Theory has thus been adopted as a theoretical perspective for this study.



## 1.5 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

Key concepts used in the study are defined as follows:-

*public relations* -

its definition has not yet been generally agreed upon.

The Public Relations Society of South Africa (Prisa) adopted the following definition in 1997 - *public relations is the management through communication of perceptions and strategic relationships between an organisation and its internal and external stakeholders* (Uys 2000:54).

One frequently-quoted definition is that of Grunig and Hunt (1984:6) - *the management of communication between an organisation and its publics*.

This study visualises *public relations* as being more inclusive than the definition of Grunig and Hunt, covering also the management of communication for an individual or a group which is not an organisation. The proposed definition is STRATEGIC RELATIONSHIP COMMUNICATION.

*education : generic -*

education whose primary focus is the individual. It provides a broad and deep background, focusing on knowledge and understanding and providing a background appropriate for research. It encourages questioning and discussion of scientific principles, and yields qualities such as innovation and leadership and has yielded scientific discovery and development. There is strong focus on theoretical education and little or no focus on the gaining of practical experience.

*education : vocational -*

education which is aimed at training individuals for a particular vocation. The skills required for work performance are a primary focus, with a period of practical experience usually being compulsory. Learning focuses on knowledge essential to work performance. Problem-solving is usually an important aspect of *vocational education*. There is thus strong focus on practical training and diminished focus on theoretical education.

*education : outcomes-based -*

education is based on intended outputs and the designed demonstrations of those outputs. It measures *competence*. The model can be interpreted in more than one way, and is also being adjusted on an ongoing basis, especially in countries where it is being newly implemented. Three kinds of competence have been described - foundational competence, applied competence and reflexive competence. It focuses on the measurement of performance, and ideally this should cover the appropriate measurement of both practical performance and theoretical knowledge and understanding.

*education : approaches to -*

the approach to education which is adopted is usually a result of the history of a society, its culture and the influence of the broader environment. The approach to education tends to guide the perspective of curriculum which will be employed. An approach to education can be identified for a particular country, or a particular approach may be adopted in several countries on a continent, such as in Europe. Europe, for example has cultivated learning and so values education for its own sake. It has adopted, from the earliest times, a generic approach to education, valuing the building of theoretical background and personal development more highly than practical experience, which it considers can be gained at a later stage. The approach to education of the USA, however, is utilitarian. It values what education can achieve for the individual, and focuses more on practical application than on the building of a theoretical background.

*curriculum -*

has been defined by the Human Sciences Research Council (1981:162) as:-

“On the macro-level : A curriculum indicates the group of subjects that are offered at an institution of education, in a course of a field of study.

On the micro-level : ...that total content of a subject for a specific phase, course of field of study as built up around, and as an extended interpretation of the group of relevant syllabi.”

Zais (1976:319) says that curriculum goals reflect the foundational commitments of society.

In this study, attention is drawn to the fact that a society's history and culture and also the influence of the broad environment have a strong influence on the curriculum perspective adopted. The study generally refers to the macro-level curriculum as defined by the Human Sciences Research Council. It does also sometimes refer to subject content, as in the Human Sciences Research Council definition of the micro-level curriculum.

*broader educational environment* -

phenomena in the broad environment which influence education.

*metatheory* -

a body of speculation that goes beyond the specific content of given theories, and metatheoretical debates are often a consequence of uncertainty about the status of knowledge in a field (Littlejohn 1989:23).

## **1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

In the first part of the study, a literature review is undertaken of current approaches to public relations education in various contexts. This includes a study of the history of curriculum approaches, and an examination of *outcomes-based* education. In order to understand the context of public relations education, the educational context will be studied and also the broader environment in which it is taking place. From this understanding, a systems model will be formulated.

In the second part of the study, the model will be used as a framework for a case study analysis. The methodology of the case study will be to utilise the theoretical overview and to analyse an educational institution within the broader context environment in which public relations takes place, which is the curriculum of public relations education. A case history will be selected from the South African environment, for South Africa is a microcosm of the public relations world. Moreover, as stated above, South Africa is at the present time engaged with the implementation of an *outcomes-based education* model on a national scale. It will, therefore, be important to produce a list of Guidelines and Recommendations for an *outcomes-based* approach to public relations education which has reference to South African education. Some of these guidelines and recommendations will have reference on a generic scale. As mentioned earlier, this could make a contribution to settling some of the underlying problems of the field of public relations, not only because graduates will be better prepared for service, but also because they should be equipped to make contributions of well-grounded research, of which there is a dearth. As it is research which establishes principles of

theory and constantly tests these in the updating process, the promotion of well-grounded research in the field is a vital factor in the quest for scientific status. Appropriate curricula can be seen as the engine of research. Research is the precedent to the establishment of a body of knowledge and of scientific status. Scientific status is the path to professionalisation of the field.

Selecting a South African case study can be justified by the following:-

- As already said, South Africa is presently engaging with the process of instituting an *outcomes-based* model of education. Being the most recent model of education, countries are making adaptations to its implementation based on the experience of countries who have implemented the *outcomes-based* model priorly. New Zealand, for example, according to Robson (1994:65) uses neither the word *education* nor *training* in documentation of the New Zealand Qualifications Authority, in an attempt to unify academic and vocational qualification. This follows the experiencing of difficulty in the *competence system* earlier introduced in the United Kingdom (UK) as *outcomes-based education*. It can thus be said that suggestions of adaptation for the curricula of public relations education in South Africa can be seen as timely.
- The background of changes in the higher education landscape of South Africa on a national scale in terms of the Draft White Paper on Education and Training (1997) promotes accommodation of the adoption of guidelines and recommendations for the near future. For those guidelines and recommendations which apply to the generic level and which are seen as having the potential of alleviating underlying or overt problems of the public relations field, can be applied, not only to the relevant education level of the case history utilised, but also to South African educational levels which have adopted the other approach to education recognised by IPRA in their Gold Paper No.7 of 1990.
- As South African education offers public relations tuition on the technician level in one higher education section and on the management level in another higher



education section, it means that South African higher education has formally adopted both approaches of education which are being utilised in public relations in other parts of the world. This renders a South African case history pregnant with opportunity for revealing indicators of curriculum weaknesses.

- The curriculum weaknesses, (if any) are very likely to fructify in the South African business/official environment into which graduates from courses utilising two very different curriculum approaches are fed. This renders a South African case history a fertile field of investigation, for employers are being offered candidates for employment whose backgrounds differ markedly. Claassen and Verwey's (1997:59) finding mentioned in section 1.2 above that South African industry views the strategic role of public relations with scepticism and sees public relations as a technical function manifests the confusion which exists.

## 1.7 STRUCTURE



Chapters 2, and 3 form the literature review of the study.

In Chapter 2 the literature review provides a brief history of the birth of public relations and its controversy, and also of approaches to public relations education, focusing on the dual approach adopted in the USA and in Europe. A global perspective of public relations education is given, and it is shown that South Africa is a microcosm of public relations education.

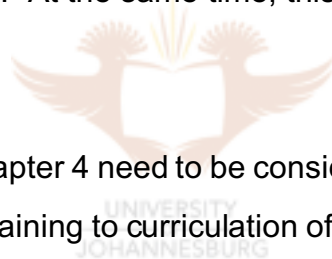
The problems in the field of public relations, such as the lack of a body of knowledge, including a dearth of well-grounded research, a lack of scientific status and the lack of professionalism are discussed and explored in order to determine the legacy of current approaches to tertiary level public relations education.

In Chapter 3, the literature review focuses on this legacy of public relations education. This legacy has had a definite influence on the approach to curriculum. Curriculum

in general is examined in its historical context. The weaknesses of the tertiary level curriculum of public relations are explored in order to formulate guidelines to offset these weaknesses. In order to contribute to solving the problems in the field of public relations, the findings of an investigation into a parallel field, that of journalism, are examined for confirmation of the curriculum weaknesses exposed in tertiary level public relations education.

The literature review then examines the most recent educational approach, *outcomes-based* education, in order to establish how well it can serve the needs of public relations education. This examination leads to a conceptual view of an appropriate public relations curriculum, and a framework of a curriculum is drawn up to illustrate this conceptual view.

Chapter 4 provides discussion on how the issues explored in Chapter 2 and 3 manifest in the South African context. At the same time, this chapter provides the background for a case study.



The issues discussed in Chapter 4 need to be considered within a broader educational environment, for issues pertaining to curriculum of public relations education need to be placed within a broader integrated framework. Thus Chapter 5 examines General Systems Theory and considers whether or not it provides a suitable theoretical perspective for understanding the complexities of the educational environment. A systems model is drawn up to provide an integrated framework.

Chapter 6 provides the case study, for which the background was provided in Chapter 4. An analysis is made of the case study, in order to determine whether the weaknesses revealed previously in perspectives of curriculum are applicable to technikon level public relations education in South Africa. The analysis clearly points to areas of technikon level curriculum which require strengthening and also to shortcomings in the approach which need to be addressed.

Chapter 7 reviews the issues dealt with in the study in order to determine if a solid

contribution can be made to the field of tertiary level public relations by education adopting the *outcomes-based* approach to public relations education. The usefulness of this approach to meet the needs of tertiary level public relations education is also explored. Based on this analysis a list of Guidelines and Recommendations for public relations education from a South African technikon level perspective is formulated. Since several guidelines could be deemed relevant on a generic basis, the applicability of these guidelines and recommendations will be reviewed in terms of their relevance to the broader field of tertiary level public relations education.

The last section of the chapter deals with a critical evaluation of the study and suggestions for further research within the field.

