

## CHAPTER 4

### ROLE-PLAYING OF THE TOP COMMUNICATOR

Aim of this chapter:

*In this chapter the various roles that the top communicator must play in order for communication to be excellent, are discussed. Knowledge of manager and technician roles should be combined to provide the requisite foundation for excellence in communication.*

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

Dozier et al (1995:107) believe that changing the roles that top communicators play in the organisation provides the most direct path to excellence. Top communication departments identified in the *Excellence Study* combine knowledge of both manager and technician roles to provide the requisite foundation for excellence. To actually achieve excellence, however, top communicators must play advanced organisational roles of communication manager and senior adviser. Communicators must develop linkages to CEOs and top management to establish communication excellence. They must acquire the power to contribute to strategic planning and decision-making.

Increasing social demands on business have created a need for public relations professionals to advise management on formulating overall strategies for an organisation. Management is increasingly faced with the consequences of ever-changing relationships with stakeholders. The ability to objectively analyse people's attitudes and to communicate with them effectively in order to promote better understanding between management and its various publics, has become extremely important to every successful business enterprise and non-profit institution (Wilcox, Ault & Agee, 1989:66).

The *Excellence* team proposed that excellent departments would be headed by senior managers and staffed by technicians skilled in the craft of the field. The team also discovered that there are at least two types of managers. Some merely supervise their department. Others, a more executive type, serve at the highest level of the organisation. They are senior advisers. As such, they become members of top management or have such immediate and frequent access to this power elite that they are in a position to affect policy for the overall company (Grunig L, 1997:7).

The *Excellence* team also found that CEOs prefer their top public relations person to play a manager or communication liaison role rather than a technician role. However, they also preferred the media relations role. (The *Excellence* team thought this reflects top management's continuing preoccupation with the media, despite much evidence suggesting that the media plays a marginal rather than central part in the effectiveness of most organisations (Grunig, L, 1997:7).) Deciding the role of the senior communication officer, depends on the size of the company, the nature of its products and its business objectives (White & Mazur, 1995:37).

Generally, top communicators who play the communication manager and senior adviser roles run excellent communication departments. Dominant coalitions in their organisations support the communication function and value the communication department. Communication makes substantial contributions to strategic management and planning in these organisations (Dozier et al, 1995:113).

Excellent communication departments are made up of communicators who know how to plan strategic programmes based on information they collect about publics. Some communicators in excellent departments have strong expertise in traditional areas of press agency, publicity, and public information practices, but what makes excellent departments stand out is knowledge of two-way practices to negotiate and to persuade (Dozier et al, 1995:115).

The one factor that most influences the playing of advanced roles, is the contribution that communication makes to strategic planning and decision-making through research.

Research provides information about relationships with key publics, a scarce and valued resource that puts top communicators at the decision-making table of top management. At decision-making tables, top communicators make senior managers aware of the knowledge, opinions, and behavioural predispositions of publics who influence the success or failure of organisations. Issues affect relationships with publics. Research helps top communicators identify emerging issues and track established ones, counselling the full range of strategic decisions (Dozier et al, 1995:117).

The manager role involves formal authority to make communication decisions. Managers hold themselves accountable for the success or failure of communication programmes, as do other managers. Through their experience and training, top communicators in this role are organisational experts in solving communication and public relations problems. Manager role-playing cannot occur unless individuals in the department have the knowledge base to perform the tasks of a communication manager (Dozier et al, 1995:17).

The second role, the senior adviser role, does not have formal authority over policy; rather, senior advisers provide senior management with needed information and act as facilitators of the decisions that top management makes. In this role, they exert informal influence. Top communicators who play either role, contribute to the excellence of their departments. Senior advisers require levels of expertise similar to those of managers. They differ from managers in their authority to make communication policy decisions and in their accountability for the success or failure of the resulting communication programmes (Dozier et al, 1995:118).

The only way CEOs can get what they need from their public relations advisers, is to have them at the table when the policies, strategies and programmes are discussed (Foster, 1990:8). Informal advising can lead to more formal influence in strategic decision-making. At first, the top communicator can win the confidence of only one or two members of the organisation's top management, but can still make significant contributions to decision making. Later on, the top communicator will win acceptance

as one of the inner circle of top decision makers (Dozier et al, 1995:108).

As often happens, the top communicator must carve out a new managerial role for herself among senior managers who have different views of communication to earn a permanent place on the strategic team. She has to be comfortable working with senior management and showing them she has the necessary skills to be an asset and an expert in communication decision-making (Dozier et al, 1995:108).

The assumptions can be made that:

- Senior management values the strategic contribution that the communication manager can make to organisational decision making, since they are increasingly faced with the consequences of ever-changing relationships with stakeholders. (Refer to H1.)
- Top management prefers its top communication person to be a manager, rather than a technician. (Refer to H1.)
- Top management values the use of two-way communication by the top communicator and the communication department. (Refer to H4.)
- Top management values the strategic contribution the communication manager makes to organisational decision-making. (Refer to H1.)
- Although communicators in excellent communication departments have strong expertise in traditional areas of press agency, publicity and public information practices, the two-way practices to negotiate and persuade make excellent departments stand out. (Refer to H2.)

## 4.2 ROLE-PLAYING

Practitioners adopt roles in organisations by taking on sets of behaviours and strategies for dealing with recurring types of situations and other's expectations. Various public relations role models describe the approaches practitioners use in practice. Every practitioner plays some or all of these roles to varying degrees, but a dominant role emerges as she goes about her day-to-day work and deals with others in the work situation (Cutlip, Center & Broom, 1985:68).

Broom and Smith (1978, 1979) introduced the concept of roles to public relations. Roles are abstractions of behaviour patterns of individuals in organisations (Dozier, in Grunig, J, 1992:330). Practitioner roles are indicators of the power of the public relations units in organisations (Lauzen, 1992; Lauzen & Dozier, 1992). Roles indicate whether public relations units participate in strategic decision making of top management, or simply execute decisions made by others (Broom & Dozier, 1986; Dozier, 1986). Roles are linked to environmental scanning (Dozier, 1987, 1990), issues management (Lauzen, 1993) and models of public relations practices (Grunig, J & Grunig, L, 1989). They contribute to the salaries of public relations practitioners and how much satisfaction practitioners derive from public relations work (Broom & Dozier, 1986). Knowledge to enact the manager role was the single-most powerful correlate of excellence in public relations and communication management in the *Excellence Study* (Dozier & Broom, 1995:4).

Roles research plays an important part in our understanding of organisational communication and public relations as an emerging profession. The ambiguity that surrounds the public relations role is reflected in the array of definitions offered to define the function. Yet, systems theory persuasively suggests that the function is essential to the survival and growth of organisations facing increasingly unstable and threatening environments (Dozier, in Grunig J, 1992:352).

The assumption can therefore be made that:

- Roles indicate whether public relations units participate in strategic decision making of top management (communication manager) or simply execute decisions made by others (technician role). (Refer to H<sub>1</sub>.)

The four public relations roles conceptualised by Dozier and Broom will now be discussed.

#### **4.2.1 Public relations roles conceptualised by Dozier and Broom**

Dozier (1984) found a **public relations manager** role that included attributes of

problem-solving process facilitation, expert prescription, and communication facilitation as interchangeable conceptual components of the same empirical role. Managers make policy decisions and are held accountable for public relations outcomes. They view themselves and are viewed by others in the organisation as communication and public relations experts. They facilitate communication between management and publics and guide management through what practitioners describe as a “rational problem-solving process” (Dozier, in Grunig, J, 1992:333). According to Berzok (1993:24), the communication executive has three major responsibilities: consultation, assistance and management. Above all else, she is a consultant to top management.

Broom also conceptualised practitioners as consultants to senior management. Roles that practitioners play are viewed as services provided or processes influenced. Four theoretical roles, first conceptualised by Broom and Smith (1979), include the expert prescriber, communication facilitator, problem process facilitator and the communication technician roles (Dozier, in Grunig, J, 1992:330).

According to Dozier & Broom (1995), the communication manager role is an abstraction of a set of repeated behaviours of professional communicators in organisations. The manager role actually consists of three conceptually distinct activities, as first theorised by Broom (1982). The first, the **expert prescriber role**, is similar to the traditional doctor-patient role. The expert prescriber is an acknowledged expert on communication in the organisation, best informed about communication issues, and best qualified to answer communication and public relations questions (Dozier, in Grunig J, 1992:333; Cutlip, Center & Broom, 1985:68).

The expert prescriber role was identified in the practitioner literature (Cutlip & Center, 1971; Newsom & Scott, 1976) as the informed practitioner (Dozier et al, 1995:24).

Such practitioners are regarded as experts on public relations, best informed about public relations issues and best qualified to answer public relations questions. Like the doctor-patient relationship, the expert prescribes and management obeys.

Management's passive involvement in communication and public relations problems and solutions leads to dependent relationships. Steele (1969) called such dependency "seductive," because the relationship is gratifying to the consultant and reassuring to management. According to Argyris (1961), such passivity and dependency leads management to regard the programme as "belonging" to the consultant. This role can logically be linked to the two-way asymmetrical and the publicity-press agency models of the practice (Grunig & Hunt, 1984:91; Dozier, in Grunig J, 1992:330; Cutlip, Center & Broom, 1985:68).

The second role, the **communication facilitator role**, means acting as a go-between, facilitating communication between management and publics (Dozier et al, 1995:24). Drawing on the consulting literature Broom conceptualised the communication facilitator role as that of a "go-between", facilitating communication. The role concerns the process, the quality and quantity of information flow between management and publics. Broom found this role described in the professional literature when practitioners served as interpreters and communication links. This micro level role is reflected at meso level in Grunig & Hunt's (1984:91) public information and two-way symmetric models of the practice (Dozier, in Grunig J, 1992:330; Cutlip, Center & Broom, 1985:69).

Broom (Broom & Smith 1979) again drew on literature to conceptualise the **problem-solving process facilitator** as practitioners helping management systematically think through organisational communication and public relations problems to solutions. The problem-solving process facilitator works carefully with management to solve problems in a step-by-step manner. Painstaking efforts to involve all members of the top management in solving communication and public relations problems is time consuming. In the long run, however, such management-involving solutions work better.

Solutions prescribed by experts leave management "unenthusiastic about the results, divided among themselves on key decisions, and unable to develop commitment". The problem-solving process facilitator role is essential in organisations practising the two-

way symmetric model (Grunig & Hunt 1984:91-92; Dozier, in Grunig, J 1992:330; Cutlip, Center & Broom, 1985:69).

Dozier (1984) also found a **public relations technician** role that closely matched Broom's conceptualisation of the service provider role he called the communication technician. Technicians do not participate in management decision-making. Rather, technicians carry out the low-level mechanics of generating communication products that implement policy decisions made by others (Dozier, in Grunig, J, 1992:333; Cutlip, Center & Broom, 1985:68).

Broom (Broom & Smith 1979) conceptualised the **communication technician** role as that of a technical services provider. Top management makes strategic decisions, specifying organisational actions and designating the communications directed at publics about such actions. The communication technician is then retained to provide those mandated communication services. Broom viewed practitioners playing the media relations role as "journalists-in-residence." Practitioners playing this role are essential players in organisations where the press agency/publicity and public information models are practised (Grunig & Hunt, 1984:92-92; Dozier, in Grunig, J, 1992:330; Dozier et al, 1995:112). The communication technician role involves the mechanics of implementing communication programmes, for example, producing brochures and pamphlets, taking photographs, etc (Dozier et al, 1995:113; Cutlip, Center & Broom, 1985:68).

In addition to the major roles just described, Dozier (1984) found two minor roles. The first role was that of the **media relations specialist**, similar to technicians in salary and organisational status, except that they specialise in external media relations rather than internal communication production activities.

The second minor role was that of **communication liaison**, similar to managers in salary and status, but excluded from management decision-making. Liaisons specialise in linking communications between management and key publics (Dozier, in Grunig, J, 1992:333).



Generally, the problem-solving process facilitator averages highest on satisfaction measures. Communication technicians average second; expert prescribers average third. The communication process facilitator averages fourth (Dozier, in Grunig, J, 1992:331).

The notion of **communication manager** was introduced when factor analysis of several communicator surveys showed that the expert prescriber, communication facilitator and problem-solving process facilitator roles are played interchangeably by the same communicators. Subsequent research over the last decade has consistently shown that the communication manager role is the most parsimonious way to think of expert prescription, communication facilitation, and problem-solving facilitation in communication roles. According to Dozier & Broom (1995), communicators who predominantly play the manager role tend to earn higher salaries than communicators who predominantly play the technician role, even with equal years of professional experience. Those predominantly playing the communication manager role participate more frequently in top management decision-making. In the late 1980s, several studies indicated that women were less likely than men to predominantly play the manager role, even when they had equal years of professional experience. However, at least one study from the 1990s indicates that such gender discrimination may be waning (Dozier et al, 1995:24).

The department's expertise or knowledge to play the communication manager role refers to the following tasks:

- Manage the organisation's response to issues.
- Use research to segment publics.
- Develop goals and objectives for one's department.
  
- Conduct evaluation research.
- Prepare departmental budget.

(Dozier et al, 1995:24)

The assumptions can be made that:

- Top communicators who predominantly play the communication manager role participate more frequently in top management decision-making. (Refer to H<sub>1</sub>.)
- Technicians do not participate in management decision-making. Technicians generate communication products that implement policy decisions made by others. (Refer to H<sub>1</sub>.)

#### 4.2.2 Expertise for advanced role-playing

Many individual and organisational characteristics do not seem to influence advanced role-playing by top communicators. However, one characteristic of the communication department helps top communicators play the communication manager and senior adviser roles (Dozier et al, 1995:115).

Top communicators play the communication manager and senior adviser roles when their departments contribute to strategic planning and decision-making through research, especially formal research. Unlike traditional roles which focus on the implementation of communication programmes, the communication manager and senior adviser roles put communicators at the table before decisions are made. The *Excellence Study* shows that formal and informal research activities in communication departments are strongly linked to advanced role-playing by top communicators. Research activities in support of strategic planning and decision-making seem perfect tools to help top communicators play manager and adviser roles (Dozier et al, 1995:115).

Evaluation activities correlate with practitioner success in increased participation in management decision-making. Both scientific and informal scanning correlate with the manager role; neither style of scanning correlates with the technician role.

This closely parallels findings that managers use both scientific and seat-of-the-pants evaluation styles, whereas technician role scores are unrelated to any style of evaluation (Dozier, in Grunig, J, 1992:338).

Dozier (in Grunig, J, 1992:341) proposed that practitioners enacting the public relations manager role will engage in both scientific and informal programme evaluation and environmental scanning with greater frequency than practitioners not enacting the manager role. Furthermore, enactment of the public relations technician role is not related to frequency of scientific and informal programme evaluation and environmental scanning activities. Practitioner involvement in management decision-making is a separate function of manager role enactment and of the practitioner's use of research (scanning and evaluation). These propositions link practitioner roles to levels of programme evaluation and environmental scanning.

Communication strategies should also be frequently evaluated against the achievement of goals and objectives to ensure that the strategy is in line with the company's mission. A lack of proper evaluation can cause employees to view management as unsupportive and distant from its strategies (Oberholster, 1993:25).

#### **4.2.3 Factors that influence the roles communicators play**

We already know a good deal about factors that influence the roles communicators play in organisations. For example, organisational size, as measured by number of employees, does not affect communication manager or senior adviser role-playing as identified by Dozier et al (1995) in the *Excellence Study*. Number of employees in the organisation does not affect media relations or technician role-playing. The number of employees in the communication department does not affect advanced role-playing by top communicators. However, departmental size does impact on traditional role-playing. Not surprisingly, top communicators play the media relations and communication technician roles more frequently in small communication departments, where top communicators cannot easily delegate such tasks (Dozier et al, 1995:113).

Regarding individual characteristics of top communicators, men and women play the communication manager and senior advisor role with equal frequency. Regarding traditional roles, women and men play the media relations role at comparable levels. The communication technician role, however, is played more frequently by female top

communicators than by male top communicators. Younger communicators play the technician role more frequently than do older communicators (Dozier et al, 1995:114).

Education does not influence playing either advanced or traditional roles either. Activities such as attending professional meetings, holding office in professional associations, or making presentations to such associations do not seem to influence role-enactment by the top communicator (Dozier et al, 1995:114).

The assumptions can be made that:

- Organisational size does not affect communication manager role-playing or technician role-playing. (Refer to H7, H8.)
- Top communicators play the media relations and communication technician roles more frequently in small communication departments, where top communicators cannot easily delegate such tasks. (Refer to H9, H10.)
- Education does not influence playing either advanced or traditional roles. Activities such as attending professional meetings, holding office in professional associations, or making presentations to such associations do not seem to influence role enactment by the top communicator. (Refer to H11, H12.)

### **4.3 THE COMMUNICATION MANAGER ROLE**

Practitioners enact two major roles in organisations (as well as several minor roles). Public relations managers make communication policy decisions and are held accountable (by themselves and others in the organisation) for the success or failure of public relations efforts. Managers are regarded by others as public relations experts, facilitating public relations problem-solving among members of top management. Technician role enactment is unrelated to communication policy decision-making.

Although every practitioner enacts both roles to some degree, the practitioner's dominant role is determined by which role-activity set – manager or technician – is enacted most frequently (Lauzen & Dozier, 1992:209).

### **4.3.1 The top communicator as communication manager**

Lauzen & Dozier (1992) studied the relationship between the environments of organisations and the consequences that external conditions exert on the public relations function. Specifically, they examined the range and changeability of publics in an organisation's environment, positing that environmental challenges create a demand for enactment of the public relations manager role by the organisation's top communicator. Such manager role enactment, in turn, leads to power consequences for the public relations function. Manager role enactment depresses marketing's involvement in areas traditionally managed by the public relations function. Manager role enactment also reduces encroachment – the assignment of individuals from outside public relations to head the public relations unit (Lauzen & Dozier, 1992:205).

In several studies (Fabiszak, 1985; McMillan, 1984, Pollack, RA, 1986), the two-way models of public relations correlated positively with the public relations manager role. These sophisticated models of public relations practice could be theoretically regarded as “positive” consequences of manager role enactment. Building on these findings, Lauzen & Dozier (1992:211) analysed what could be regarded as “negative” consequences of not enacting the manager role. These consequences are marketing involvement and encroachment. Marketing involvement is the expansion of the marketing function into traditional public relations domains (Ehling, 1989; Lauzen, 1990) – actions explicitly mandated by such conceptualisations as “megamarketing” (Kotler, 1986). Theoretically, the movement of marketing into traditional public relations domains can occur at either the managerial or the technical level. When one department provides technical support (production, graphics, photography, etc.) for another, such support need not disrupt unit boundaries or undermine the receiving unit's survival as a separate entity.

Marketing involvement in public relations at the manager level (making policy decisions and solving strategic problems) is of considerable theoretical significance. Such involvement threatens the relative autonomy of the receiving department, reducing its claim on its organisational domain (Lauzen & Dozier, 1992:211).

From a power-control perspective, both marketing involvement and encroachment are consequences of the powerlessness of the public relations function. The function, headed by a practitioner who fails (for whatever reason) to enact the manager role, lacks the organisational power necessary to maintain its own domain (Lauzen & Dozier, 1992:211).

The qualities that chief communications executives have to possess today, include an interesting mix of functional, managerial, organisational and negotiating abilities. And as they become more senior and increasingly associate with other senior executives as equals, there is greater emphasis on improving the communication skills of all management (White & Mazur, 1995:36).

As decisions about organisational responses to the environment become more novel and non-programmed, practitioner roles change. Practitioners in such organisations shift activities from generating communications to making strategic decisions – or helping management to do so. Such managers make communication policy decisions; and are then held accountable for programme success or failure. They take management through a step-by-step planning and decision-making process (Dozier, in Grunig J, 1992:342).

The expert prescription, communication facilitation and problem-solving process facilitation components of the manager role are significantly and positively correlated with strategic decision-making. Technician scores, on the other hand, showed only modest correlation with participation in meetings where decisions were made about implementing communication programmes. The technician role is negatively correlated with participation in meetings where new policies are decided (Dozier, in Grunig, J, 1992:343).

Practitioners in organisations practising the press agency and public information models of public relations will engage in few activities that define the public relations manager role. Practitioners in organisations practising the two-way asymmetric and

two-way symmetric models of public relations are more likely to play the public relations manager role (Dozier, in Grunig J, 1992:347).

Problem-solving process facilitation, expert prescription, or communication facilitation are of little value in organisations following a publicity/press agency or public information model. These one-way models generate messages by organisations for distribution to publics. Publicity/press agency model organisations spread favourable propaganda about the organisation with only moderate regard for information accuracy. Public information model organisations disseminate information with traditional journalistic concerns for objectivity and accuracy. Such low-level staff functions do not require practitioners to enact the manager role (Dozier, in Grunig, J, 1992:347).

The following is therefore suggested:

- Manager role enactment is more frequent in organisations practising the two-way symmetric and asymmetric models of public relations.
- Manager role enactment is less frequent in organisations practising the press agency or public information models of public relations.
- Technician role enactment is more frequent in organisations practising the press agency and public information models of public relations (Dozier, in Grunig, J, 1992:347).

One explanation for these findings is that organisations have top managements with different strategic decision-making dynamics and different orientations towards environmental inputs. The process of strategic decision-making can be organised by type. The process is affected by both underlying beliefs of powerful members of the dominant coalition and the relative concentration of power in such coalitions. Both beliefs and power affect the negotiated belief structures of dominant coalitions (Dozier, in Grunig, J, 1992:348).

The open or closed mind-set of senior management strongly mediates the model of

public relations followed and the roles that practitioners play (Dozier, in Grunig, J, 1992:344).

The assumptions can be made that:

- Manager role enactment leads to power consequences for the public relations function. (Refer to H1.)
- The two-way models of public relations correlate positively with the public relations manager role. (Refer to H4.)
- Participation in management decision-making enhances the status of public relations practitioners. (Refer to H1.)
- The manager role is significantly and positively correlated with strategic decision making. The technician role is negatively correlated with participation in meetings where new policies are decided. (Refer to H3.)
- Practitioners in organisations practising the press agency and public information models of public relations, will engage in few activities that define the public relations manager role. (Refer to H3.)
- Practitioners in organisations practising the two-way asymmetric and two-way symmetric models of public relations are more likely to play the public relations manager role. (Refer to H4.)

#### **4.3.2 Functions of the communication manager**

As boundary-spanner between the organisation and its environment, the communication manager is responsible for the monitoring of changes and emerging issues, the predicting of consequences and the counselling of organisation leaders (Lubbe, 1994a:11)

Managers also control scarce and valued resources (environmental intelligence) that they can leverage for organisational power. Control of scarce resources decreases the department's substitutability, the second factor used in strategic contingencies theory to explain intra-organisational power. Non-substitutability is the departmental ability



to provide skills, products or services no other department can provide (Lauzen & Dozier, 1992:210).

From an environmental-imperative perspective, managers frequently use formal and informal research techniques to scan the organisation's environment, to plan public relations programmes, to monitor their execution, and to evaluate their impact (Dozier, 1990). Environmental challenges increase demand for "managers as scanners." Environmental scanning by practitioners reduces both substitutability and uncertainty for organisations. A study by Crozier (1964) suggested that those with the capacity to reduce uncertainty in organisations possess power. Environmental scanning by practitioners reduces uncertainty about future events affecting organisations (Lauzen & Dozier, 1992:210).

According to Seitel (1989:50-51), public relations managers have the following functions:

- They must consider the relationship of the organisation to its environment – the ties that unite business managers and operations support staff, for example, and the conflicts that separate them.
- They must work within organisational confines to develop innovative solutions to organisational problems. Public relations managers must be innovative, not only in proposing communication solutions, but also in making them understandable and acceptable to colleagues.
- They must think strategically. Public relations managers must demonstrate their knowledge of the organisation's mission, objectives, and strategies. Their solutions must answer the real needs of the organisation.
- Public relations managers must also be willing to measure their results. They must state clearly what they want to accomplish, systematically set out to accomplish it, and measure their success. This means using such accepted business school techniques as management-by-objectives (MBO), management-by-objectives-and-results (MOR), and programme evaluation and research technique (PERT).
- Finally, in managing an organisation's public relations system, practitioners must demonstrate a comfort with the various elements of the organisation itself. 1)

functions – the real jobs of organisational components; 2) structure – the organisational hierarchy of individuals and positions; 3) processes – the formal decision-making rules and procedures the organisation follows; and 4) feedback – the formal and informal evaluative mechanisms of the organisation.

- Mintzberg & Quinn (1992:21) furthermore state that it is not just the manager's role in the creation of strategy so much as in its institutionalisation that counts – the establishment of commitment among the people who make up the organisation.

Claassen's (Claassen & Verwey, 1997:56) study on communication management in the South African business environment states that the communication manager in the South African business environment functions at a relatively low-level with threshold competencies. The results of her survey indicate a total lack of understanding of the role of the communication management function in the broader organisational context. However, there is a growing realisation of the value communication managers can add to organisational functioning.

In Claassen's study (Claassen & Verwey, 1997:55) the collection and dissemination of information is perceived as the most important output of communication practitioners, followed closely by knowledge regarding the internal environment, interpersonal communication skills, problem-solving abilities and issues management, knowledge regarding the external environment and media relationships and contacts. These outputs were viewed as the very foundation of communication management, being largely interdependent, and some, such as interpersonal communication skills and problem-solving abilities, being a prerequisite for success in others. Managerial competencies, personal characteristics and the ability to function effectively in a group, have an important influence on the communication manager's managerial effectiveness, while social marketing and integrated communication is considered in the planning and execution of social marketing initiatives.

### **4.3.3 Managerial positions**

There are four positions one can have as a manager in the organisation – leader,

counsellor, implementer and outsider. Leaders are active in the direction and management of a company. Counsellors are valued advisors. Implementers execute tactics and strategies developed by others. Outsiders have been forgotten. Each role has risks and rewards.

Leaders have power and the responsibility to use power well to support top management and the company. They know they can be sacrificed quickly when a mistake is made – whether or not it is due to their actions (Horton, 1991:39).

Leaders: Leaders tend to group subordinates into an “in-group” and an “out-group”. Typically about 20% of subordinates are considered to be insiders and 80% to be outsiders. An insider is typically allowed to develop a more personal relationship with a manager. They give and receive personal disclosure, mutual support, and a fair amount of autonomy/responsibility is delegated to the subordinate (something akin to Blake & Mouton’s high concern for task – high concern for relationship style) (Leichty & Springston, 1993:332).

Counsellors: Counsellors have access, but they know the door to the corporate suite can be slammed if their advice is in error or does not settle well with the CEO or Chairman (Horton, 1991:39).

Implementers: Implementers have departments and a stream of work to keep them busy, but they know during corporate cutbacks they will be forced to justify their existence in the usual competition for the corporate budget (Horton, 1991:39).

Outsiders: Outsiders have a security in being forgotten. They do their jobs and go home, or use their time in activities they like to do. However, according to Horton (1991:39), outsiders know the axe can fall without warning if they are discovered.

Leichty & Springston (1993:333) state that outsiders tend to receive something akin to Blake & Mouton’s high task – low relationship management style. The communicative

exchanges between leader and follower tend to be formal, involve authority and emphasise the formal responsibilities of both parties.

Frustration comes from being trapped in a role which one does not want. An outsider who wants to be a leader or a leader who wants to be an implementer is acutely uncomfortable (Horton, 1991:39).

According to Mintzberg & Quinn (1992:21), three of the manager's roles arise directly from formal authority and involve basic interpersonal relationships: Figurehead role, leader role and liaison role. By virtue of their interpersonal contacts, both with subordinates and with their network of contacts, managers emerge as the nerve centres of their organisational units. They may not know everything, but they typically know more than any member of their unit.

Three roles describe the informational aspects of managerial work: monitor (environmental scanner), disseminator of information and spokesperson. Information is not an end in itself, but is the basic input to decision-making. Managers play a major role in their unit's decision-making system. As its formal authority, only they can commit the unit to important new courses of action; and as its nerve centre, only they have full and current information to make the set of decisions that determine the unit's strategy. Four roles describe the manager as decision maker: entrepreneur, disturbance handler, resource allocator and negotiator (Mintzberg & Quinn, 1992:21).

#### **4.3.4 The top communicator as a leader**

A careful comparison of power and leadership reveals that the two concepts are closely intertwined. Leaders use power as a means of attaining group goals (Robbins, 1998:397). Communication practitioners should strive to develop leadership qualities in order to become more influential and professional in the organisation.

There is a tendency today to move beyond the traditional management approach to one of dynamic leadership. Managers' ability to influence is based on the formal, authority

inherent in their positions. In contrast, leaders may either be appointed or emerge from within a group. Leaders can influence others to perform beyond the actions dictated by formal authority (Robbins & De Cenzo, 1998:189; Carr & Johansson, 1995:45).

According to Peters & Waterman (1982:83), transforming leadership occurs when one or more persons engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality. Their purposes, which might have started out separate but related, in the case of transactional leadership, become fused. Transforming leadership ultimately becomes moral in that it raises the level of human conduct and ethical aspiration of both the leader and the led, and thus has a transforming effect on both.

John Kotter of the Harvard Business School, argues that management is about coping with complexity. Leadership, in contrast, is about coping with change. Leaders establish direction by developing a vision for the future; then they align people by communicating this vision and inspiring them to overcome hurdles (Robbins, 1998:347; Carr & Johansson 1995:45).

However, Loewen (1999:5) states that it is not enough to have clever insights and innovative strategies if the executive does not understand how to access the ideas and energies of their people as well. Only when a leader realises the need to engage others consistently, fairly and every day, if possible, will his vision be translated into effective actions.

Bennis and colleague Burt Nanus (in Pincus & De Bonis, 1994:84) frame effective leadership in terms of four strategies: attention through vision; meaning through communication; trust through positioning; and deployment of self through positive self-regard.

Senge (1990:340) states that leaders in a learning organisation are designers, stewards and teachers. They are responsible for building organisations where people continually

expand their capabilities to understand complexity, clarify vision and improve shared mental models – that is, they are responsible for learning.

According to Puth (1994:146), leading also has to do with influencing others through communication and is, therefore, based on communication. The style and substance of communication distinguish dynamic leadership from traditional management. Leaders not only communicate information, but also attitudes and assumptions. In any leadership situation, the values to be gained and the merits of certain courses of action are either clearly stated or implied. Leaders can articulate the consequences of visions, goals, actions, policies, events, decisions or solutions clearly (Foster, 1990:9; Puth, 1994:146).

Effective leadership depends on having the information necessary for effective decision-making. An effective leader encourages open, direct and accurate communication (Rasberry & Lemoine, 1986:349). Leadership by communication involves using, or attempting to use, all of the channels of communication; trying to keep open all of the avenues of interaction. When communication channels are closed, little can be done to develop compliance to the organisation's goals (Hunt, 1989:172).

Pincus & De Bonis (1994:88) believe that leadership and communication are hand-in-glove processes sharing the common purpose of forming and crystallising meaningful relationships. This core finding defines the perspective they bring to their examination of leadership. The leadership and communication processes share the identical objective of building relationships; however, the types of relationships each seeks to establish are different.

The communication process aims to create relationships of understanding: understanding of purpose, understanding of message, understanding of source, understanding of expected outcome.

The leadership process differs slightly, seeking to construct relationships of commitment: commitment to leader, commitment to organisation, commitment to

cause, commitment to stay committed (Pincus & De Bonis, 1994:88). Communication and leadership are synergistic concepts. Leaders need to foster environments within which people can develop relationships with each other, relationships within work groups, and relationships with clients and customers (Pincus, Rayfield & De Bonis, 1991:22).

Because they are communication professionals, public relations executives should play a key role in the leadership team – developing communication strategies, coaching and counselling on communication tactics and techniques, and providing feedback (Foster, 1990:9).

#### **4.4 THE SENIOR ADVISOR ROLE**

Unlike the formal authority of the communication manager role, the senior advisor role involves informal power. As senior counsel to the dominant coalition on matters of communication and public relations, the senior adviser exerts influence through suggestions, recommendations, and plans. Much of the senior adviser's authority comes from close contact with key publics. Senior advisers mediate the flow of two-way communication between organisations and publics. Although she is not a member of the senior management team, the senior advisor's perspective is sought and listened to by senior managers (Dozier et al, 1995:109).

Both formal and informal power serve excellence. Indeed, excellent organisations blur boundaries between communication issues and organisational issues. The formal authority of even the most powerful communicator must be shared with others in top management when issues affect other areas of responsibility in organisations. The formal authority to make policy decisions specific to communication must be matched by informal influence on all issues of strategic planning and decision-making (Dozier et al, 1995:110).

If the public relations practitioner develops a well-planned public relations strategy, she will have taken a significant step towards positioning herself as an indispensable

advisor to the CEO. The traditional public relations departments are gradually giving way to purchased services. What will be left will be strategic counsellors to the CEO (Forbes, 1992:31; Pincus & De Bonis, 1994:233).

#### **4.4.1 The top communicator as senior advisor**

There is a growing emphasis on management's evolving relationships with stakeholder groups, especially employees. The CEO's role is being transformed from technical manager to inspirational leader. Leadership and communication are relationship-building processes rather than merely controlling functions. The company's top communicator can be an important sounding board and advisor on both business and personal matters. Pincus & De Bonis theorise that this treatment of the human or spiritual side of the CEO is "the wave of the future" (Winokur & Kinkead, 1993:18).

Pincus & De Bonis stress the importance of the communication or public relations strategist who serves as an "alter ego" to the CEO and as a devil's advocate. As the CEO's primary advisor on communication strategy and implementation, this executive stays close to the centre of decision-making. At the same time the advisor faces the disadvantage of playing a precarious, ever-shifting role fraught with built-in discomforts (Winokur & Kinkead, 1993:22).

And it is in the business-counselling arena where public relations practitioners can add maximum value. The future of communication professionals will continue to be that of being partners and consultants in the boardroom (Winokur & Kinkead, 1993:22).

Every CEO needs a counsellor/mentor. Instead of being the object of the CEO's criticism for not being candid, public relations professionals can exercise the role of CEO counsellor. They can tell CEOs that doing things right is not the same as doing the right things and they can help them communicate more effectively with groups that can make a difference, specifically employees (Fulginiti, 1995:78).

CEOs of the future will demand communication counsellors who can analyse corporate



*cultures and understand how to influence their evolution. These counsellors must be as comfortable in the boardroom as they are at the computer keyboard. They must be able to handle a crisis, write a speech and devise a corporate strategy with equal ease (Winokur & Kinkead, 1993:23)*

According to Howard, CM (1995:6), the evolution from communicator to counsellor is so natural and so subtle that a public relations practitioner may not be aware of the metamorphosis until it has occurred. When the role of the public relations practitioner changes, she is helping to set the agenda for the organisation.

Harold Burson, founder of Burson-Marsteller and one of the great public relations professionals of our time, describes this evolution: When public relations was in its infancy, clients called on their public relations people and asked, "How should I say it?" As the profession became more sophisticated, the question evolved to, "What should I say?" At the next level it became, "How should we do it?" And at the highest level it became, "What should we do?" As that question has changed over the last few decades, so our function has changed and grown as well (Howard, CM, 1995:6).

Robert A Allen, CEO and chairman at AT&T, once said: "I need public relations people at my side, not in my wake." Public relations practitioners who can close the gap with public relations theorists, are the people most likely to inherit the position at the CEO's side in the future (Winokur & Kinkead, 1993:23).

#### **4.4.2 Counselling the CEO**

Pincus & De Bonis (1994:233) state that CEOs who hold close working relationships with their top communication professional, appeared most likely to understand their communication role and how it fits into overall communication strategy. The counsellor, generally a vice president of public relations or corporate communication, usually has prime responsibility for devising and executing the company's communication plan.

Also, that individual needs to have an in-depth knowledge of communication, public opinion and human behaviour, experience as a communication practitioner, and a thorough familiarity with the CEO's managerial and communication style and capabilities.

Trusting CEO-counsellor associations take time to mature. But once trust is established between CEO and advisor, the counsellor's role becomes two-fold: first, to exploit and magnify the CEO's and the organisation's strengths; and second, to minimise exposure of the CEO's and the organisation's weaknesses (Pincus & De Bonis, 1994:234).

In the end, the nature of this relationship depends on what the CEO, far more than the counsellor, allows it to become. But if the CEO and counsellor can agree on what they are trying to accomplish and have faith in each other, they are likely to operate as one mind (Pincus & De Bonis, 1994:234).

The CEO's communication counsellor can earn her trust by understanding the top manager's special position, and by not misusing or wasting her time or stretching communication capabilities past their natural limits (Pincus & De Bonis, 1994:234).

#### **4.5 PLAYING TRADITIONAL ROLES**

In addition to the role of communication manager and senior advisor, the *Excellence* research team also examined two traditional communicator roles. As detailed earlier, these roles are essential to executing communication programmes. Indeed, even top communicators in excellent organisations play these traditional roles from time to time (Dozier et al, 1995:112).

The **media relations role** is played by journalists-in-residence, who maintain media contacts, place news releases, and establish what the media will find newsworthy about their organisations.

In the media relations role, top communicators keep senior management posted about media coverage of the organisation and coverage of issues important to the organisation (Dozier et al, 1995:112).

The **communication technician role** involves the mechanics of implementing communication programmes. In this role, top communicators produce brochures, pamphlets and other publications, write communication material, take photographs and create graphics for communication and public relations material, and edit the material written by others in the organisations for grammar and spelling (Dozier et al, 1995:112).

The assumption can be made that:

- Organisations that practise the press agency and public information models need technicians. Communication staff are not involved in strategic planning and problem solving under these models. Once strategic decisions are made and action plans drawn, the technician is brought in to implement outward communication from the organisation to target publics. The process is one-way; the practitioner is a skilled communicator uninvolved with monitoring the environment. The latter simply provides a technical support service (outward communication) for decisions made and actions taken by others. Consistent with theory, the technician role is positively and significantly correlated with the press agency and public information models. The technician role indicates weak, negative correlations with the two-way models. (Refer to H3, H4.)

#### **4.5.1 Knowing traditional communication practices**

Dozier et al (1995:53) use craft to name the range of traditional communicator skills associated with the technician role and the press agency/publicity and public information models of public relations and communication practices. How such crafts are used, accounts for the differences in overall communication excellence (Dozier et al, 1995:54).

Knowledge to play the communication technician role include the following:

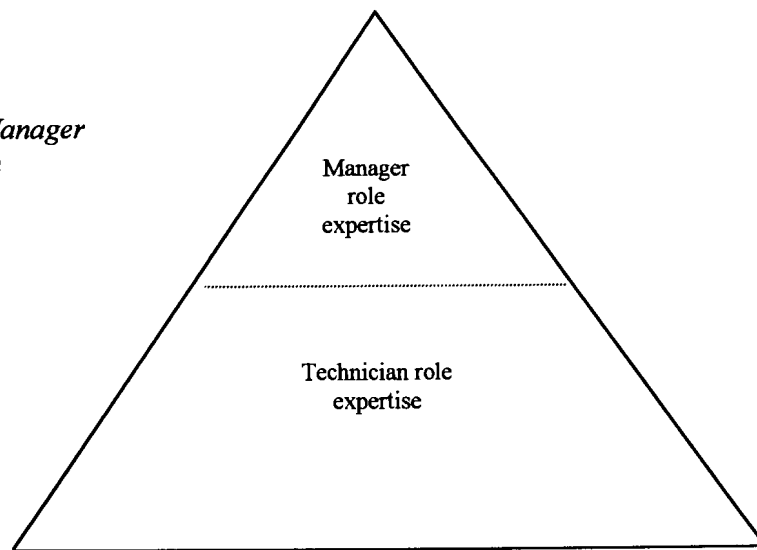
- Write news releases and feature articles.
- Write an advertisement.
- Write speeches.
- Produce publications.
- Produce audio/visuals (graphics, slide shows, videos, radio spots).
- Take photographs.
- Create and manage a speaker's bureau.
- Co-ordinate a press conference or arrange media coverage of an event (Dozier et al, 1995:54).

Departmental expertise to play the communication technician role is strong in those departments that have the expertise to play the manager role. Expertise in the technician role is also strong in departments that know how to practice two-way models. In fact, knowledge of the technician role in communication departments is stronger for organisations with high overall *Excellence* scores compared to organisations with low *Excellence* scores (Dozier et al, 1995:55).

Organisations have less-than-excellent communication when traditional technical expertise is all the department has. This shows up when the organisation's top communicator primarily plays the technician role. Top communicators play this role because top management expects it, or because they lack the knowledge to play any other (Dozier et al, 1995:55).

Knowledge of traditional communicator craft, as indicated by technician role expertise, helps excellent communication departments work. In case study interviews, the *Excellence* research team confirmed that even the most strategically managed departments must still possess the expertise to implement communication programmes, using the technical expertise within the department. Dozier et al (1995:55) thought most departments would be organised in a traditional hierarchy with senior-ranking managers supervising technicians in subordinate positions – see diagram.

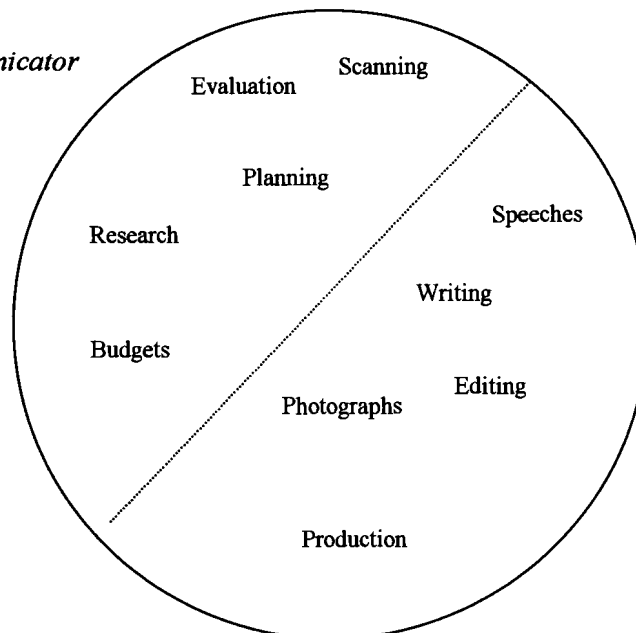
*Figure 4.1 - Manager and technician role expertise*



(Dozier et al, 1995:55)

However, case study interviews indicated that some organisations use a more organic approach to roles. Tasks are assigned according to the strengths of individual communicators, without great regard to who the supervisor is and who the subordinate is. Roles can also be passed back and forth based on preferences and knowledge. A rigid hierarchical model may therefore be inappropriate. Manager and technician role expertise can be thought of as two fundamentally different principles of communication that work best in tension and balance with each other. The following figure captures this sense of balance and tension (Dozier et al, 1995:55).

*Figure 4.2 - Communicator skills*



(Dozier et al, 1995:56)

Departmental expertise to practice the press agency/publicity model involves the following:

- Get your organisation's name into the media.
- Get maximum publicity for a staged event.
- Keep bad publicity out of the media.

These tasks focus on the press agency imperative to generate publicity. Only the last one, keeping bad publicity out of the media, deals with the favourable quality of the information. The other two concentrate on generating media coverage, regardless of content. In the *Excellence Study*, these items were combined to create a single measure of press agency/publicity expertise. The greater the department's expertise to practice the two-way symmetrical and two-way asymmetrical models, the greater the department's expertise to practice the press agency/publicity model. Organisations with higher overall excellence scores also posted higher scores on press agency/publicity expertise (Dozier et al, 1995:57-58).

Knowledge of public information practices include tasks that measure the technical expertise expected from a journalist-in-residence – emphasising the communication department's ability to co-operate as a journalistic unit, understanding the news values of reporters and using that understanding to write stories that reporters will use. Objectivity is one such journalistic value incorporated into products of the communication department (Dozier et al, 1995:58).

#### **4.6 THE EXPLANATION OF VARIABLES**

In this section the conversion of the constructs of communication manager role and communication technician role (as described above) into measurable variables is described. These variables were used as items in Section C of the measuring instrument.

*Table 4.1 - Variables that describe the construct “communication technician role”*

1. Senior management expects you to predominantly write communication material such as speeches, articles, advertisements, etc.
2. Senior management expects you to produce brochures.
3. Senior management expects you to edit the grammar and spelling of the material written by others in the organisation.
4. Senior management expects you to use your journalistic skills to establish what the media will consider newsworthy about your organisation.
5. Senior management expects you to issue news releases.
6. Senior management expects you to keep others in the organisation informed of what the media report about important issues.

*Table 4.2 - Variables that describe the construct “communication manager role”*

7. Senior management expects you to take responsibility for the success or failure of your organisation’s communication programmes just as other managers take responsibility for their terrain.
8. Senior management expects you to develop strategies for solving communication problems because of your experience and training.
9. Senior management expects you to make communication policy decisions.
10. Senior management expects you to act as counsel to top decision makers when communication issues are involved.
11. Senior management expects you to create opportunities for management to hear the views of various (internal and external) publics.
12. Senior management expects you to represent the organisation at events or meetings.

#### **4.7 SUMMARY**

Manager role enactment is both the product of and a contributor to a practitioner’s organisational power – a self-replicating loop. Research indicates that public relations managers, as opposed to public relations technicians, participate significantly more often in meetings with management about adopting new policies, discussing major problems, adopting new procedures, implementing new programmes, and evaluating programme results, than technicians do. From a power-control perspective, a public relations manager who frequently participates in management decision-making may be viewed as a member of the dominant coalition.

Public relations manager roles are, therefore, conceptually related to participation in management decision-making. This involvement of boundary-spanning practitioners in management decision-making is influenced, to some degree, by the instability and threatening nature of the organisation’s environment.

Participation in management decision-making is extremely important for practitioners. Many practitioners agree with this view, because such participation enhances their status. Encroachment is also blocked if practitioners participate in management decision-making.

However, discussions of roles and practices too often focus on what individual communicators know, rather than on the knowledge base of the entire communication department. Within excellent departments, individuals, with strong creative talents in traditional communication crafts, also play an important role. The best-laid plans of top management and top communicators mean nothing without traditional communication skills to implement them. A plan could, for example, be compiled for the organisation to monitor attraction and retention of clients, using ongoing evaluation techniques to keep track of successes and failure of programme goals. The communicator can also play a leadership role in other important projects such as a total quality management programme.

At the core of an excellent communication department, these traditional crafts complement cutting-edge expertise to manage the department strategically and utilise two-way communication practices.



## CHAPTER 5

### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Aim of this chapter:

*The aim of this chapter is to discuss the choice of a research design as well as the methodological implications thereof on sampling, data collection and instrument development. Hypotheses are formulated, connected with research objectives and variables are operationalised so that hypothesis testing can take place.*

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

A research design can be defined as the comprehensive planning of procedures for data collection and analysing (Mouton & Marais, 1989:32; Mouton, 1996:x). The structure and particular logic of the research design for this study follows from the research problem as stated in Chapter 1. The degree of structure in this design is a direct function of the research goals. It is a framework for specifying the relationships among the study's variables and it is a blueprint that outlines each procedure from the hypothesis formulation to the analysis of data (Mouton, 1996:108; Cooper & Schindler, 1998:130).

On the one hand the data research design aims to specify the unit of analysis, and on the other hand it aims to describe the conditions under which observation takes place, in such a way that the validity of the research results is increased (Du Plooy, 1996:39; Mouton & Marais, 1989:32).

The research design for this study can be described as follows:

- Research objective: This descriptive study is correlational in that its description takes place in terms of connections between variables. In statistical terms, these connections can be established in various ways.

For this study, the statistical methods of factor analysis and analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used to establish the connections between the variables (Mouton & Marais, 1989:44; Leedy 1993:122).

- **Research strategy:** The research strategy for this study is ideographic and nomothetic. On a continuum, the focus is on the differences as well as the similarities between phenomena (Mouton & Marais, 1989:48-51).
- A quantitative approach is followed. Variables are operationalised and measured with the aim to describe, predict and explain (Leedy, 1993:143). The study is therefore universal (Mouton & Marais, 1989:52).
- It is applied research that investigates theoretical relationships in order to find a solution to the practical problem of managing the relationship between senior management in the organisation and the communication department.
- As the research investigates the perceptions of respondents at a specific moment, the research design is cross-sectional or synchronic (Du Plooy, 1996:128; Mouton & Marais, 1989:41).

In Chapter 1, the research problem, the research objectives, conceptualisation, operationalisation, sample design, data collection, and analysis and interpretation were briefly discussed. In this chapter, these aspects will be discussed in more detail and a theoretical description of the statistical methods used in this study will be given.

When undertaking a survey in communication research, the researcher collects information from a group of people to describe their abilities, opinions, attitudes, beliefs and/or knowledge with regard to a particular topic or issue. Generally, the purpose of using survey research in communication is to explore and describe what is, rather than to evaluate why an observed distribution (or attitude) exists. This study also has an explanatory purpose in mind, as the researcher will be examining the interrelationships between two or more variables (Du Plooy, 1996:127)

## **5.2 CONCEPTUALISATION**

According to Mouton (1996:109), conceptualisation firstly refers to the clarification

and analysis of the key concepts in the problem statement, and secondly to the integration of the study into a theoretical framework.

The key concepts in the problem statement have already been clarified in Chapter 1. In this chapter, the integration of the study into the underlying theoretical framework for communication management will be addressed in more detail. This integration is done by formulating research hypotheses that are testable and have exploratory potential.

The question surrounding empirical testability is whether one can foresee or indicate how the hypothesis will be tested. The question of explanatory potential refers to the degree of theoretical support or embeddedness enjoyed by the hypotheses (Mouton, 1996:110). The outcome of this conceptualisation phase is research hypotheses which should meet the criterion of “theoretical validity”.

In order to embed or incorporate this research into the body of knowledge that is pertinent to the research problem being addressed, a thorough literature review of previous theoretical and empirical work in this field (Chapters 2, 3 and 4) was done. In Chapter 7, this study will be related to the existing literature.

### **5.2.1 Hypothesis formulation**

The hypotheses for the study links directly with the research objectives, but are formulated as tentative concrete and testable assumptions, as obtained from the literature study. Hypotheses are therefore statements with which answers to the research questions are generalised from the sample to the population, taking into account the sample error. In this study, inferences as to the correctness of the hypotheses will be made from sample information (Du Plooy, 1996: 36; Diamantopoulos & Schlegelmilch, 1997:130).

Through deductive reasoning the general research hypotheses were derived from the theory. These relational hypotheses postulate that a certain kind of relationship exists between two or more variables (Mouton, 1996:122; Bailey, 1987:41). The hypotheses

for this study are correlational (or descriptive) hypotheses as opposed to causal (or explanatory) hypotheses. The hypotheses also refer to a class of cases and can therefore be referred to as general hypotheses, as opposed to singular hypotheses which only apply to one case. (Mouton, 1996:122).

When a research hypothesis (alternative hypothesis) is tested, the antithesis of the hypothesis is tested in the form of a null hypothesis. (The term null hypothesis reflects the concept that this is a hypothesis of no difference. It is therefore a statement of equality. As a complementary hypothesis, the alternative hypothesis will include a statement of inequality.) Only when the null hypothesis is rejected totally, can indirect support for the research hypothesis be obtained. If the null hypothesis is not rejected, it eliminates the possibility of an alternative hypothesis in any direction (positive or negative) (Diamantopoulos & Schlegelmilch, 1997:133-136).

For purposes of this study, the alternative hypothesis was stated first, followed by a null hypothesis. The null hypothesis will be assumed to be true unless it is rejected as a result of the testing procedure.

In the stated hypotheses, the factors, as identified in the factor analysis, were used as variables. The words “significant difference” were used in each hypothesis to indicate that the results are defined to be statistically significant if the research hypothesis is accepted using a test at the 5% level (based on a standard 95% confidence level). In its statistical sense, the word “significance” indicates that random chance has been ruled out. It still remains for the researcher to examine the data to see if the effect is strong enough to be important (Siegel, 1997:327).

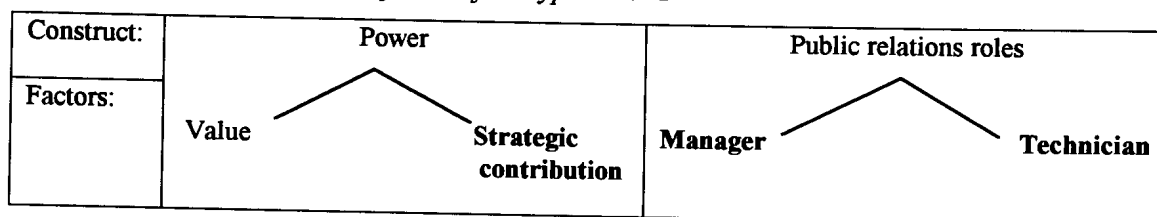
The hypotheses formulated are based on the perceptions of top communicators in South African organisations about the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution made by the top communicator in these organisations; the one-way and/or two-way models used by top communicators and communication departments in communication activities and organisational decision-making in these organisations; and the public relations manager or public relations technician role that

senior management expects the top communicator to play in these organisations. The formulation of these hypotheses was guided by the research objectives.

From the assumptions made in the literature study, the following hypotheses are stated and motivated. Figures depicting the constructs, factors, variables and differences to be tested are also included with each hypothesis:

### Hypothesis 1

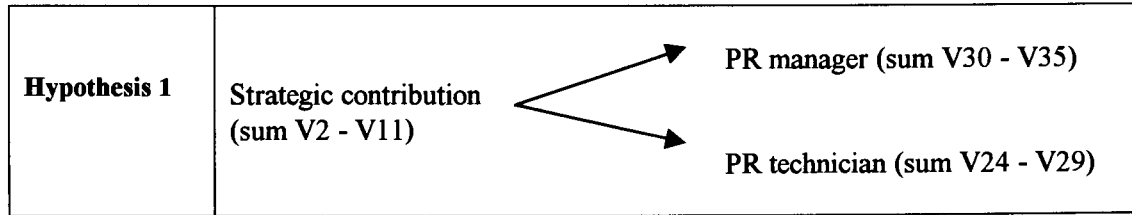
Figure 5.1 -- Constructs and factors for Hypothesis 1



H<sub>1</sub>: There is a significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the **strategic contribution** the top communicator predominantly playing the **public relations manager role** makes to organisational decision-making, and the expectations of senior management with regard to the **strategic contribution** the top communicator predominantly playing the **public relations technician role** makes to organisational decision-making.

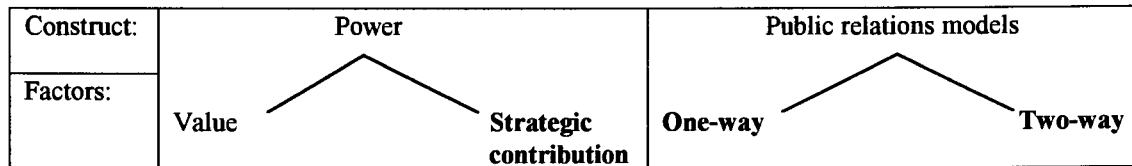
H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the **strategic contribution** the top communicator predominantly playing the **public relations manager role** makes to organisational decision-making, and the expectations of senior management with regard to the **strategic contribution** the top communicator predominantly playing the **public relations technician role** makes to organisational decision-making.

Figure 5.2 -- Factors and variables for Hypothesis 1



## Hypothesis 2

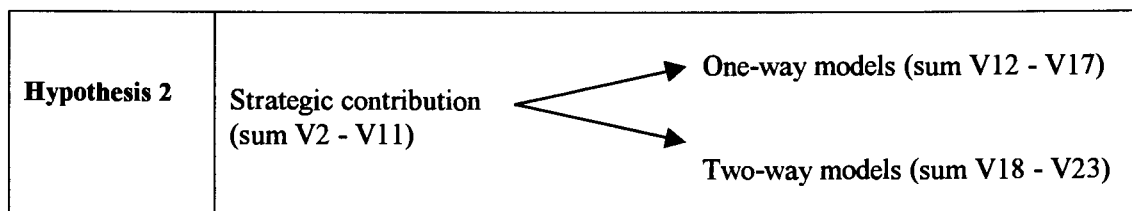
Figure 5.3 -- Constructs and factors for Hypothesis 2



H<sub>2</sub>: There is a significant difference between the beliefs and expectations of senior management with regard to the top communicator using the **one-way public relations models** to make a **strategic contribution** to organisational decision-making, and the beliefs and expectations of senior management with regard to the top communicator using the **two-way public relations models** to make a **strategic contribution** to organisational decision-making.

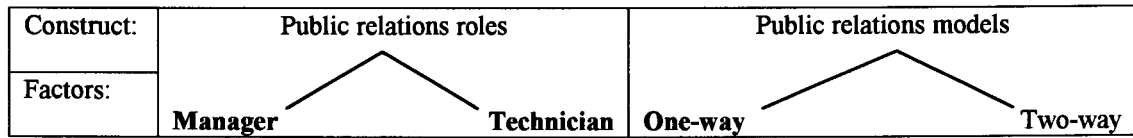
H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference between the beliefs and expectations of senior management with regard to the top communicator using the **one-way public relations models** to make a **strategic contribution** to organisational decision-making, and the beliefs and expectations of senior management with regard to the top communicator using the **two-way public relations models** to make a **strategic contribution** to organisational decision-making.

Figure 5.4 -- Factors and variables for Hypothesis 2



### Hypothesis 3

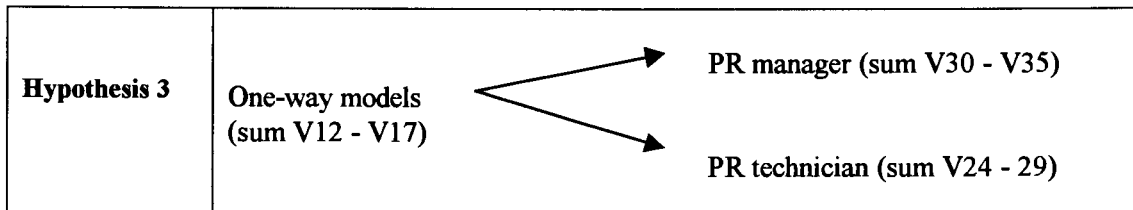
Figure 5.5 - Constructs and factors for Hypothesis 3



H<sub>3</sub>: There is a significant difference between senior management's beliefs and expectations of the top communicator predominantly playing the **public relations manager role** using the **one-way public relations models** in communication activities and organisational decision-making, and senior management's beliefs and expectations of the top communicator predominantly playing the **public relations technician role** using the **one-way public relations models** in communication activities and organisational decision-making.

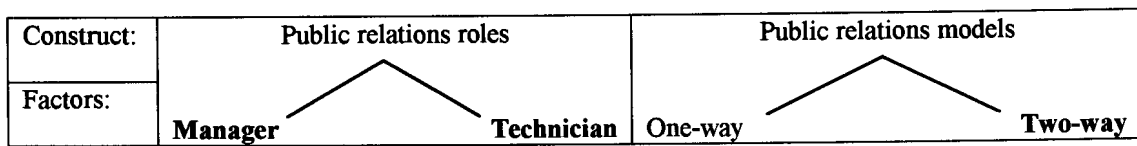
H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference between senior management's beliefs and expectations of the top communicator predominantly playing the **public relations manager role** using the **one-way public relations models** in communication activities and organisational decision-making, and senior management's beliefs and expectations of the top communicator predominantly playing the **public relations technician role** using the **one-way public relations models** in communication activities and organisational decision-making.

Figure 5.6 -- Factors and variables for Hypothesis 3



## Hypothesis 4

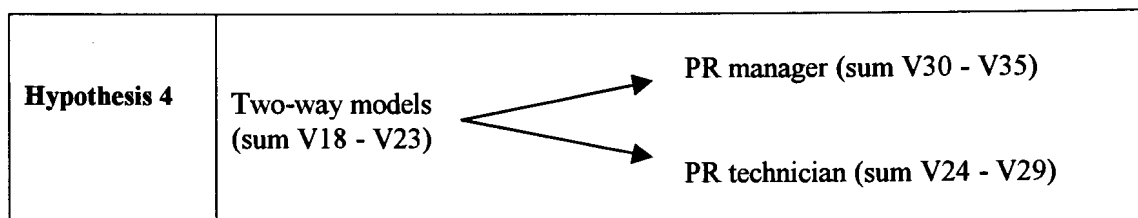
Figure 5.7 -- Constructs and factors for Hypothesis 4



H<sub>4</sub>: There is a significant difference between senior management's beliefs and expectations of the top communicator predominantly playing the **public relations manager role** using the **two-way public relations models** in communication activities and organisational decision-making, and senior management's beliefs and expectations of the top communicator predominantly playing the **public relations technician role** using the **two-way public relations models** in communication activities and organisational decision-making.

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference between senior management's beliefs and expectations of the top communicator predominantly playing the **public relations manager role** using the **two-way public relations models** in communication activities and organisational decision-making, and senior management's beliefs and expectations of the top communicator predominantly playing the **public relations technician role** using the **two-way public relations models** in communication activities and organisational decision-making.

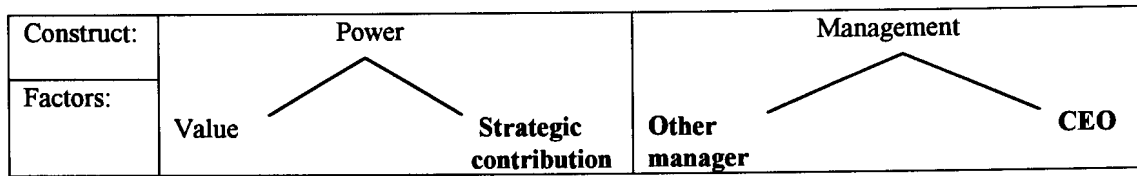
Figure 5.8 -- Factors and variables for Hypothesis 4





## Hypothesis 5

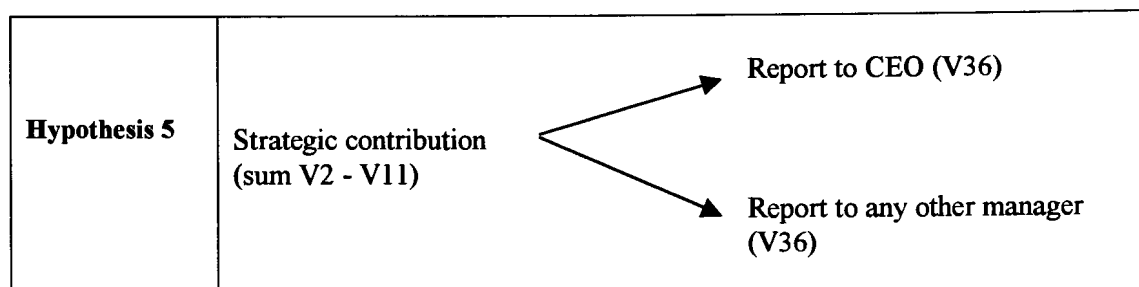
Figure 5.9 -- Constructs and factors for Hypothesis 5



H<sub>5</sub>: There is a significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the top communicator's **strategic contribution** to organisational decision-making when reporting to the **CEO** and the expectations of senior management with regard to the top communicator's **strategic contribution** to organisational decision-making when reporting to any **other senior manager**.

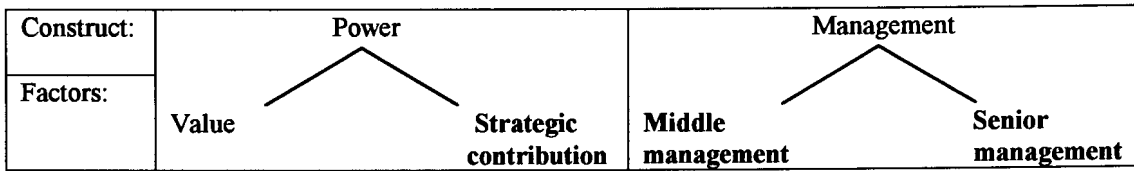
H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the top communicator's **strategic contribution** to organisational decision-making when reporting to the **CEO** and the expectations of senior management with regard to the top communicator's **strategic contribution** to organisational decision-making when reporting to any **other senior manager**.

Figure 5.10 -- Factors and variables for Hypothesis 5



## Hypothesis 6

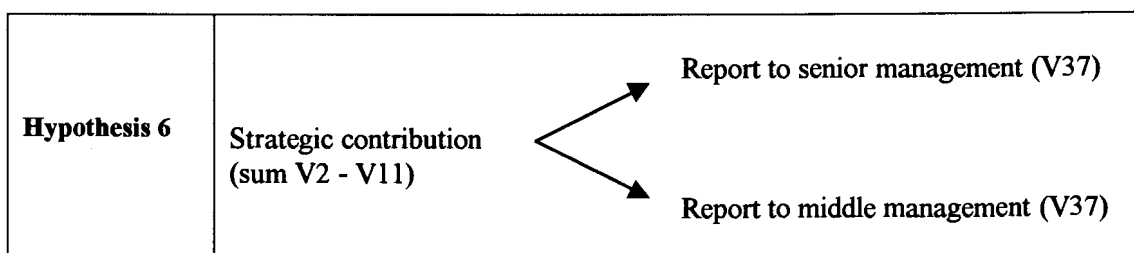
Figure 5.11 -- Constructs and factors for Hypothesis 6



H<sub>6</sub>: There is a significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the top communicator's **strategic contribution** to organisational decision-making when reporting to **senior management** in the organisation and the expectations of senior management with regard to the top communicator's **strategic contribution** to organisational decision-making when reporting to **middle management** in the organisation.

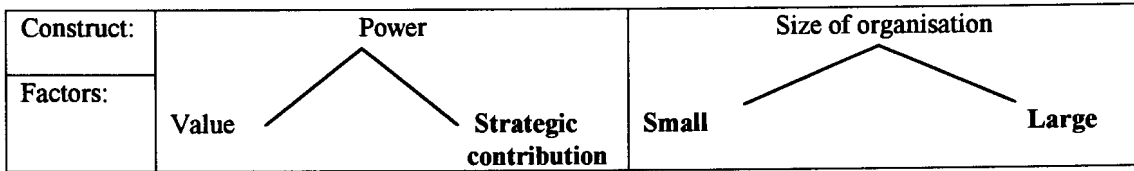
H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the top communicator's **strategic contribution** to organisational decision-making when reporting to **senior management** in the organisation and the expectations of senior management with regard to the top communicator's **strategic contribution** to organisational decision-making when reporting to **middle management** in the organisation.

Figure 5.12 -- Factors and variables for Hypothesis 6



## Hypothesis 7

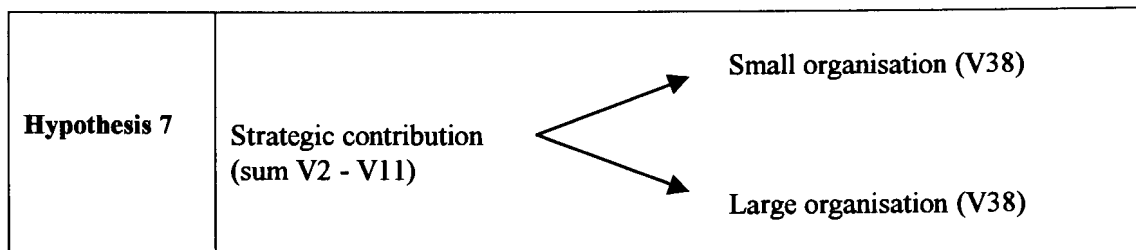
Figure 5.13 - Constructs and factors for Hypothesis 7



H7: There is a significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the **strategic contribution** made by the top communicator in a **small organisation** and the expectations of senior management with regard to the **strategic contribution** made by the top communicator in a **large organisation**.

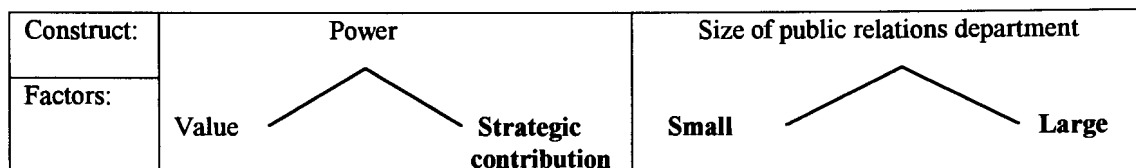
H0: There is no significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the **strategic contribution** made by the top communicator in a **small organisation** and the expectations of senior management with regard to the **strategic contribution** made by the top communicator in a **large organisation**.

Figure 5.14 -- Factors and variables for Hypothesis 7



## Hypothesis 8

Figure 5.15 -- Constructs and factors for Hypothesis 8

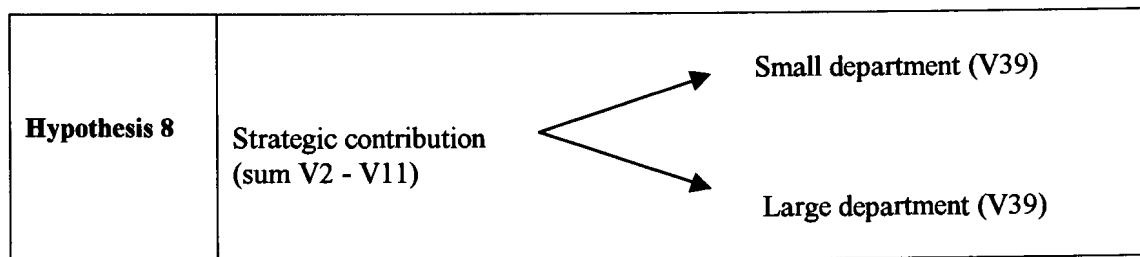


H8: There is a significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the **strategic contribution** the top communicator in a **small**

public relations department makes to organisational decision-making, and the expectations of senior management with regard to the **strategic contribution** the top communicator in a **large public relations department** makes to organisational decision-making.

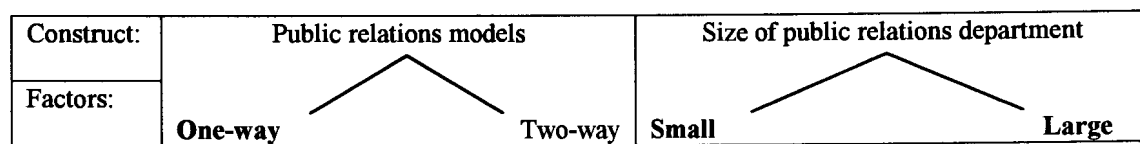
Ho: There is no significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the **strategic contribution** the top communicator in a **small public relations department** makes to organisational decision-making, and the expectations of senior management with regard to the **strategic contribution** the top communicator in a **large public relations department** makes to organisational decision-making.

Figure 5.16 -- Factors and variables for Hypothesis 8



### Hypothesis 9

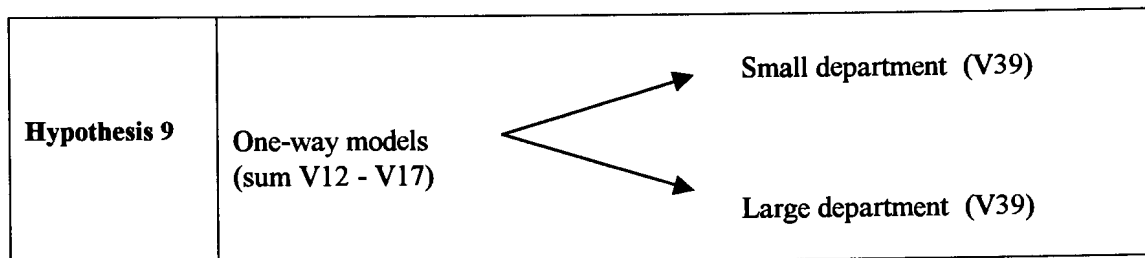
Figure 5.17 -- Constructs and factors for Hypothesis 9



H<sub>9</sub>: There is a significant difference between the beliefs and expectations of senior management with regard to the use of **one-way public relations models** for communication activities and organisational decision-making by the top communicator in a **small public relations department**, and the beliefs and expectations of senior management with regard to the use of **one-way public relations models** for communication activities and organisational decision-making by the top communicator in a **large public relations department**.

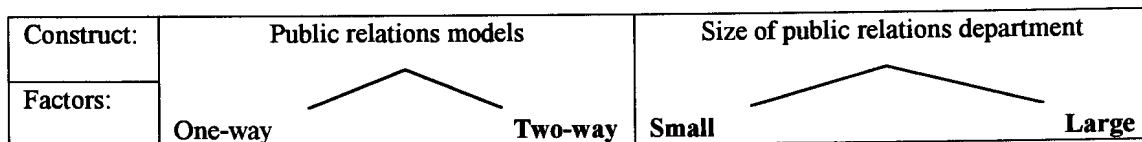
H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference between the beliefs and expectations of senior management with regard to the use of **one-way public relations models** for communication activities and organisational decision-making by the top communicator in a **small public relations department**, and the beliefs and expectations of senior management with regard to the use of **one-way public relations models** for communication activities and organisational decision-making by the top communicator in a **large public relations department**.

Figure 5.18 -- Factors and variables for Hypothesis 9



### Hypothesis 10

Figure 5.19 -- Constructs and factors for Hypothesis 10

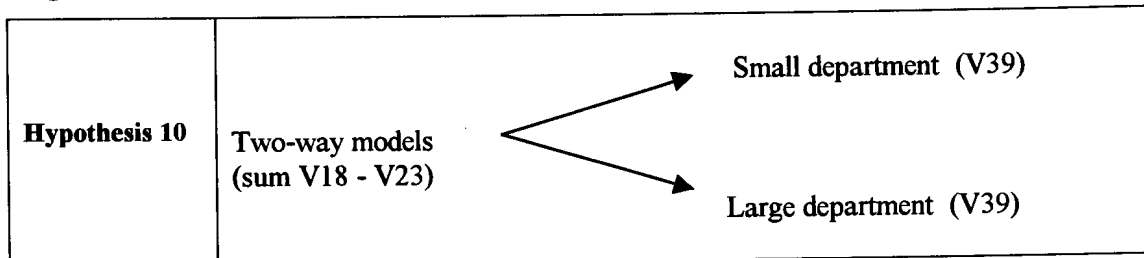


H<sub>10</sub>: There is a significant difference between the beliefs and expectations of senior management with regard to the use of **two-way public relations models** for communication activities and organisational decision-making by the top communicator in a **small public relations department**, and the beliefs and expectations of senior management with regard to the use of **two-way public relations models** for communication activities and organisational decision-making by the top communicator in a **large public relations department**.

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference between the beliefs and expectations of senior management with regard to the use of **two-way public relations models** for communication activities and organisational decision-making by the top communicator in a **small public relations department**, and the beliefs and

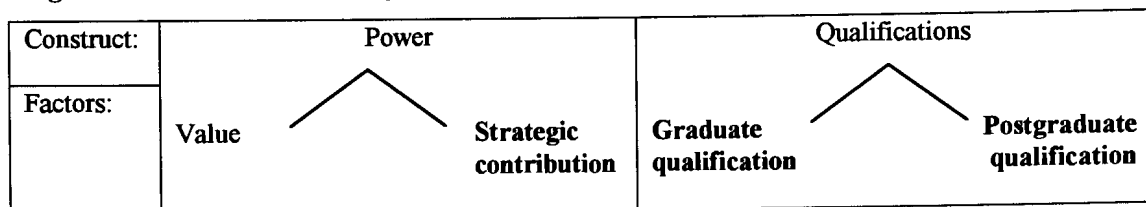
expectations of senior management with regard to the use of **two-way public relations models** for communication activities and organisational decision-making by the top communicator in a **large public relations department**.

Figure 5.20 -- Factors and variables for Hypothesis 10



### Hypothesis 11

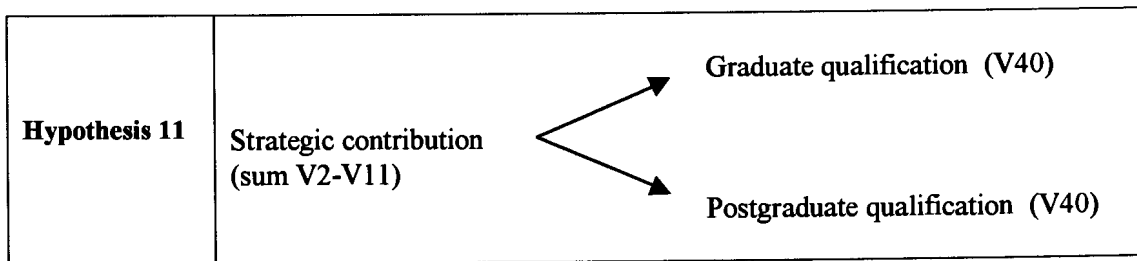
Figure 5.21 -- Constructs and factors for Hypothesis 11



H<sub>11</sub>: There is a significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the **strategic contribution** to organisational decision-making made by the top communicator with a **graduate qualification** and the expectations of senior management with regard to the **strategic contribution** made to organisational decision-making by the top communicator with a **postgraduate qualification**.

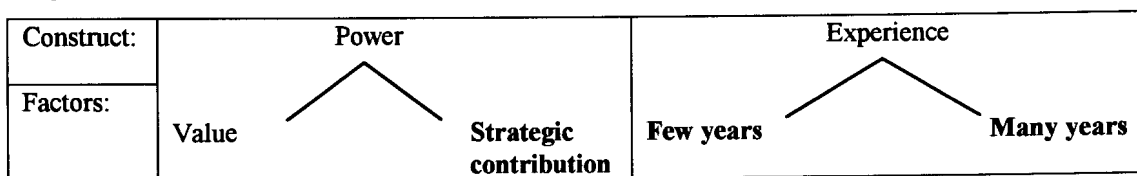
H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the **strategic contribution** to organisational decision-making made by the top communicator with a **graduate qualification** and the expectations of senior management with regard to the **strategic contribution** made to organisational decision-making by the top communicator with a **postgraduate qualification**.

Figure 5.22 -- Factors and variables for Hypothesis 11



## Hypothesis 12

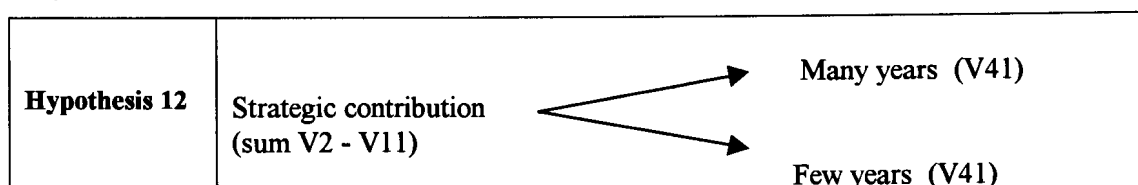
Figure 5.23 -- Constructs and factors for Hypothesis 12



H<sub>12</sub>: There is a significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the **strategic contribution** the top communicator with a **few years' experience** in the communications field makes to organisational decision-making and the expectations of senior management with regard to the **strategic contribution** the top communicator with **many years' experience** in the communications field makes to organisational decision-making.

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the **strategic contribution** the top communicator with a **few years' experience** in the communications field makes to organisational decision-making and the expectations of senior management with regard to the **strategic contribution** the top communicator with **many years' experience** in the communications field makes to organisational decision-making.

Figure 5.24 -- Factors and variables for Hypothesis 12



## 5.2.2 Statistical procedures

The statistical procedures used to analyse the sample data will now be discussed. A theoretical overview will be given of each of these procedures to serve as background for the presentation and interpretation of the results in Chapters 6 and 7.

### 5.2.2.1 Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics were used to reflect the demographic and other data of the population. Pie and bar charts were used to show the distribution of respondents with regard to reporting lines, the size of the organisation and qualifications and experience of the respondents (Section D).

The descriptive statistics applicable to Section A, B and C of the measuring instrument are:

- The average: These measures indicate central location and reflect “middle” points in the sense that they are near the centre of the distribution (Diamantopoulos & Schlegelmilch, 1997:90).
- The standard deviation: This is a measure of spread that takes all the individual observations into account. It calculates the deviation of each value from a point of reference. The mean is used as a point of reference (Steyn, Smit, Du Toit & Strasheim, 1999:129).
- The Top2Box% and Low2Box%: These boxes are particularly well suited to the task of comparing distributions, specifically in the higher and lower range of responses.

The results of the descriptive statistics are described in Chapter 6.

### 5.2.2.2 Statistics for hypothesis testing

As stated in Chapter 1, the research question and hypotheses for the study link directly



to the research objectives, but are formulated as tentative concrete and measurable assumptions as obtained from the literature study.

As stated earlier, the null hypothesis is the antithesis of the research hypothesis or alternative hypothesis. The null hypothesis is a statement of equivalence or no difference. The process of hypothesis testing assumes that the null hypothesis is “true”. All statistical procedures test the null hypothesis (Diamantopoulos & Schlegelmilch, 1997:133). Researchers confirm or reject research or alternative hypotheses by establishing the “truth” of the null hypothesis. A research or alternative hypothesis can never be tested directly. Only when a null hypothesis is rejected, is indirect support obtained for the alternatives of research hypotheses. If enough proof does not exist to reject the null hypothesis, the null hypothesis is accepted.

The alternative hypotheses in this study are numbered and are indicated as H<sub>1</sub>, H<sub>2</sub>, H<sub>3</sub>, etc., followed by the null hypothesis, indicated as H<sub>0</sub>.

#### i. Explanation of terms used in hypothesis testing

The following terms will be used when indicating the results for the hypothesis testing.

##### a. Significance level

In hypothesis testing, the researcher must first decide on an appropriate significance level before deciding on the statistical test to be used in conjunction with this level. Since the null hypothesis is always given the benefit of the doubt, H<sub>0</sub> was not rejected in this study unless there was strong evidence against it. The significance level is denoted as  $\alpha$  and is used to indicate the maximum risk in rejecting a true null hypothesis: the less risk the researcher is willing to assume, the lower the  $\alpha$ .

Typical values for  $\alpha$  are 0.10, 0.05., 0.01 and 0.001. In this study 0.05 was used as a level of significance.

A significance level should always be associated with a probability of making a mistake: rejecting the null hypothesis when one shouldn't reject it (because it is true). Thus, when the researcher selects the 5% significance level (i.e. set  $\alpha = 0.05$ ) to conduct a hypothesis test, the test will be conducted in such a way that the null hypothesis will only be rejected when in fact it is true five times out of 100.

If the result of the statistical test is such that the value obtained has a probability of occurrence less than or equal to  $\alpha$ , then  $H_0$  is rejected in favour of  $H_1$  and the test result is declared significant. If, on the one hand, the probability associated with the test result is greater than  $\alpha$ , the researcher cannot reject  $H_0$  and the test result is denoted as non-significant (Diamantopoulos & Schlegelmilch, 1997:139).

The significance test (statistical test) used in conjunction with the significance level is analysis of variance (ANOVA).

b. *p*-value

In hypothesis testing problems, the observed value of the test statistic is compared with a critical value. The *p*-value is the probability that the test statistic under  $H_0$  is equal to the observed value of the test statistic, or is more extreme in the direction suggested by the alternative. It is also known as the exceedance probability. This provides the researcher with additional information that will determine the degree of confidence with which the null hypothesis can be rejected or accepted. When using *p*-values, the following rule applies:

Reject  $H_0$  if the *p*-value  $\leq \alpha$ .

Do not reject  $H_0$  if the *p*-value  $> \alpha$ .

(Steyn et al, 1999:420)

The lower the *p*-value, the stronger the evidence against the null hypothesis. It therefore shows the researcher the strength of the evidence against the null hypothesis

(Diamantopoulos & Schlegelmilch, 1997:147; Siegel, 1997:328; Steyn et al, 1999:413).

ii. Analysis of variance (ANOVA)

The analysis of variance (ANOVA) provides a general framework for statistical hypothesis testing based on careful examination of the different sources of variability in a complex situation (Siegel, 1997:581). ANOVA is used to test whether the means of a number of populations differ from one another (Steyn et al, 1999:508).

The null hypothesis tested by one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) is that  $k$  groups have equal means in the population; the alternative hypothesis is that at least one mean is different from the others. The alternative hypothesis does not indicate which groups may differ, only that the groups are not all the same; additional analysis is necessary to identify where the identified differences exist (Diamantopoulos & Schlegelmilch, 1997:187). The software *Statistica* was used to do the calculation.

Analysis of variance, as the name indicates, breaks the total variance up into components or parts. In an ANOVA model, each group has its own average and values that deviate from the average. All the data points of all the groups also have an overall average. The total deviation is the sum of the squared differences between each data point and the overall difference.

The analysis of variance uses an  $F$  test, based on the  $F$  statistic, a ratio of two variance measures, to perform each hypothesis test. (The  $F$  statistic is the ratio of variability measures, indicating the extent to which the sample averages differ from one another (the numerator) with respect to the overall level of variability in the samples (denominator). The  $F$  statistic has two numbers for degrees of freedom ( $df$ ). It inherits the degrees of freedom of both of the variability measures it is based on – the between sample and within sample.

The numerator represents the variability due to the special, interesting effect being tested, and the denominator represents a baseline measure of randomness.

The  $F$  test is performed by computing the  $F$  statistic and comparing it to the value in the  $F$  table. If the ratio is larger than the value in the  $F$  table, the effect is significant (Siegel, 1997:587-589; Steyn et al, 1999:513-517).

The results of the hypothesis tests, by using ANOVA, are described in Chapter 6.

### **5.3 OPERATIONALISATION**

During the process of operationalisation a measuring instrument, such as a scale or questionnaire, is developed. Ideally, this instrument constitutes a valid measure of the key concepts in the research question. The outcome is a measuring instrument and the predominant epistemological criterion is measurement validity (Mouton, 1996:110; Grunig, L, in Broom & Dozier, 1990:163).

The methodological criteria applicable to the construction of a valid measuring instrument for this study, were the following:

- The population from which the items were selected to construct the instrument was exhaustive with regard to the phenomena investigated.
- The categories used in the scale/questionnaire were unambiguous and mutually exclusive.
- Scales met the criteria of unidimensionality, which means that a single scale could not be used to measure two or three different dimensions or aspects of a phenomenon (Mouton, 1996:40).

According to Dane (1990:248), measurement is a process through which the kind or intensity of something is determined. The use of multiple measures of constructs in this study helps capture more of what is meant by the construct. Together, these measures triangulate on the abstract constructs (Grunig, L, in Broom & Dozier, 1990:165).

### **5.3.1 Development of the measuring instrument**

To determine the perceptions of communication managers about the expectations top management has of the communication function in the organisation, a measuring instrument was developed. A description of the scale consideration and the compilation of the measuring instrument will now be discussed.

#### **5.3.1.1 Scale consideration**

A measuring instrument consists of a set of measuring scales which organises information and transforms it into numerical data. Measurement in research consists of assigning numbers to empirical events in compliance with a set of rules.

It was decided not to use any of the available standard measuring instruments used in communication research, like the Thurstone scale, the Guttman scale, Osgood's semantic differential scale and the Likert scale (Du Plooy, 1996:77) in this study, but to develop a new 0 to 10 point scale. In developing the format for the scale, the respondents on whom the scale was intended to be administered, and the concept measured with the scale, were taken into account (Dane, 1990:268).

The scale (Appendix B) has the following characteristics:

- It consists of a range of items describing a construct, each accompanied by a 0 to 10 point scale. Respondents had to indicate their different degrees of agreement with each statement. Numeral or category 1 (option 0) represents "very unfavourable" (totally disagree) up to numeral or category 11 (option 10) which represents "very favourable" (totally agree).
- It is a forced choice scale, which forces the respondent to select a response from the established set of discrete and mutually exclusive options.
- The scale is flexible and the dimensions of agreement (totally disagree, totally agree) can be adjusted to measure the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution the top communicator makes to organisational

decision-making, the public relations models used by the top communicator and the role played by the top communicator.

- This scale could be considered a factor scale as defined by Grunig, L (in Broom & Dozier, 1990:180). It is a multi-item measure in terms of the same construct. The index is assumed to be unidimensional, in that items making up the index measure a single construct (Bailey, 1987:60).

**i. The process of structuring the scale**

A construct is any concept that cannot be isolated or observed directly. Constructs are ideas that are developed specifically as building blocks of the research process. The phenomenon “expectations of senior management” as theoretically supported in the previous chapters, is studied according to three constructs: power (value and strategic contribution); the four public relations models (press agency, public information, two-way asymmetrical and two-way symmetrical); and the role the top communicator plays in the organisation (manager and technician). Chapters 2, 3 and 4 studied these constructs in depth.

**ii. A multi-item battery of the possible scales to measure each construct was compiled**

Each of the three abovementioned constructs was conceptually defined by a multi-item battery which is included in the measuring instrument as statements.

**iii. The final set of scales were chosen**

Through a process of pre-testing, each multi-item battery was subjected to judgement by 15 respondents. It was consequently decided to adjust the wording of three of the questions and to put in a descriptor stating that the terms “public relations” and “communication” will be regarded as synonyms in the questionnaire.

#### iv. The discriminatory power of the scale was established

The discriminatory power refers to a scale's ability to measure only the construct that is being studied. This is a test of the unidimensionality as well as the validity of a set of scales. Since the measuring instrument was only subjected to pre-testing and not to a pilot study, the discriminatory power of the scale could only be established in the first phase of data-analysis by doing a reliability analysis of the different constructs (Groenewald, 1998; Cooper & Schindler, 1998:166-174).

#### 5.3.1.2 Compilation of the measuring instrument

The measuring instrument (see questionnaire Appendix B) is organised in accordance with the three constructs from which "expectations from senior management" are hypothetically constructed. The complete measuring instrument that was developed, consists of three sections representing the three constructs. These three sections were treated as three separate measuring instruments combined into one. Section A (Power), Section B (Models) and Section C (Roles) each measures a construct in the form of a multi-item battery which is subjected to measurement on an agreement scale. A fourth division collected demographic data of respondents and consisted of open questions.

Questions/variables/items were grouped together according to the factors expected to be identified through factor analysis. The researcher was sensitive to the fact that the sequence in which questions and statements is arranged could influence individual responses and, consequently, the findings of the survey.

In this study, statements on similar topics were grouped together. Concern about the possibility that a respondent will repeat similar views towards an issue (reflecting earlier answers) may tempt one to randomise items (i.e. not group them together). However, Babbie (in Broom & Dozier 1990:165) warns against this practice, arguing that by randomising, items "will probably strike respondents as chaotic and worthless

... [and] ... they will have difficulty answering ... since they must continually switch their attention from one topic to another”.

The scale used in the measuring instrument reflected the empirical objective of the measuring instrument. The agreement scale is anchored in a bipolar way between “totally disagree” and “totally agree” in order to measure the respondents’ perception of:

Section A: The value top management attaches to the top communicator and to communication management as well as the expectations top management has about the strategic contribution the top communicator makes to organisational decision-making.

Section B: The expectations of top management about the use of one-way and two-way public relations models in communication activities and organisational decision-making. The use of these methods can be regarded as the preferred communication management philosophy in the organisation.

Section C: The expectations of top management with regard to the public relations manager or public relations technician role played by the top communicator in the organisation.

Section D: Demographic information on respondents was gathered in this section. Respondents had to indicate, amongst others, the reporting lines and size of their organisations and departments.

The measurement was done by sending the questionnaire to respondents with a covering letter stating the purpose of the study and an attachment giving background information on the *Excellence Study* on which this study is based, as well as two other similar studies done in South Africa in this regard. (Appendix A)

Each division of the measuring instrument will be discussed next. The variables and items which make up each construct were discussed in the previous chapter. Therefore only the grouping of the constructs and the phase of measurement are referred to here.



## **Section A**

As described at the end of Chapter 2, the construct “power” consists of the two concepts “value senior management attaches to the top communicator and the communication function” and “strategic contribution the top communicator makes to organisational decision-making”. The first five items in this section refers to “value”, whereas items 6 to 10 refer to the “strategic contribution” the top communicator makes to organisational decision-making. These two variables were grouped together since the theory indicated that the power of the communication department comes from the value and support senior management attaches to the communication department and the strategic contribution the communication department and/or the top communicator makes to organisational decision-making. Since the theory indicated that there is a strong link between the knowledge of the communication department and its strategic contribution, as well as the value senior management attaches to it, it was assumed that a high strategic contribution would also be an indication of suitable strategic knowledge in the department. The construct of knowledge was not measured in this study, although a question on the qualifications of respondents was asked in Section D.

## **Section B**

In Section B the construct “public relations models” (items 1 to 12) is measured. The top management’s beliefs with regard to the use of the “press agency” (items 1 to 3), “public information” (items 4 to 6), “two-way asymmetrical” (items 5 to 8) and “two-way symmetrical” (items 9 to 12) models, were measured to establish their philosophy with regard to the use of these models.

Top communicators indicated what senior management believed the task of the top communicator and the communication department to be.

The aim of this multi-item battery was to gain clarity on whether senior management believes that top communicators and communication departments (should) mainly use one-way practices in public relations or whether they (should) also use the more sophisticated two-way practices which lead to excellence in communication management. The use of two-way practices could also lead to a bigger strategic contribution.

### **Section C**

Section C measures the construct “roles the top communicator plays” and consists of items/variables describing the “communication manager” and “communication technician”.

In this section senior management’s expectations with regard to the role the top communicator should play, were measured. Items 1 to 6 are building blocks of “communication technician” and items 7 to 12 make up the “communication manager”. Technical communication skills reflect the typical role of the communication technician, whereas the communication manager also needs general as well as communication management skills.

### **Section D**

Section D consists of six questions that are codified as nominal scale questions. Each of the questions will be briefly motivated.

The first question asked to whom top communicators (respondents) report in their organisations. The designation of the person had to be stated. As a follow-up question, the respondent had to indicate whether that person was regarded as junior, middle or senior management in the organisation.

Motivation for this question: To establish whether it can be assumed that the seniority of the person to whom the respondent reports, influences her strategic contribution to organisational decision-making.

The second question tried to establish how many people work for the organisation.

Motivation for this question: To establish whether it can be assumed that the size of the organisation influences the strategic contribution the top communicator makes to organisational decision-making.

In Question 3 the size of the communication department was established by asking how many people are employed in that department.

Motivation for this question: To establish whether the size of the department influences the strategic contribution the top communicator makes to organisational decision-making.

The highest qualification of the top communicator had to be stated in the fifth question.

Motivation for this question: To establish whether a graduate or postgraduate qualification of a top communicator influences the strategic contribution she makes to organisational decision-making.

In the last question, top communicators had to state their designation.

Motivation for this question: By asking this question, it could be established whether the top communicator is mainly responsible for corporate communication or whether other responsibilities such as Marketing, Human Resources or Administration are also part of her role. This was also an indication of the popular designations for top communicators in the field. This question was not used for statistical analysis.

### 5.3.1.3 Questionnaire design

The researcher made use of a self-administered questionnaire which each respondent could complete personally. Various methodological guidelines were considered for the design of the questionnaire (Dane, 1990:119-143; Du Plooy, 1996:129; Mouton & Marais, 1989:91).

- The covering letter of the questionnaire explained the purpose of the study, indicated how the information would be used and motivated why the individual's participation is important. This letter identified the person undertaking the survey, and was aimed at persuading the respondent to complete and return the questionnaire by a specific date.
- To interest respondents, an addendum was attached with background information on the *Excellence Study* on which this study was based, as well as information on

two other similar studies conducted in South Africa.

- The address to which the questionnaire had to be returned was clearly indicated on the front, middle and last page of the questionnaire to facilitate the return of the questionnaire.
- Specific instructions were included in the covering letter. The multi-item battery for each of the divisions was divided by transmission instructions which orientated the respondent with regard to the next section. Clear instructions were given on how to complete the questionnaire.
- On the last page of the questionnaire, an offer was made to send the respondent the results of the study and space to fill in an address was provided.
- Respondents' anonymity was assured and the questionnaires were therefore not numbered. However, respondents could give their particulars if they wanted to receive the results of the study, which meant that those respondents could be identified.
- In designing this self-administered questionnaire, careful attention was given to the types of questions asked and statements made, the wording of the questions and statements, and the formatting of the measuring instrument.
- Multiple measures of constructs were used, as it helps capture more of what is meant by the construct. Taken together, these concrete measures triangulate on the abstract construct. They can be combined to form an index that measures the three constructs "power", "shared expectations with regard to the use of the one-way and two-way models of public relations", and "role-playing" (Grunig, L, in Broom & Dozier, 1990:165).
- The statements in Sections A, B and C required respondents to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with the statements. Respondents were asked to select a category between 0 and 10 to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with statements (Du Plooy, 1996:133).
- A mixture of direct and indirect statements was made, and specific as opposed to general statements were included.
- The aim was to keep questions short and unambiguous. The words "or" and "and" were not used in any of the items.

- Care was taken to avoid loaded language, leading statements (or questions), negative items, incomplete questions, vague questions (or statements), lengthy questions (or statements), ambiguous language or complex questions (Du Plooy, 139-140).
- Sections A, B and C included closed-ended statements, while open-ended questions were asked in Section D. Question 1 in Section D was a contingency question.
- Open-ended questions on the status of the top communicator in the organisation were kept to the minimum and placed in Section D because of the inherent problems with codifying them.
- The questionnaire was only distributed in English since it was assumed that Afrikaans-speaking communication managers have a very good command of both English and Afrikaans and would therefore be able to complete the questionnaire successfully.

The biggest constraint when using a self-administered questionnaire is a low rate of return. The data collection time is also long, which was specifically the case in this study. Dillman (1978) developed a set of practices to increase the rate of return of questionnaires. These practices are known as the Total Design Method (TDM) and are supported by empirical research (Dane, 1990:134). These practices were used in this study.

Dillman (1978) sees survey research as a social exchange process – “an interpersonal relationship in which an individual’s willingness to enter or remain in the relationship depends on expectations of rewards and costs.” The researcher can therefore increase the rate of return by making the completion of the questionnaire worth it for the respondent with the aim of ensuring an acceptable rate of return for the e-mailed and/or faxed questionnaire. In relation to the above point, PRISA’s standard communication with members was used to keep respondents up to date with the progress of the research project and to communicate the importance of the study. Respondents were also promised the results of the study.

A pre-test was also done in this study. A pre-test differs from a pilot study in that the total research procedure is not subjected to testing. Data gathered in the pre-test is not statistically analysed – only the measuring instrument is tested in advance. The purpose of pre-testing is, amongst others, to establish whether respondents understand the instructions, whether items are not confusing or unclear and whether the length of the questionnaire is realistic. The questionnaire was subjected to 15 communication managers in the Pretoria region. The necessary changes were made. The result of the pre-test was the rewording of three items and a change to the instructions in the covering letter. Where only e-mail was at first considered as a distribution method, it was decided to distribute the questionnaire by e-mail initially, but to follow it up by faxing questionnaires to respondents who did not reply. The reason for this procedure was that the distribution of questionnaires by e-mail could keep the cost down, could be very easy to return and could in some cases be a preferred way for respondents to communicate. It was, however, expected that the rate of return would be lower than if a questionnaire was faxed or posted, which was indeed the case.

Faxes were sent to respondents who did not reply to the e-mail. It was assumed that the rate of return would be higher if a copy of the questionnaire was faxed, which would save the respondent the time to print the document. In some cases the e-mail address was not functional. Cases where the top communicator was not sufficiently electronically literate, or where secretaries received their bosses' e-mails or faxes, could also have had an influence on the rate of return.

### **5.3.2 Reliability and validity of the measuring instrument**

Reliability needs stability and the delivery of consistent measuring over time. Reliability consists of three components: stability, internal consistency and equivalency (Du Plooy, 1996:74; Cooper & Schindler, 1998:166-174).

According to Hair, Anderson, Tatham & Black (1998:117), reliability is an assessment of consistency between multiple measurements of a variable. In this study, two diagnostic measures of reliability were used, i.e. internal consistency, which applies to

the consistency among the variables in a summated scale; and Cronbach's alpha, which is the reliability coefficient that assesses the consistency of the entire scale.

The reliability of research concerns the replicability and consistency of the methods, conditions and results. Internal reliability refers to the extent to which the data collection, analysis and interpretation is consistent, given the same conditions. External reliability deals with the issue of whether or not independent researchers can replicate studies in the same or similar settings and obtain similar results (Du Plooy, 1996:31; Bailey, 1987:71; Grunig L, in Broom & Dozier, 1990:169).

The rationale for internal consistency is that the individual items or indicators of the scale should all measure the same construct and should thus be highly intercorrelated. The individual items for the three constructs "power", "shared expectations with regard to the use of one-way and two-way models" and "role-playing" were measured separately.

Because no single item is a perfect measure of a construct, one must rely on a series of diagnostic measures to assess internal consistency. First, there are several measures relating to each separate item, including the item-to-total correlation (the correlation of the item to the summated scale score) or the inter-item correlation (correlation among items). Rules of thumb suggest that the item-to-total correlations exceed .50 and that the inter-item correlations exceed .30 (Hair et al, 1998:118).

For the purpose of the development of a measuring instrument, the internal consistency is the most important consideration. Items in the measuring instrument can be inconsistent and lead to unreliable measurement if they are vague, confusing or simply irrelevant to the concept. Respondents can also contribute to unreliable measurement because of fatigue, fluctuation in memory, emotional problems and familiarity with the measuring instrument. The latter is known as random error (Du Plooy, 1996:72; Mouton & Marais, 1989:75-89; Cooper & Schindler, 1998:171-174).

There are various methods of establishing the reliability of measurement. All the

methods have a common goal, namely to calculate the reliability coefficient. The reliability of the measuring instrument for this study was tested by using the statistical methods of item-to-total analysis and Cronbach's alpha. In accordance with the guidelines laid down by Du Plooy (1996:72), the reliability coefficient ranges from no reliability (0) to perfect reliability (1). A reliability coefficient of 0.9 or higher is excellent and between 0.8 and 0.89 is good, while a reliability coefficient of between 0.7 and .79 can serve as fair.

When a measuring instrument includes items which measure the perceptions, attitudes or opinions of respondents as in the case of the measuring instrument under discussion, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient is used (Du Plooy, 1996:74). As respondents' perceptions, attitudes or opinions do not reflect "correct" or "incorrect" options, the Cronbach's alpha measures reliability by establishing the consistency with which respondents reacted to the items on the measurement instrument. It is the more sophisticated computerised application of the "split-halves" method.

Multiple pairs of sub-categories are randomly selected for measurement, after which all these sub-categories are correlated as an index of internal consistency of the measuring instrument as a whole. The reliability analysis is discussed in more detail in the section on data-analysis.

According to Grunig, L (in Broom & Dozier, 1990:165), there are three ways to argue the validity of a variable which supposedly measures a construct. These are face validity, criterion validity and construct validity. Measurement validity and, more specifically, construct validity, confronts the question whether the instrument really measures the specific theoretical construct that is being studied (Mouton & Marais, 1989:94; Du Plooy, 1996:75; Bailey, 1987:66-70). The measuring instrument must be able to differentiate the construct studied from any other similar construct (Diamantopoulos & Schlegelmilch, 1997:21; Cooper & Schindler, 1998:166-171). A good indication of validity is made possible by a factor analysis of the measuring instrument. Through factor analysis it can be established whether the constructs or factors, as identified by the researcher, measure what they are supposed to measure (Mouton & Marais, 1989:69).



When it is claimed that a measuring instrument is valid, it is at the same time implied that measurement is reliable, as reliability is a prerequisite for validity. In establishing construct validity, the measuring instrument must be related to the theoretical framework as discussed in the literature study to ensure that the measurement logically links with other concepts in the framework. In this study, the following process was followed to ensure construct validity:

- Hypotheses are based on the literature study and objectives for the study were formulated.
- The variables measured were operationally defined.
- The hypotheses were statistically tested.

#### 5.3.2.1 Factor analysis

Factor analysis is the method according to which groups of (linear) related variables are identified with the aim of reducing many variables to a more manageable number of variables to discover multiple underlying dimensions of commonality between variables (the variance) in the data set. To the extent that subsets among original variables reflect a common “core” (i.e. are measuring the same underlying construct) the derived dimensions should be meaningful and interpretable. The original variables can then be described in terms of the common underlying dimensions (Diamantopoulos & Schlegelmilch, 1997:216).

A single factor solution means that all items were sufficiently intercorrelated to form a single group measuring a single construct. Multiple factors mean that several dimensions of the construct are involved in the item set (Gruning, L, in Broom & Dozier, 1990:180).

Factor analysis therefore implies that a small set of hypothetical causal variables of factors can possibly explain the correlations between observable variables. Because of this, factor analysis begins by constructing a set of variables, based on the relationships in a correlation matrix. The above can be done by various methods, but for the purposes of this study, the most general method – principle components analysis – was

used. Principle components analysis focuses on the total variance (in other words the total variance in the data set) and seeks to reduce the original set of composite variables (“principle components”) which are uncorrelated to one another (Diamantopoulos & Schlegelmilch, 1997:216).

Each principle component is formed by linearly combining the original variables to explain as much of the original variance in the data as possible by few principle components. The sole aim of principle components analysis is to reduce the original set of variables into a smaller set of composite variables (components). It is a data reduction technique and makes no assumptions regarding the underlying structure of the data (Diamantopoulos & Schlegelmilch, 1997:216).

As mentioned above, these linear combinations of variables, called factors, account for the variance in the data as a whole. The best combination makes up the first principal component and is the first factor. The second principal component is defined as the best linear combination of variables for explaining the variance not accounted for by the first factor. In turn, there may be a third, fourth and kth component, each being the best linear combination of variables not accounted for by the previous factors (Cooper & Schindler, 1998:577; Hair et al, 1998:106).

The orthogonal (with the axes 90 degrees) Varimax normalised rotational method was used for identifying factors (Hair et al, 1998:106).

The items in each of the sections (A to C) of the measuring instrument were included in the factor analysis. However, items that were eliminated during the reliability analysis because of low internal consistency were not subjected to factor analysis. For the purpose of operationalisation, the variables accompanying items on which factor analysis was done, were described in Chapter 6.

The interpretation of the factor analysis gives a qualitative dimension to the statistical analysis in the study and takes place subjectively in terms of the judgement of the researcher. The information obtained from the factor analysis is, however, valuable in

determining the construct validity and gives depth to the study. The literature study as theoretical basis is used as a frame of reference for interpretation.

*Table 5.1 – Operationalisation of variables for statistical analysis: Agreement scale*

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Items on questionnaire</b>
<b>Power</b>	<b>Section A</b>
Value	Items 1-5 (Variables 2 - 6)
Strategic contribution	Items 6-10 (Variables 7 - 11)
<b>Four public relations models</b>	<b>Section B</b>
Press agency	Items 1-3 (Variables 12 - 14)
Public information	Items 4-6 (Variables 15 - 17)
Two-way asymmetric	Items 7-9 (Variables 18 - 20)
Two-way symmetric	Items 10-12 (Variables 21 - 23)
<b>Public relations roles</b>	<b>Section C</b>
Public relations manager	Items 1-6 (Variables 24 - 29)
Public relations technician	Items 7-12 (Variables 30 - 35)
<b>Demographic</b>	<b>Section D</b>
Reporting lines, size of organisation and department, highest qualification and experience of respondents	Items 1-6 (Variables 36 - 42)

## 5.4 SAMPLING

During the process of selecting or sampling, the aim is to get a sample that is as representative as possible of the target population. Representativeness is the underlying epistemic criterion of a “valid”, i.e., unbiased sample. According to Mouton (1996:110), the methodological criteria, applied in the process of sampling, are a clear definition of the population; the systematic drawing of a sample; the drawing of probability rather than non-probability samples; and observing the advantages of multi-stage versus simple random sampling.

When undertaking a survey in communication research, one collects information from a group of people to describe their abilities, opinions, attitudes, beliefs and/or their knowledge with regard to a particular topic or issue. Generally, the purpose of using survey research in communication is to explore and to describe what is, rather than to evaluate why an observed distribution (or attitude) exists. This study also has an explanatory purpose in mind as the researcher will be examining the interrelationships between two or more variables (Du Plooy, 1996:127).

### 5.4.1 Sampling design

Data collection is the means by which measurement is realised (Du Plooy, 1996:42). In this study primary data was collected through questionnaires sent to and received by respondents who were part of a certain population.

Sampling refers to the process of selecting participants for a research project (Dane, 1990:289). In this study the sampling frame (concrete list of the elements in a population), as addressed later in this chapter, was considered to be the population used for the study and no sample was drawn from this frame. The population of top communicators as defined later in this chapter was considered potential respondents in this study. This sample can, therefore, be referred to as a probability sample, since the probability of selecting any particular sampling element is known (Walton F, 1990:124; Diamantopoulos & Schlegelmilch, 1997:13).

The sampling unit (sampling element) in this study is the top communicator in the South African organisation who is a member of any of the professional public relations institutes in South Africa (PRISA, SAKOMM, IABC, Unitech, IMPRO) and the Top 200 companies as identified by the magazine *Finance Week*, Top 200, 1999. These sampling units were included in a sampling frame, the complete list of all units (Bailey 1987:81; Du Plooy, 1996:50; Dane, 1990:289; Mouton, 1996:135).

A distinction is furthermore made in this study between the target population (all top communicators in South African organisations) and the accessible population (all top communicators in South African organisations who are members of professional public relations associations) (Du Plooy, 1996:50).

The population parameters for the accessible population (Du Plooy, 1996:50) “top communicators” can therefore be defined as:

*All of the most senior communicators in public and private organisations in South Africa, including corporations, not-for-profit organisations, government agencies and professional trade associations and who are members of the professional public relations institutes in South Africa, namely PRISA (Public Relations Institute of South Africa), IABC (International Association of Business Communicators),*

*SAKOMM (South African Communication Association), Unitech (Public Relations Association for Universities and Technikons), IMPRO (Institute for Municipal Public Relations Officers) and the Top 200 companies as identified by the magazine Finance Week, Top 200, 1999. The top communicator may be head of a department or may function alone as the most senior communicator in the organisation.*

This survey population was chosen because it was assumed that members of professional organisations would strive to practice excellent communication. As will be explained later in this chapter, the sampling frame had to be expanded to also include the Top 200 companies as identified by *Finance Week*, Top 200, 1999.

Findings of this study can be generalised to the accessible population, as the whole accessible population was included in the sampling framework, and was considered participants in this project (Du Plooy, 1996:50; Dane, 1990:289).

The sampling framework (Dane, 1990:289) was reconstructed from the following sources:

- The national membership index of PRISA, comprising 1 250 senior members.
- A list of the South African members of the IABC, comprising 87 members.
- A membership list of SAKOMM, comprising 46 members.
- A contact list of top communicators at Universities and Technikons who are members of Unitech, totalling 42.
- A list of members of IMPRO totalling 119 members.

These lists were consolidated and names appearing more than once on the list were deleted. The sampling units were selected according to their designations and can be considered as representative of the accessible population. The individual had to have a designation such as communication manager, public relations manager, public affairs manager or something similar.

As factor analysis was used as a statistical method to reduce data, the sample size had to take into account the general rule applicable to factor analysis. This is to have at least five times as many observations as there are variables to be analysed (Hair et al,

1998:99). As the measuring instrument contained 40 variables, at least 200 questionnaires had to be realised. (Precisely 202 were realised.)

All 439 sampling units in the sampling frame were contacted to establish whether they were still working for the organisation as indicated on the membership list and whether their particulars were correct. The 364 units that were accessible by e-mail, fax or telephone and who indicated that they were the top communicators in the organisation were regarded as part of the sample.

A self-administered questionnaire (Appendix A) was e-mailed to each respondent over a period of two weeks starting in September 1999. Respondents had two weeks in which to reply, after which the e-mail was followed up with a fax or a personal or telephonic request to complete a questionnaire.

Several questionnaires were returned, but it was not enough to realise the necessary 200 completed questionnaires. Requests were followed up telephonically and by fax for a third time. After receiving 163 questionnaires, it was clear that this sample was depleted and it was consequently decided to expand the sampling framework to also include public relations practitioners of the Top 200 companies in South Africa (*Finance Week*, 1999 Survey) in the sampling framework. This addition to the sampling framework was considered appropriate since it was assumed that public relations practitioners working for the Top 200 companies in South Africa would be practising excellent communication.

Companies that were included in the first sample were deleted from the list. A total of 137 companies remained on the list and were contacted to obtain the particulars of the top communicator and to establish whether this person was indeed the most senior person responsible for communication in the company. Some 120 questionnaires were sent to accessible respondents first by e-mail and then by fax, depending on the preference of the respondent.

Respondents were to reply within two weeks, after which the request was followed up

by e-mail or fax. This process was repeated for a third time in cases where questionnaires were not received. A total of 39 questionnaires were received from this sample, to make up a total of 202 completed questionnaires received in total.

## **5.5 SUMMARY**

In this chapter the research design, methodology, generation of hypotheses and operationalisation of variables have been discussed. The sample design and data collection for the population have been addressed by defining the population, specifying the sampling frame, explaining the method of sample measurement, motivating the sample size and describing the data collection.

The process of measuring instrument development is explained by the development of a scale, the compilation of the measuring instrument and the methodology of the questionnaire design. The reliability and validity of measurement were also addressed.

The hypotheses followed from the literature study and support the research objectives. In the operationalisation of variables, the constructs and items concerned were specified and the statistical techniques such as ANOVA, with which the hypotheses were tested, explained. In the next section, the results of the empirical study will be discussed.

## CHAPTER 6

### RESULTS AND FINDINGS

**Aim of this chapter:**

*In this chapter the data is analysed and interpreted and the findings and results of the empirical study are presented. The first section addresses descriptive statistics, while factor analysis is discussed in the second section. In the third section, hypotheses are tested and evaluated. In conclusion, the main findings of the descriptive statistics are discussed, the results of the factor analysis summed up and the hypothesis testing discussed.*

#### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the data for the study is analysed by identifying patterns and themes in the data and drawing certain conclusions from them. To analyse the data, statistical techniques such as descriptive statistics for a reliability analysis of the measuring instrument, factor analysis and analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used.

Inferences were drawn from the results according to the principles of statistical inference (the logic of hypothesis testing) (Mouton, 1996:111). The outcome of the analysis and interpretation is certain conclusions which followed logically from the empirical evidence and will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

The aim of descriptive statistics is to collect, organise and sum up data. Descriptive statistics condenses large volumes of data into a few summary measures. With descriptive statistics, the important characteristics of the sample were identified and a profile of behaviour set. General findings were made on the basis of the descriptive statistics (Diamantopoulos & Schlegelmilch, 1997:64).

The primary aim of the factor analysis is to reduce the number of variables of expectations in the measuring instrument to a smaller set of underlying dimensions with the minimum loss of information (Hair, Anderson, Tatham & Black, 1995:371).



These dimensions of factors are interpreted with the literature as frame of reference and can be seen as respondents' groupings of the variables from which the measuring instrument is built. For purposes of the study, the factor analysis is exploratory and groups of expectations were identified in the measured constructs.

The aim of hypothesis testing is to put into words the general findings of the samples and to formulate specific statements; to test the general findings and to generalise the results to the accessible population (Diamantopoulos & Schlegelmilch, 1997:64,65).

To generalise the findings of the samples to the population, inferential statistics was used. Inferential statistics is that area of statistics which extends the information extracted from a sample to the actual environment in which the problem arises. Decision-making on the acceptance or rejection of hypotheses takes place on the basis of statistical procedures that indicate that findings from the sample data are significant for the population in total.

In conclusion, the main findings, as obtained from the descriptive statistics, the results of the factor analysis and the results of the hypothesis testing will be summarised. The results and findings will be discussed in the next chapter.

## **6.2 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS: BIOGRAPHIC DATA**

The data collection for this study was discussed in detail in Chapter 5. The 202 questionnaires received from top communicators were captured on *Microsoft Excel*. The software package used for the analysis of the data was *Statistica*. In order to submit the most important characteristics of the samples, the demographic data, as obtained from Part II of the measuring instrument, will be discussed first. Thereafter the opinion of the sample will be discussed section for section. The descriptive statistics will be concluded with a few general research findings as summarised from the section-to-section analysis.

## 6.2.1 Biographic data

Biographic data such as reporting lines to senior management, the size of the organisation, the size of the communication department and the top communicator's highest qualification and number of years' experience in the communications field will be discussed next.

### 6.2.1.1 Reporting lines

Question 1 in Part II consists of two parts and is a classification question to determine who the top communicator reports to in her organisation. The designation of the person had to be stated in the first section in order to establish the position of the top communicator in the hierarchy of the organisation.

It was also important to establish whether the person who is reported to is regarded as being part of junior, middle or senior management, as it is hypothesised that the strategic contribution the top communicator makes to organisational decision-making could depend on the reporting line she has to senior management.

From the demographic data it could be inferred that 43% of top communicators indicated that they reported to the CEO, while 57% report to another senior manager. A total of 95% regarded the person they report to as a senior manager, while 5% regarded him/her to be a middle manager. It can therefore be assumed that most top communicators have ready access to senior management and a high percentage of top communicators have direct access to the most senior manager in the organisation, the CEO. The access that top communicators have to senior management is often an indication of the value and support senior management attaches to this function. With 95% of the respondents indicating that the person they report to is part of senior management, it can be assumed that the communication function is valued in the South African organisation.

Figure 6.1 – Reporting lines of top communicator to CEO

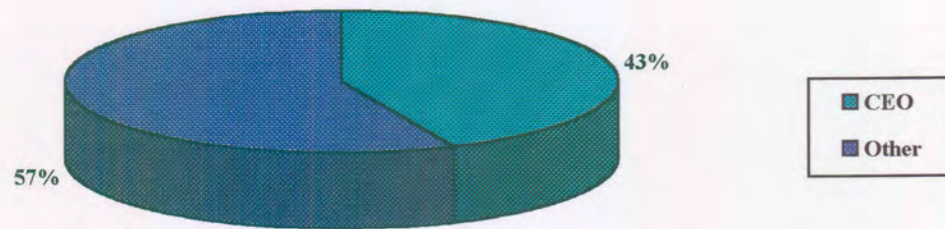
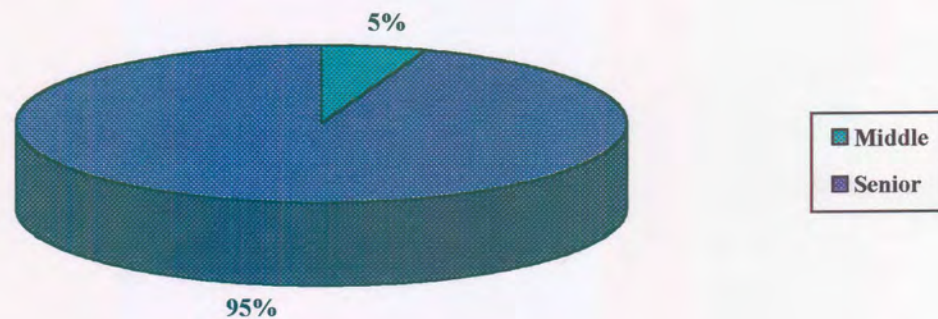


Figure 6.2 – Reporting lines of top communicator to senior management



#### 6.2.1.2 Size of organisation and communication department

Top communicators were requested to indicate how many people are employed by the organisation they work for. Next they had to indicate how many communication practitioners there are in their communication departments.

The aim of these questions was to establish the size of the organisations and of the communication departments that respondents represent. In the literature it is indicated that the size of the organisation and of the communication department could give an indication of the strategic contribution the top communicator makes to organisational decision-making, the one-way or two-way public relations models she uses for communication activities and the public relations manager or public relations technician role she plays in the organisation.

The qualitative variable “number of staff in the organisation” was categorised into three categories:

Category 1: 1 to 999 staff members (86 responses)

Category 2: 1 000 to 9 999 staff members (93 responses)

Category 3: 10 000 to 100 000 staff members (23 responses)

The descriptive statistics indicated that most respondents represented organisations with less than 10 000 staff members.

The variable “number of staff in the communication department” was categorised into five categories:

Category 1: 1 to 19 staff members (190 responses)

Category 2: 20 to 39 staff members (8 responses)

Category 3: 40 to 59 staff members (no responses)

Category 4: 60 to 79 staff members (1 response)

Category 5: 80 to 100 staff members (3 responses)

The descriptive statistics also indicated that most respondents are members of relatively small communication departments of less than 20 people.

It was hypothesised that the number of staff in the organisation and in the communication department could have an influence on the way in which communication is practised in the organisation. The results of the cross-tabulation of the means for these responses with the means for the constructs “strategic contribution”, “one-way and two-way models” and “public relations manager role” and “public relations technician role” will be discussed later in this chapter.

Figure 6.3 – Number of staff in the organisation

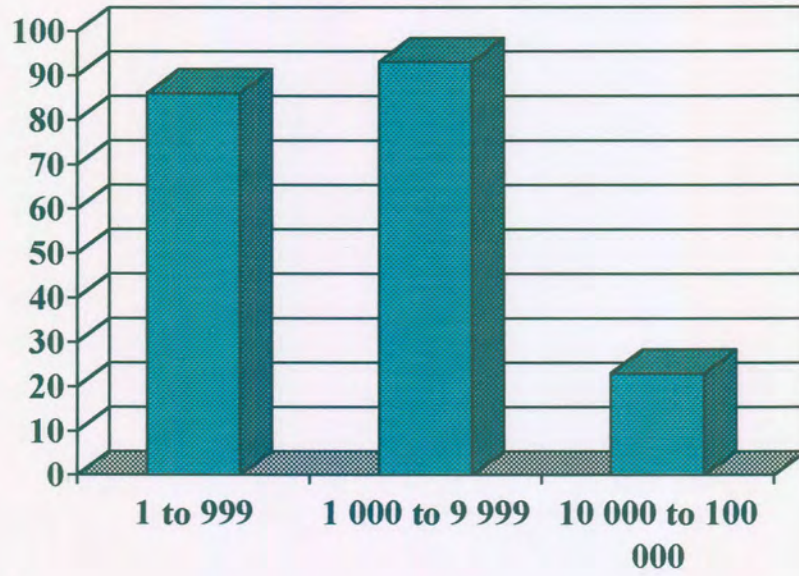
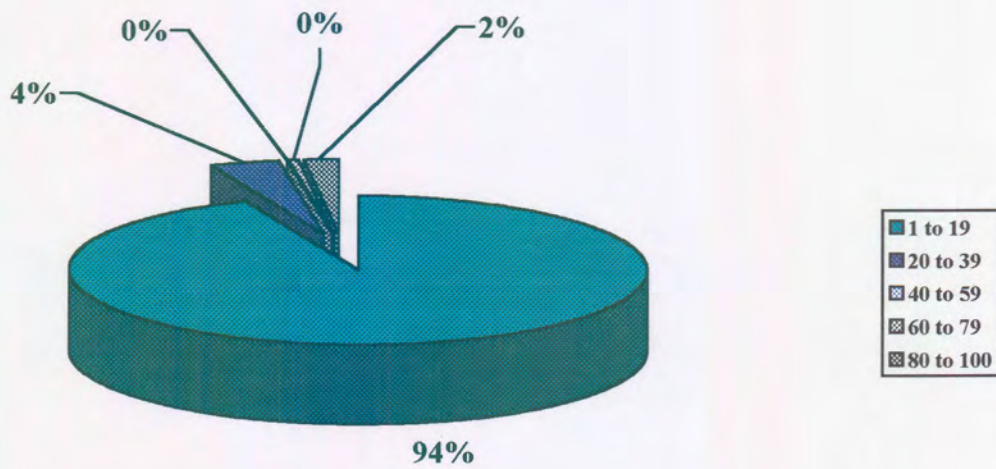


Figure 6.4 – Number of staff in the communication department



### 6.2.1.3 Highest qualification and number of years' experience in the communications field

The aim of Question 4, “What is your highest qualification”, and of Question 5, “How many years' experience do you have in the communications field”, was to establish the knowledge level of the top communicator. Top management tends to value a strategic contribution coming from a knowledgeable communicator. Knowledge of strategic and technical communication practices is regarded as one of the three principle components of excellent communication.

The qualitative variables “highest qualification of the top communicator” and “number of years' experience of the top communicator in the communications field” were classified. Qualifications were classified into three categories: graduate qualification (degree or diploma), postgraduate qualification (higher diploma, honours degree, masters' degree, doctorate) and other qualifications (certificates, short courses, etc). Eighty-two respondents indicated that they had a graduate qualification, 84 indicated that they had a postgraduate qualification and 34 indicated that they had other qualifications. The mean score of these results was cross-tabulated with the mean score of “strategic contribution” to organisational decision-making to establish whether top communicators' qualifications could be an indicator of the strategic contribution they make to organisational decision-making.

The descriptive statistics indicated that most of the top communicators had between 10 and 19 years' experience, followed by one to nine years' experience. This indicates that most top communicators have less than 20 years' experience in the field of public relations. This finding has been cross-tabulated with the construct “strategic contribution” to determine whether the number of years' experience that top communicators have will influence the strategic contribution they make to organisational decision-making.

Figure 6.5 – Highest qualification of top communicators

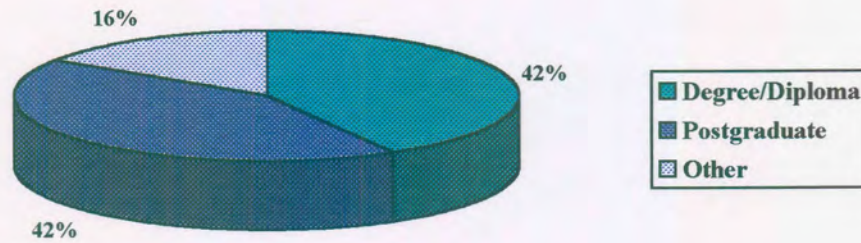
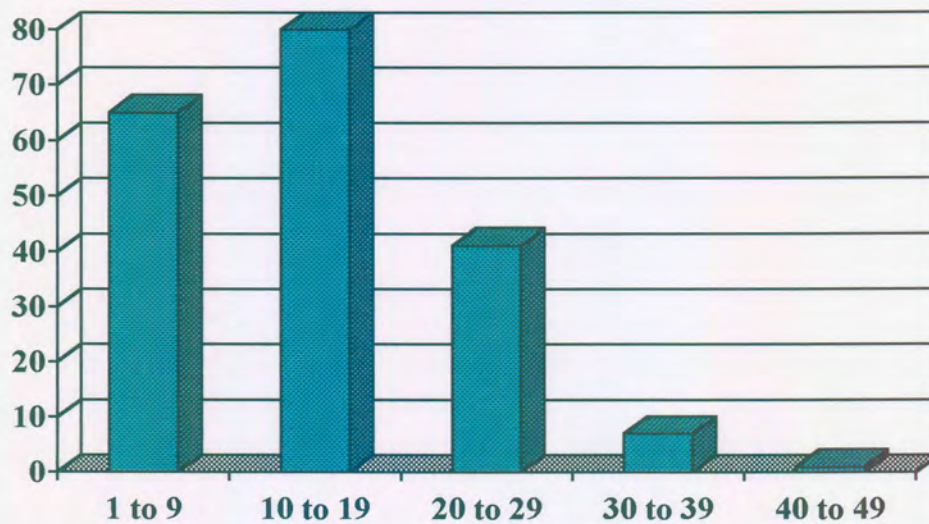


Figure 6.6 – Number of years' experience in the communication field



#### 6.2.1.4 Designation of the top communicator

This is a classification question to establish what the most popular titles of top communicators in organisations are. If they have titles with, for example, marketing as part of the title, this would be an indication of the role marketing principles play in the decisions that top communicators make. Encroachment by individuals from other disciplines could also be established.

However, this item was not considered for measurement, because of the difficulty in classifying the responses to this open-ended question. The findings would also not contribute significantly to the objectives of this study.

The descriptive statistics for the three measuring instruments that were developed, namely Sections A, B and C, will be discussed next.

### **6.3 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS: SECTIONS A, B AND C**

The three sections in the measuring instrument represent the following:

- Section A: Power of the communication department and the top communicator.
- Section B: The use of one-way and two-way public relations models in communication activities and organisational decision-making.
- Section C: The public relations manager and/or public relations technician role the top communicator predominantly plays.

The averages, standard deviations and Top2Box% and Low2Box% were calculated for the sample data. The three sections in the measuring instrument (Section A, B and C) will now be discussed separately. Scores in the three sections will be compared in a summary.

#### **6.3.1 Section A of the measuring instrument**

In Chapter 2, the power of the communication department and the top communicator was discussed as manifested in the value top management attributes to the communication department and the top communicator and the strategic contribution communicators make to organisational decision-making.

Value and support come to those communication departments that prove their worth to senior management by their strategic contributions.



Communication departments need power within senior management in order to make strategic contributions. (Dozier et al, 1995:75-88).

Communicators are linked to top management in organisations with excellent programmes by a set of shared expectations about communication management in the organisation – the role communication plays in the overall management of the organisation and the way in which communication can benefit the organisation. Both CEOs and top communicators must agree about the role communication should play in the organisation. Ambiguity and uncertainty about the value and support of communication diminishes the department's ability to contribute (Dozier et al, 1995:14-88).

The three self-explanatory items with the highest average score in the measuring instrument, indicating the three most important responses (as indicated in Table 6.1), were:

1. You readily have access to senior management. (83.23)
2. Senior management expects the communication department to manage its own programme in line with the principles of strategic management. (77.08)
3. Senior management expects you to contribute towards effectiveness by helping the organisation to meet its goals. (76.93)

It can be assumed from these results that it is the perception of top communicators that they have ready access to senior management, which is an important prerequisite for making a strategic contribution to organisational decision-making. It is also clear that senior management expects the top communicator to manage the communication function strategically by managing the communication programme in line with the principles of strategic management and by contributing towards effectiveness by helping the organisation to meet its goals.

The Top2Box% and Low2Box% indicate the highest and lowest percentages of responses in the top and lower sections of the measuring instrument. The three highest percentages in the Top2Box% measurements were:

1. You readily have access to senior management. (61.88%)
2. Senior management expects you to contribute towards effectiveness by helping the organisation to meet its goals. (40.1%)
3. Senior management expects the communications department to manage its own programme in line with the principles of strategic management. (39.6%)

These results confirm the results obtained from the average scores and indicate that it can be assumed that it is the perception of top communicators that they have ready access to senior management, and that senior management expects them to manage the communication function strategically.

The three highest percentages in the Low2Box% measurements were:

1. You are in a position to influence key strategic decisions of senior management. (11.88%)
2. Senior management expects you to use (formal and informal) research techniques to monitor trends in the organisation's environment for use in business decision-making. (8.42%)
3. Senior management values your input before they make decisions. (6.93%)

According to these results, it can be assumed that it is the perception of top communicators that they are not in a favourable position to influence key strategic decisions and that senior management does not expect them to use research to monitor trends for use in business decision-making. Senior management does not necessarily ask for the input of top communicators before decisions are made, either.

Table 6.1 – Descriptive statistics for Section A of the measuring instrument

	Statement	Average	Standard deviation	Top2-Box%	Low2-Box%
V2	1. Senior management supports the communication function in your organisation	74.36	20.54	31.19%	0.99%
V3	2. Senior management recognises that communication can make a strategic contribution.	70.50	24.14	32.67%	2.48%
V4	3. You readily have access to senior management.	83.23	21.52	61.88%	1.98%
V5	4. Senior management values your input before they make decisions.	61.78	26.52	18.81%	6.93%
V6	5. Senior management expects you to make communication decisions fairly autonomously.	69.31	21.03	24.26%	1.98%
V7	6. Senior management expects you to contribute towards effectiveness by helping the organisation to meet its goals.	76.93	20.96	40.10%	0.99%
V8	7. Senior management expects the communication department to manage its own programme in line with the principles of strategic management.	77.08	20.51	39.60%	1.98%
V9	8. Senior management expects you to work closely with them to solve organisational problems that involve relationships with target audiences.	68.02	26.56	29.70%	6.44%
V10	9. Senior management expects you to use (formal and informal) research techniques to monitor trends in the organisation's environment for use in business decision-making.	59.75	27.32	20.30%	8.42%
V11	10. You are in a position to influence key strategic decisions of senior management.	61.00	29.48	24.26%	11.88%

### 6.3.2 Section B of the measuring instrument

In Chapter 3, the shared expectations between the top communicator and top management with regard to the use of the four public relations models in communication activities and organisational decision-making were discussed. It was concluded that organisations that achieve excellence have communication departments with the expertise for both traditional one-way and advanced two-way communication to negotiate and persuade both senior management and publics toward mutually beneficial relationships. However, communication departments need CEOs and top managements that understand such practices and expect them from their communication departments.

Dozier et al (1995:102) furthermore contended that organisations with high overall excellence scores in the *Excellence Study* reported a strong preference for two-way symmetrical and two-way asymmetrical practices. Top communicators in these same excellent organisations also reported high top management demand for two-way symmetrical and two-way asymmetrical practices. Furthermore, communication departments in excellent organisations know how to deliver these practices. Such shared expectations presuppose new communication expertise.

The three items with the highest average score, were:

1. Senior management believes that it is your task to prepare news stories that reporters will use. (69.85)
2. Senior management believes it is the role of communication to facilitate mutual understanding between the management of the organisation and the publics the organisation affects. (69.46)
3. Senior management believes you should make sure that the organisation's policies are described in ways its publics would be most likely to accept. (66.47)

According to these results, it can be assumed that it is the perception of top communicators that the media relations role is still considered very important to senior management. Apart from this one-way practice, the two-way symmetrical practice of facilitation with the aim of gaining mutual understanding between management and its publics is also considered important. Senior management furthermore considers it the top communicator's responsibility to use the two-way asymmetrical practice of making sure that the organisation's policies are described in ways its publics would be most likely to accept.

The *Excellence* team found that CEOs prefer their top public relations person to play a manager or communication liaison role rather than a technician role. However, they also preferred the media relations role. (The *Excellence* team thought this reflects top management's continuing preoccupation with the media, despite much evidence

suggesting that the media plays a marginal rather than central part in the effectiveness of most organisations (Grunig, 1997:7.)

The three highest percentages in the Top2Box% measurements were:

1. Senior management believes that it is your task to prepare news stories that reporters will use. (34.65%)
2. Senior management believes it is the role of communication to facilitate mutual understanding between the management of the organisation and the publics the organisation affects. (32.18%)
3. Senior management believes that the purpose of communication is to prevent unfavourable publicity for your organisation in the media. (21.78%)

The importance of the media relations role is confirmed in the Top2Box% results. The first two statements confirm the results for the average scores, while the presence of the third statement further strengthens the perception that the media relations role is important, since management believes that the purpose of communication is to prevent unfavourable publicity for the organisation in the media.

The three highest percentages in the Low2Box% measurements were:

1. Senior management believes that it is only necessary to keep a clipping file to determine the success of public relations. (14.85%)
2. Senior management believes that after completing a communication programme, research should be done to determine how effective this programme has been in changing people's attitudes. (12.87%)
3. Senior management believes that the purpose of communication is to change the attitudes of management as much as it is to change the attitudes of publics. (11.39%)

These results indicate that one can assume that it is the perception of top communicators that senior management to a lesser extent believes that it is the purpose of communication to change the attitudes of management as much as it is to change the attitudes of publics. According to the literature, this two-way symmetrical approach is

one of the key indicators of excellence in communication practices, but it seems as though senior managements in South African organisations do not recognise this.

Although senior managements support the communication function to facilitate mutual understanding between the organisation and the publics the organisation affects (as indicated earlier), they do not believe that it is the purpose of communication to change the attitudes of management and of publics.

It can also be assumed that it is the perception of top communicators that senior management does not necessarily believe that research should be done after the completion of communication programmes to determine how effective the programme was in changing people's attitudes. However, it can be assumed that senior management believes that a clipping file is not the only way to determine the success of public relations.

*Table 6.2 – Descriptive statistics for Section B of the measuring instrument*

	<b>Statement</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Standard deviation</b>	<b>Top2-Box%</b>	<b>Low2-Box%</b>
V12	1. Senior management believes that the purpose of communication is predominantly to get your organisation's name into the media.	56.19	26.58	15.35%	8.91%
V13	2. Senior management believes that the success of communication is measured by the number of people who use your products or services.	60.00	25.22	17.82%	4.95%
V14	3. Senior management believes that the purpose of communication is to prevent unfavourable publicity for your organisation in the media.	59.41	27.09	21.78%	5.94%
V15	4. Senior management believes that it is your task to prepare news stories that reporters will use.	69.85	26.36	34.65%	3.96%
V16	5. Senior management believes that it is only necessary to keep a clipping file to determine the success of public relations.	43.61	27.23	6.44%	14.85%
V17	6. Senior management believes that the top communicator is a neutral disseminator of information.	52.80	26.09	12.38%	8.91%
V18	7. Senior management believes that in communication, the broad goal is to persuade publics to behave as the organisation wants them to behave.	58.37	26.76	16.34%	8.91%

V19	8. Senior management believes that after completing a communication programme, research should be done to determine how effective this programme has been in changing people's attitudes.	53.51	27.12	10.89%	12.87%
V20	9. Senior management believes you should make sure that the organisation's policies are described in ways its publics would be most likely to accept.	66.47	23.30	21.29%	3.47%
V21	10. Senior management believes that the purpose of communication is to change the attitudes of management as much as it is to change the attitudes of publics.	56.08	28.42	15.35%	11.39%
V22	11. Senior management believes it is the role of communication to facilitate mutual understanding between the management of the organisation and the publics the organisation affects.	69.46	24.84	32.18%	3.47%
V23	12. Senior management believes communication should provide mediation opportunities to help management and publics negotiate conflict.	55.97	27.70	16.34%	8.42%

### 6.3.3 Section C of the measuring instrument

In Section C, the public relations technician and/or public relations manager role the top communicator plays in the organisation was addressed. According to Dozier et al (1995:107), changing the roles that top communicators play in the organisation provides the most direct path to excellence. Top communication departments identified in the *Excellence Study* combine knowledge of both manager and technician roles to provide the requisite foundation for excellence. To actually achieve excellence, however, top communicators must play advanced organisational roles of communication manager and senior adviser.

The *Excellence* team proposed that excellent departments would be headed by senior managers and staffed by technicians skilled in the craft of the field. They also found that CEOs prefer their top public relations person to play a manager or communication liaison role rather than a technician role. Top managements in these organisations support the communication function and value the communication department. Communication makes substantial contributions to strategic management and planning

in these organisations (Grunig, L, 1997:7; White & Mazur, 1995:37; Dozier et al, 1995:113).

The three items with the highest average score, as indicated in Table 6.3, were:

1. Senior management expects you to take responsibility for the success or failure of your organisation's communication programmes just as other managers take responsibility for their terrain. (81.19)
2. Senior management expects you to develop strategies for solving communication problems because of your experience and training. (77.52)
3. Senior management expects you to issue news releases. (76.07)

According to these results, it can be assumed that it is the perception of top communicators that senior management expects them to play a public relations manager role by taking responsibility for the success or failure of communication programmes and by developing strategies for solving communication problems. However, it can once again be assumed that senior management considers the media relations role as important, because of the perception that senior management expects top communicators to issue news releases.

The three highest percentages in the Top2Box% measurements were:

1. Senior management expects you to issue news releases. (50.99%)
2. Senior management expects you to take responsibility for the success or failure of your organisation's communication programmes just as other managers take responsibility for their terrain. (50%)
3. Senior management expects you to develop strategies for solving communication problems because of your experience and training. (47.52%)

It can again be assumed that senior management considers the media relations role to be important. However, apart from the importance of this technical one-way practice, it is the perception of top communicators that senior management also wants them to play the public relations manager role, as they expect them to take responsibility for the success or failure of communication programmes and to develop strategies for solving communication problems.



The three highest percentages in the Low2Box% measurements were:

1. Senior management expects you to edit the grammar and spelling of the material written by others in the organisation. (12.38%)
2. Senior management expects you to predominantly write communication material such as speeches, articles, advertisements, etc. (8.42%)
3. Senior management expects you to create opportunities for management to hear the views of various (internal and external) publics. (8.42%)

These results indicate that it can be assumed that it is the perception of top communicators that senior management does not necessarily expect them to create opportunities for management to hear the views of various internal and external publics. It also indicates that senior management does not necessarily expect top communicators to write communication material such as speeches, articles and advertisements or to edit the grammar and spelling of the material written by others in the organisation.

*Table 6.3 – Descriptive statistics for Section C of the measuring instrument*

	<b>Statement</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Standard deviation</b>	<b>Top2-Box%</b>	<b>Low2-Box%</b>
V24	1. Senior management expects you to predominantly write communication material such as speeches, articles, advertisements, etc.	62.52	28.25	24.26%	8.42%
V25	2. Senior management expects you to produce brochures.	70.55	28.55	39.11%	5.94%
V26	3. Senior management expects you to edit the grammar and spelling of the material written by others in the organisation.	59.11	30.68	27.23%	12.38%
V27	4. Senior management expects you to use your journalistic skills to establish what the media will consider newsworthy about your organisation.	72.77	25.88	38.12%	4.95%
V28	5. Senior management expects you to issue news releases.	76.07	27.73	50.99%	4.46%
V29	6. Senior management expects you to keep others in the organisation informed of what the media report about important issues.	72.29	27.55	38.12%	6.44%
V30	7. Senior management expects you to take responsibility for the success or failure of your organisation's communication programmes just as other managers take responsibility for their terrain.	81.19	20.14	50.00%	1.98%

V31	8. Senior management expects you to develop strategies for solving communication problems because of your experience and training.	77.52	23.30	47.52%	2.48%
V32	9. Senior management expects you to make communication policy decisions.	71.68	25.98	39.11%	4.46%
V33	10. Senior management expects you to act as counsel to top decision-makers when communication issues are involved.	69.15	27.74	35.15%	6.44%
V34	11. Senior management expects you to create opportunities for management to hear the views of various (internal and external) publics.	63.51	28.41	26.24%	8.42%
V35	12. Senior management expects you to represent the organisation at events or evenings.	75.79	23.87	42.57%	2.97%

### 6.3.4 Comparison between results for Sections A, B and C

The highest average scores for the total measuring instrument are the following:

1. You readily have access to senior management (83.23)
2. Senior management expects you to take responsibility for the success or failure of your organisation's communication programmes just as other managers take responsibility for their terrain. (81.19)
3. Senior management expects you to develop strategies for solving communication problems because of your experience and training. (77.52)

From these results, it can be assumed that the strongest perception of top communicators is that they readily have access to senior management. Senior management also expects them to play the public relations manager role by taking responsibility for the success or failure of the organisation's communication programmes, just as other managers take responsibility for their terrain, and to develop strategies for solving communication problems because of their experience and training.

The highest scores for the Top2-Box% for the total measuring instrument are the following:

1. You readily have access to senior management. (61.88%)
2. Senior management expects you to issue news releases. (50.99%)

3. Senior management expects you to take responsibility for the success or failure of your organisation's communication programmes just as other managers take responsibility for their terrain. (50%)

It can be assumed that the strongest perception is again the one that top communicators readily have access to senior management. Senior management also expects top communicators to take responsibility for the success or failure of the organisation's communication programmes just as other managers take responsibility for their terrain. However, apart from these two communication management functions, the technical function of issuing new releases is also considered important, which once again confirms the importance of the media relations role on this level.

The highest scores for the Low2Box% for the total measuring instrument are the following:

1. Senior management believes that it is only necessary to keep a clipping file to determine the success of public relations. (14.85%)
2. Senior management believes that after completing a communication programme, research should be done to determine how effective this programme has been in changing people's attitudes. (12.87%)
3. Senior management expects you to edit the grammar and spelling of the material written by others in the organisation. (12.38%)

According to these results, it can be assumed that it is the perception of top communicators that senior management does not necessarily believe that it is only necessary to keep a clipping file to determine the success of public relations. Senior management does not necessarily believe that research should be done to determine how effective a communication programme was in changing people's attitudes, either, and they do not necessarily expect top communicators to edit the grammar and spelling of the material written by others in the organisation.

The analysis to determine the reliability of the measuring instrument will be discussed next.

## 6.4 RELIABILITY ANALYSIS

A measuring instrument consists of a set of measuring scales that organise and transform information to numerical data. Multiple measures of constructs were used for the measuring instrument for this study, which help to capture more of what is meant by the construct (Broom & Dozier, 1990:165). The concept “shared expectations” is built up out of multiple constructs, of which three were identified for this study. A multi-item battery was developed to measure these constructs. (Appendix A)

The process followed to construct the scale was the following:

- The constructs that had to be measured were established. The constructs that form the building blocks for the concept “shared expectations” are “power” (value attached to the communication function and strategic contribution made to organisational decision-making); the “shared expectations with regard to the use of the four public relations models” (the press agency model, the public information model, the two-way asymmetrical model and the two-way symmetrical model); and the “public relations manager role” and “public relations technician role”.
- A multi-item battery of the possible scales to measure each construct was compiled. Each of the constructs that were conceptually defined in Chapters 2, 3 and 4 was changed into measurable variables in Chapter 5.
- Through a process of pre-testing, as described in Chapter 5, the final set of scales was chosen.

The above steps were followed to ensure a reliable and valid measuring instrument.

A complete measuring instrument, divided into three sections representing the three constructs, was developed.

The three sections are treated as three measuring instruments combined into one. Section A (Power), Section B (Models) and Section C (Roles) each measures a construct in the form of a multi-item battery which was subjected to measurement on

an agreement scale. A fourth division collected demographic data of respondents and consisted of open questions.

The internal consistency of the individual items on the three measuring instruments that form part of the overall measuring instrument was, amongst others, measured by means of an item-to-total correlation (the correlation of the item to the summated scale score). The item-to-total correlation should exceed .50. Items that threatened the internal stability of the instrument were eliminated.

The other statistical method used in the reliability analysis was for determining the Cronbach's alpha. The reliability coefficient, Cronbach's alpha, assesses the consistency of the entire scale. A reliability coefficient of 0.9 or higher is extremely good, between 0.8 and 0.89 is good, while a reliability coefficient of between 0.7 and .79 is fair.

The total measuring instrument, consisting of 34 items, will be discussed in the three sections it has been divided into.

#### **6.4.1 Section A of the measuring instrument**

The first measuring instrument (Section A of the questionnaire) consisted of 10 items representing the “value top management attaches to the top communicator and the communication department” (items 1 to 5) and “the strategic contribution the top communicator makes to organisational decision-making” (items 6 to 10). All items in this Section had an item-to-total correlation of above .50, which indicates a good correlation of the item to the summated scale score. No item threatened the internal consistency of this measuring instrument and all items were included in the instrument for final measurement.

The Cronbach's alpha for all items was high, and the standardised alpha for variables V2 to V11 was **.936152**, which can be regarded as extremely good (Table 6.4). This indicates a high reliability for this measuring instrument.

Table 6.4 – Total measuring instrument for Section A

Summary for scale: Mean = 701.950			
Standard deviation = 191.024			
Valid N:202			
Cronbach alpha: .934996			
<b>Standardised alpha: .936152</b>			
Variables		Item-total correlation	Alpha if deleted
V2	1. Senior management supports the communication function in your organisation.	0.756938	0.928042
V3	2. Senior management recognises that communication can make a strategic contribution.	0.810653	0.924735
V4	3. You readily have access to senior management.	0.6048	0.934446
V5	4. Senior management values your input before they make decisions.	0.824815	0.923836
V6	5. Senior management expects you to make communication decisions fairly autonomously.	0.597916	0.934706
V7	6. Senior management expects you to contribute towards effectiveness by helping the organisation to meet its goals.	0.766241	0.927518
V8	7. Senior management expects the communication department to manage its own programme in line with the principles of strategic management.	0.765548	0.927683
V9	8. Senior management expects you to work closely with them to solve organisational problems that involve relationships with target audiences.	0.846885	0.922596
V10	9. Senior management expects you to use (formal and informal) research techniques to monitor trends in the organisation's environment for use in business decision-making.	0.654037	0.933487
V11	10. You are in a position to influence key strategic decisions of senior management.	0.823815	0.924342

### 6.4.2 Section B of the measuring instrument

The second measuring instrument consisted of 12 items representing the four public relations models. Although only the two broad categories of one-way models and two-way models were used for hypothesis formulation, the items in the measuring instrument were arranged in the following manner:

- Press agency model: Items 1 to 3
- Public information model: Items 4 to 6
- Two-way asymmetrical model: Items 7 to 9
- Two-way symmetrical model: Items 10 to 12

The items for the press agency and public information models were grouped together to form the variables for the one-way models and the items for the two-way asymmetrical and two-way symmetrical models were grouped together to form the variables for the two-way models.

In the second measuring instrument (Section B of the questionnaire) shown below in Table 6.5, the original standardised alpha was **.785051** and only four items originally had an item-to-total correlation of above .50. Two items, V17 and V18, threatened the internal stability of this measuring instrument and were eliminated. This increased the item-to-total correlation of all the items to above .50, except for V13 and V20 (as indicated in Table 6.6 and Table 6.7 below).

After the elimination of items V17 and V18, the standardised Cronbach's alpha for variables V12 to V16 (one-way models) increased to **.819267** and for variables V19 to V23 (two-way models) to **.826477** as shown in Table 6.6 and Table 6.7 respectively.

*Table 6.5 – Total measuring instrument for Section B*

Summary for scale: Mean = 701.714			
Standard deviation = 172.069			
Valid N:202			
Cronbach alpha: .782899			
<b>Standardised alpha: .785051</b>			
<b>Variables</b>		<b>Item-total correlation</b>	<b>Alpha if deleted</b>
V12	1. Senior management believes that the purpose of communication is predominantly to get your organisation's name in the media.	0.425736	0.767277
V13	2. Senior management believes that the success of communication is measured by the number of people who use your products or services.	0.472307	0.762739
V14	3. Senior management believes that the purpose of communication is to prevent unfavourable publicity for your organisation in the media.	0.549379	0.753946
V15	4. Senior management believes that it is your task to prepare news stories that reporters will use.	0.542343	0.755064
V16	5. Senior management believes that it is only necessary to keep a clipping file to determine the success of public relations.	0.340802	0.77621
V17	6. Senior management believes that the top communicator is a neutral disseminator of information.	0.485393	0.761195

V18	7. Senior management believes that in communication, the broad goal is to persuade publics to behave as the organisation wants them to behave.	0.501933	0.759219
V19	8. Senior management believes that after completing a communication programme, research should be done to determine how effective this programme has been in changing people's attitudes.	0.37207	0.772947
V20	9. Senior management believes you should make sure that the organisation's policies are described in ways its publics would be most likely to accept.	0.522735	0.758808
V21	10. Senior management believes that the purpose of communication is to change the attitudes of management as much as it is to change the attitudes of publics.	0.220176	0.789306
V22	11. Senior management believes it is the role of communication to facilitate mutual understanding between the management of the organisation and the publics the organisation affects.	0.253835	0.783647
V23	12. Senior management believes communication should provide mediation opportunities to help management and publics negotiate conflict.	0.412879	0.768699

Table 6.6 – Dimensional reliability for V12 to V16 (One-way models)

<p>Summary for scale: Mean = 289.059</p> <p>Standard deviation = 101.047</p> <p>Valid N:202</p> <p>Cronbach alpha: .819968</p> <p><b>Standardised alpha: .819267</b></p>			
Variables		Item-total correlation	Alpha if deleted
V12	1. Senior management believes that the purpose of communication is predominantly to get your organisation's name in the media.	0.729262	0.74891
V13	2. Senior management believes that the success of communication is measured by the number of people who use your products or services.	0.495881	0.816411
V14	3. Senior management believes that the purpose of communication is to prevent unfavourable publicity for your organisation in the media.	0.687586	0.761403
V15	4. Senior management believes that it is your task to prepare news stories that reporters will use.	0.602102	0.787425
V16	5. Senior management believes that it is only necessary to keep a clipping file to determine the success of public relations.	0.551847	0.802568



Table 6.7 – Dimensional reliability for V19 to V23 (Two-way models)

Summary for scale: Mean = 301.488			
Standard deviation = 101.221			
Valid N:202			
Cronbach alpha: .828267			
Standardised alpha: .826477			
Variables		Item-total correlation	Alpha if deleted
V19	8. Senior management believes that after completing a communication programme, research should be done to determine how effective this programme has been in changing people's attitudes.	0.631479	0.792254
V20	9. Senior management believes you should make sure that the organisation's policies are described in ways its publics would be most likely to accept.	0.451162	0.837804
V21	10. Senior management believes that the purpose of communication is to change the attitudes of management as much as it is to change the attitudes of publics.	0.643976	0.788905
V22	11. Senior management believes it is the role of communication to facilitate mutual understanding between the management of the organisation and the publics the organisation affects.	0.689017	0.776924
V23	12. Senior management believes communication should provide mediation opportunities to help management and publics negotiate conflict.	0.716826	0.766067

### 6.4.3 Section C of the measuring instrument

This measuring instrument contained 12 variables representing the constructs “public relations technician role” (items 1 to 6) and “public relations manager role” (items 7 to 12). The standardised alpha value was **.821259** and five items had an item-to-total correlation of above .50 (Table 6.8). Two items, V29 and V35, threatened the internal stability and were eliminated. This increased the item-to-total correlation of all the items to above .50, as indicated in Table 6.9 and Table 6.10.

Eliminating the two items also increased the Cronbach's alpha value. The standardised alpha for variables V24 to V28 (public relations technician role) increased to **.838273** (Table 6.9) and for variables V30 to V34 (public relations manager role) it increased to **.870115** (Table 6.10), which can be considered good.

Table 6.8 – Total measuring instrument for Section C

Summary for scale: Mean = 852.173			
Standard deviation = 183.597			
Valid N:202			
Cronbach alpha: .815920			
<b>Standardised alpha: .821259</b>			
Average inter-item correlation: .296094			
Variables		Item-total correlation	Alpha if deleted
V24	1. Senior management expects you to predominantly write communication material such as speeches, articles, advertisements, etc.	0.409259	0.807713
V25	2. Senior management expects you to produce brochures.	0.357623	0.812442
V26	3. Senior management expects you to edit the grammar and spelling of the material written by others in the organisation.	0.411915	0.808379
V27	4. Senior management expects you to use your journalistic skills to establish what the media will consider newsworthy about your organisation.	0.621078	0.789051
V28	5. Senior management expects you to issue news releases.	0.467127	0.802359
V29	6. Senior management expects you to keep others in the organisation informed of what the media reports about important issues.	0.544258	0.795337
V30	7. Senior management expects you to take responsibility for the success or failure of your organisation's communication programmes just as other managers take responsibility for their terrain.	0.536925	0.799167
V31	8. Senior management expects you to develop strategies for solving communication problems because of your experience and training.	0.550921	0.79628
V32	9. Senior management expects you to make communication policy decisions.	0.500684	0.799483
V33	10. Senior management expects you to act as counsel to top decision-makers when communication issues are involved.	0.459201	0.80307
V34	11. Senior management expects you to create opportunities for management to hear the views of various (internal and external) publics.	0.445285	0.804452
V35	12. Senior management expects you to represent the organisation at events or evenings.	0.358565	0.810931

Table 6.9 – Dimensional reliability for V24 to V28 (Public relations technician)

Summary for scale: Mean = 341.026 Standard deviation = 109.691 Valid N:202 Cronbach alpha: .836342 <b>Standardised alpha: .838273</b>			
Variables		Item-total correlation	Alpha if deleted
V24	1. Senior management expects you to predominantly write communication material such as speeches, articles, advertisements, etc.	0.695238	0.7871
V25	2. Senior management expects you to produce brochures.	0.679343	0.79157
V26	3. Senior management expects you to edit the grammar and spelling of the material written by others in the organisation.	0.564271	0.826274
V27	4. Senior management expects you to use your journalistic skills to establish what the media will consider newsworthy about your organisation.	0.643925	0.802686
V28	5. Senior management expects you to issue news releases.	0.61747	0.808891

Table 6.10 – Dimensional reliability for V30 to V34 (Public relations manager)

Summary for scale: Mean = 363.067 Standard deviation = 102.193 Valid N:202 Cronbach alpha: .868136 <b>Standardised alpha: .870115</b>			
Variable		Item-total correlation	Alpha if deleted
V30	7. Senior management expects you to take responsibility for the success or failure of your organisation's communication programmes just as other managers take responsibility for their terrain.	0.547854	0.872511
V31	8. Senior management expects you to develop strategies for solving communication problems because of your experience and training.	0.795454	0.816927
V32	9. Senior management expects you to make communication policy decisions.	0.744641	0.826728
V33	10. Senior management expects you to act as counsel to top decision-makers when communication issues are involved	0.793261	0.813268
V34	11. Senior management expects you to create opportunities for management to hear the views of various (internal and external) publics.	0.611767	0.864307

#### 6.4.4 Summary of results of reliability analysis

With reference to the above explanation of the calculation of the item-to-total correlation and the Cronbach's alpha, the overall reliability of the measuring instrument is considered to be above normal.

According to Hair et al (1998:117), reliability is an assessment of consistency between multiple measurements of a variable. In this study, two diagnostic measures of reliability were used, i.e. internal consistency, which applies to the consistency among the variables in a summated scale; and Cronbach's alpha, which is the reliability coefficient that assesses the consistency of the entire scale.

The rationale for internal consistency is that the individual items or indicators of the scale should all measure the same construct and should thus be highly intercorrelated. The individual items for the three constructs "power", "shared expectations with regard to the use of one-way and two-way models" and "role-playing" were measured separately. Rules of thumb suggest that the item-to-total correlations exceed .50 (Hair et al, 1998:118).

The item-to-total correlation of Section A of the measuring instrument was above .50 for all the items; for Section B it was above .50 for all the items, except for V13 and V20; and for Section C it was above 0.50 for all the items.

The Cronbach's alpha values for the complete measuring instrument were between **.936152** and **.819267** (See Table 6.11). According to Du Plooy (1996:72), a reliability coefficient of 0.9 or higher is excellent and between 0.8 and 0.89 is good.

The results of the reliability analysis for this measuring instrument indicate that it complies with internal and external reliability requirements. The measuring instrument complies with internal reliability requirements, which indicates that the data collection, analysis and interpretation are consistent, and should be consistent in similar studies, given the same conditions.

It also complies with external reliability requirements, which indicates that independent researchers can replicate the study in the same or similar settings and obtain similar results (Du Plooy, 1996:31; Bailey, 1987:71; Grunig L, in Broom & Dozier, 1990:169). For the purpose of developing a measuring instrument, the internal consistency is the most important consideration.

*Table 6.11 – Cronbach’s alpha values for the total measuring instrument*

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Standardised alpha</b>
<b>Section A</b>	
V2 to V11: Strategic contribution	<b>.936152</b>
<b>Section B</b>	
V12 to V16: One-way public relations models	<b>.819267</b>
V19 to V23: Two-way public relations models	<b>.826477</b>
<b>Section C</b>	
V24 to V28: Public relations technician role	<b>.838273</b>
V30 to V34: Public relations manager role	<b>.870115</b>

## **6.5 VALIDITY ANALYSIS**

Factor analysis was used as a deductive approach in hypothesising about the relationships that exist between factors. The data analysis was aimed at determining the dimensions underlying the measurement obtained by means of the questionnaire. According to Hair et al (1998:97), factor analysis is most efficient when conceptually defined dimensions can be represented by the derived factors.

In this study, issues such as which variables should be grouped together on a factor and the precise number of factors to be extracted, were addressed. In this instance factor analysis takes a confirmatory approach – i.e., assesses the degree to which the data meets the expected structure.

Predetermined criteria such as percentage of variance, latent root criterion and a scree test were used to decide when to stop factoring and to arrive at a specific number of factors to extract (Hair et al, 1998:103).

As a first step principal components analysis, the method used for factor analysis in this study was carried out by means of the software package *Statistica*. This analysis was used as the objective was to summarise most of the original information (variance) in a minimum number of factors for prediction purposes.

Principal components analysis focuses on the total variance (i.e. the entire variation in the data set) and seeks to reduce the original set of variables into a smaller set of composite variables (called principle components) which are uncorrelated (Diamantopoulos & Schlegelmilch, 1997:216).

The scree option was used in all cases. The scree test is derived by plotting the latent roots against the number of factors in their order of extraction. The shape of the resulting curve is used to evaluate the cut-off point.

The following stepping criteria for the number of factors to extract have been utilised:  
Latent root/eigenvalue criterion: Eigenvalues are the sum of the variances of the factor values. When divided by the number of variables, an eigenvalue yields an estimate of the amount of total variance explained by the factor. Only factors having eigenvalues greater than 1 were considered significant; all factors with latent roots less than 1 were considered insignificant and were disregarded (Hair et al, 1998:104).

Percentage of variance criterion: The percentage of variance criterion is an approach based on achieving a specified cumulative percentage of total variance extracted by successive factors (Hair et al, 1998:105). This ensures that they explain at least a specified amount of variance.

Scree test criterion: The scree test is used to identify the optimum number of factors that can be extracted before the amount of unique variance begins to dominate the common variance structure (Hair et al, 1998:104).

Numerical results for the factor analysis are shown in Tables 6.12 to 6.18 below, while the scree tests are shown in Figures 6.7 to 6.9. The values in the tables for Section A,

B and C of the questionnaire are correlation coefficients (loadings) between the factor and the variables.

An unrotated factor solution was considered sufficient for Section A. The Varimax normalised rotational method was used for Section B and Section C. As an orthogonal rotation method, the Varimax criterion centres on simplifying the columns of the factor matrix. This method maximises the sum of variances of required loadings of the factor matrix. Interpretation is easiest when the variable-factor correlations are (1) close to either +1 or -1, thus indicating a clear positive or negative association between the variable and the factor or (2) close to 0, indicating a clear lack of association (Hair et al, 1998:109).

Factor loadings of  $\pm .50$  or larger, are considered practically significant. The larger the absolute size of the factor loading, the more important the loading in interpreting the factor matrix. A .30 loading translates to approximately 10% explanation, and a .50 loading denotes that 25% of the variance is accounted for by the factor. The loading must exceed .70 for the factor to account for 50% of the variance (Hair et al, 1998:111).

For a sample size of 202, a factor loading of .40 is significant according to Hair et al (1998:112). For Sections A, B and C, factor loadings of higher than .60 were considered significant.

### **6.5.1 Section A of the measuring instrument**

In Section A, the eigenvalue for **Factor 1** is **6.406358**. This factor accounts for 64% of the total variance.

In this case an unrotated factor solution was considered sufficient for interpreting the factors. Unrotated factor solutions extract factors in the order of their importance. One factor was extracted when the preliminary unrotated factor matrix was computed. The best linear combination was found, since the particular combination of all the

original variables accounts for more of the variance in the data as a whole than any other linear combination of variables (Hair et al, 1998:107). All variables, therefore, loaded high on the factor “strategic contribution” and none were deleted as shown in Tables 6.12 and 6.13.

Rotation was not done for these variables, as the eigenvalue for only one factor was very high and further rotation was not necessary (Hair et al, 1998:107).

A scree test, shown in Figure 6.7, was also used for this principle components analysis, from which it is clear that only one factor, “strategic contribution”, could be extracted. This one factor explained 64% of the total variance.

*Table 6.12 – Eigenvalues for Section A of the measuring instrument*

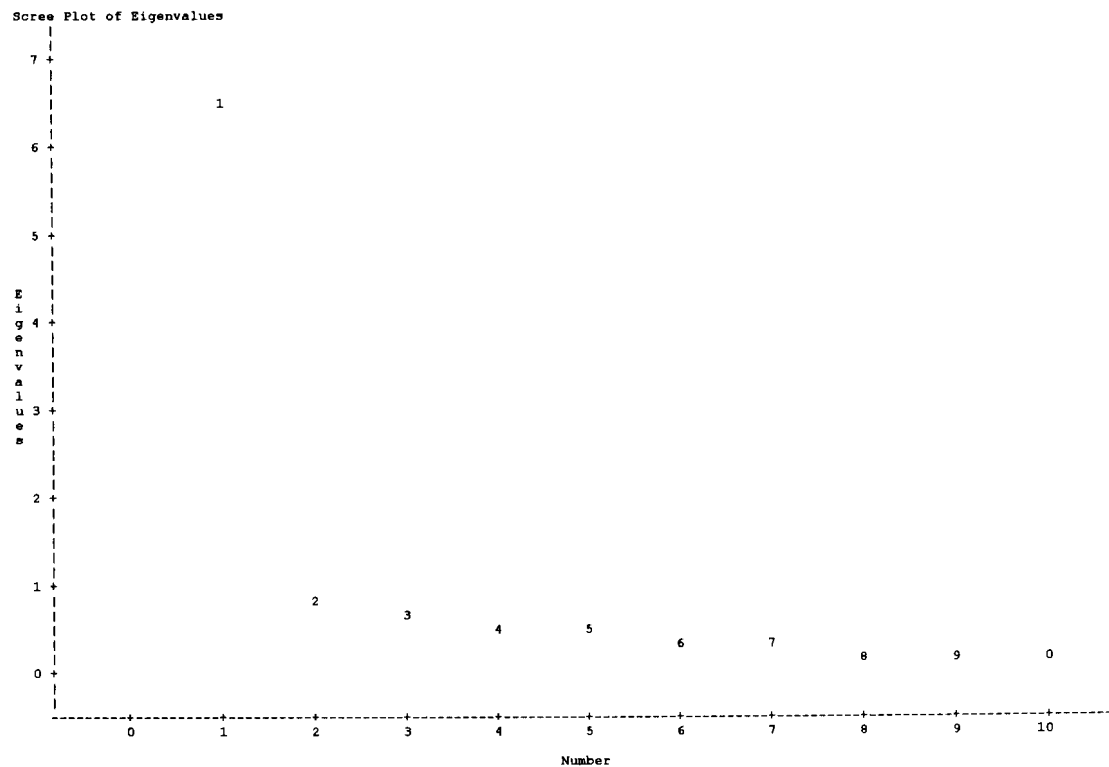
	<b>Eigenvalue</b>	<b>% total variance</b>	<b>Cumulative Eigenvalue</b>	<b>Cumulative %</b>
1	6.406358	64.06358	6.358406	64.06358

*Table 6.13 – Factor loadings (Unrotated) for Section A of the measuring instrument*

<b>(Marked loadings are &gt;.700000)</b>		
<b>Variables</b>		<b>Factor 1</b>
V2	1. Senior management supports the communication function in your organisation.	0.812
V3	2. Senior management recognises that communication can make a strategic contribution.	0.860
V4	3. You readily have access to senior management.	0.675
V5	4. Senior management values your input before they make decisions.	0.864
V6	5. Senior management expects you to make communication decisions fairly autonomously.	0.665
V7	6. Senior management expects you to contribute towards effectiveness by helping the organisation to meet its goals.	0.816
V8	7. Senior management expects the communications department to manage its own programme in line with the principles of strategic management.	0.818
V9	8. Senior management expects you to work closely with them to solve organisational problems that involve relationships with target audiences.	0.883
V10	9. Senior management expects you to use (formal and informal) research techniques to monitor trends in the organisation’s environment for use in business decision-making.	0.713
V11	10. You are in a position to influence key strategic decisions of senior management.	0.861



Figure 6.7 - Scree plot for Section A of the measuring instrument



### 6.5.2 Section B of the measuring instrument

In Section B, the eigenvalue for **Factor 1** is **3.082499** and for **Factor 2** it is **3.056199**. The percentage of total variance was 30.82499 and 30.56199 respectively. The total variance for the two factors is therefore 61,4%. This indicates that these two factors explain 61,4% of the total variance.

For this Section, a rotated factor solution was used in the form of the orthogonal Varimax normalised rotational method. The first factor that was extracted can be regarded as the single best summary of linear relationships exhibited in the data (Hair et al, 1998:109). Variables V12 to V16, representing the one-way models, loaded on this factor. Variables V19 to V23, representing the two-way models, loaded favourably on the second factor which is defined as the second-best linear combination of the variables, subject to the constraint that it is orthogonal to the first factor. (Variables 17 and 18 had already been eliminated in the calculation of the Cronbach's alpha and were therefore not taken into account for this factor analysis.)

A scree test, shown in Figure 6.8, was also used for this principle components analysis, from which it is clear that two factors: one-way models (Factor 1) and two-way models (Factor 2), could be extracted.

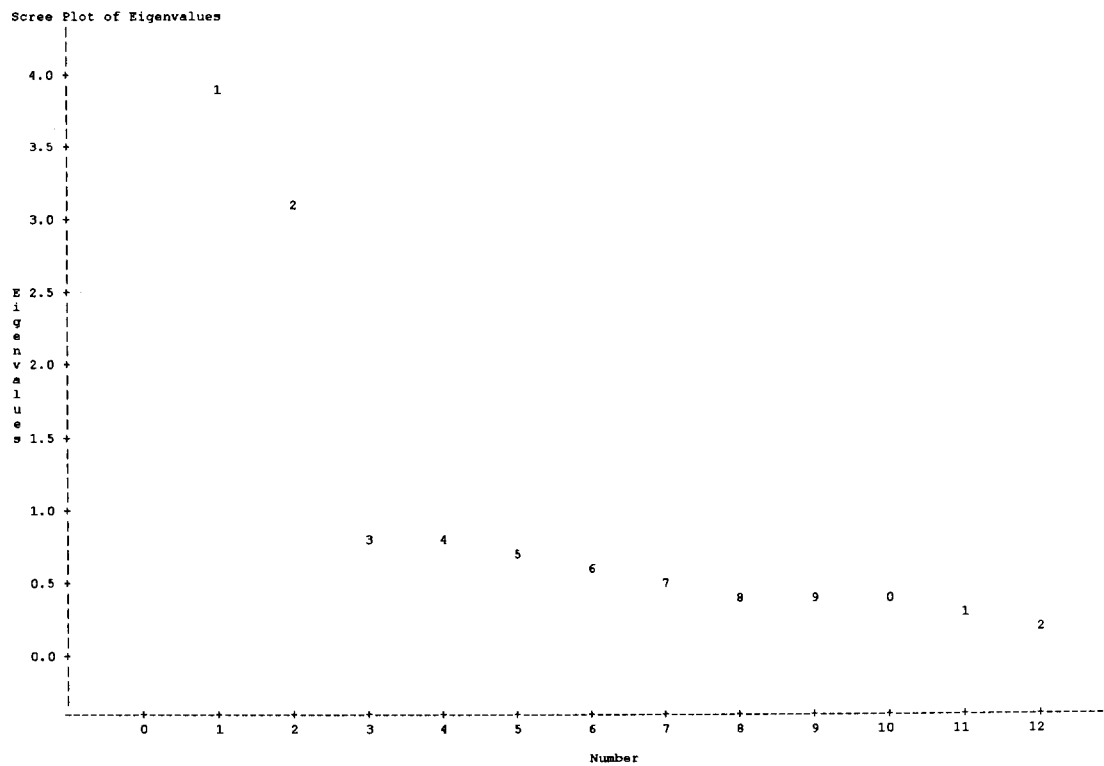
*Table 6.14 – Eigenvalues for Section B of the measuring instrument*

	<b>Eigenvalue</b>	<b>% total variance</b>	<b>Cumulative Eigenvalue</b>	<b>Cumulative %</b>
1	3.082499	30.82499	3.082499	30.82499
2	3.056199	30.56199	6.138698	61.38698

*Table 6.15 – Factor loadings (Varimax normalised) for Section B of the measuring instrument*

<b>(Marked loadings are &gt;.700000)</b>			
<b>Variables</b>		<b>Factor 1</b>	<b>Factor 2</b>
V12	1. Senior management believes that the purpose of communication is predominantly to get your organisation's name in the media.	<b>0.8434412</b>	
V13	2. Senior management believes that the success of communication is measured by the number of people who use your products or services.	<b>0.655527</b>	
V14	3. Senior management believes that the purpose of communication is to prevent unfavourable publicity for your organisation in the media.	<b>0.819299</b>	
V15	4. Senior management believes that it is your task to prepare news stories that reporters will use.	<b>0.764774</b>	
V16	5. Senior management believes that it is only necessary to keep a clipping file to determine the success of public relations.	<b>0.700053</b>	
V19	8. Senior management believes that after completing a communication programme, research should be done to determine how effective this programme has been in changing people's attitudes.		<b>0.77194</b>
V20	9. Senior management believes you should make sure that the organisation's policies are described in ways its publics would be most likely to accept.		<b>0.602812</b>
V21	10. Senior management believes that the purpose of communication is to change the attitudes of management as much as it is to change the attitudes of publics.		<b>0.787341</b>
V22	11. Senior management believes it is the role of communication to facilitate mutual understanding between the management of the organisation and the publics the organisation affects.		<b>0.821654</b>
V23	12. Senior management believes communication should provide mediation opportunities to help management and publics negotiate conflict.		<b>0.84347</b>
Expl.Var		3.082258	3.056439
Prp.Totl		0.308226	0.305644

Figure 6.8 - Scree plot for Section B of the measuring instrument



### 6.5.3 Section C of the measuring instrument

In Section C, the eigenvalue for **Factor 1** is **3.622883** and for **Factor 2** it is **2.881288**. The percentage of total variance is 36.22883 and 28.81288 respectively. The total variance for the two factors is therefore 65%. This indicates that these two factors explain 65% of the total variance.

For this Section, a rotated factor solution was again used in the form of the orthogonal Varimax normalised rotational method. Variables V30 to V34 loaded on the first factor and can be regarded as the single best summary of linear relationships exhibited in the data. This factor describes the public relations manager role. The second factor loaded on the variables describing the public relations technician role (V24 to V28), and represents a combination that accounts for a smaller amount of variance than Factor 1. (Variables V29 to V35 had already been eliminated in the calculation of the Cronbach's alpha and were not taken into account for this factor analysis.)

A scree test, shown in Figure 6.9, was also used for this principle components analysis, from which it is clear that two factors: the public relations manager role (Factor 1) and the public relations technician role (Factor 2), could be extracted.

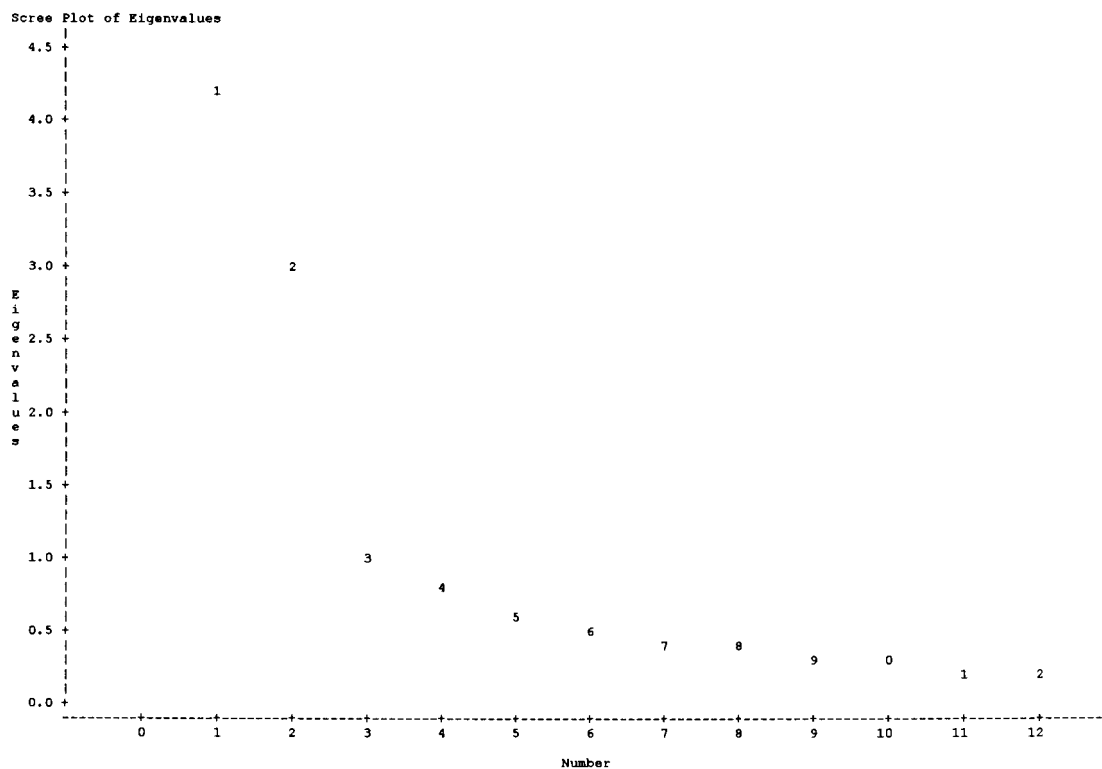
Table 6.16 – Eigenvalues for Section C of the measuring instrument

	<b>Eigenvalue</b>	<b>% total variance</b>	<b>Cumulative Eigenvalue</b>	<b>Cumulative %</b>
1	3.622883	36.22883	3.622883	36.22883
2	2.881288	28.81288	6.504171	65.04171

Table 6.17 – Factor loadings (Varimax normalised) for Section C of the measuring instrument

<b>(Marked loadings are &gt;.700000)</b>			
<b>Variables</b>		<b>Factor 1</b>	<b>Factor 2</b>
V24	1. Senior management expects you to predominantly write communication material such as speeches, articles, advertisements, etc.		<b>0.821</b>
V25	2. Senior management expects you to produce brochures.		<b>0.818</b>
V26	3. Senior management expects you to edit the grammar and spelling of the material written by others in the organisation.		<b>0.710</b>
V27	4. Senior management expects you to use your journalistic skills to establish what the media will consider newsworthy about your organisation.		<b>0.760</b>
V28	5. Senior management expects you to issue news releases.		<b>0.771</b>
V30	7. Senior management expects you to take responsibility for the success or failure of your organisation's communication programmes just as other managers take responsibility for their terrain.	<b>0.682</b>	
V31	8. Senior management expects you to develop strategies for solving communication problems because of your experience and training.	<b>0.882</b>	
V32	9. Senior management expects you to make communication policy decisions.	<b>0.853</b>	
V33	10. Senior management expects you to act as counsel to top decision-makers when communication issues are involved.	<b>0.877</b>	
V34	11. Senior management expects you to create opportunities for management to hear the views of various (internal and external) publics.	<b>0.745</b>	

Figure 6.9 – Scree plot for Section C of the measuring instrument



#### 6.5.4 Summary of results of validity analysis

A good indication of validity was made possible by a factor analysis of the measuring instrument. Through factor analysis it can be established whether the constructs or factors, as identified, measure what it is supposed to measure (Mouton & Marais, 1989:69).

Measurement validity, and more specifically construct validity, therefore confronts the question whether the instrument really measures the specific theoretical construct that is studied (Mouton & Marais, 1989:94; Du Plooy, 1996:75; Bailey, 1987:66-70). The measuring instrument must be able to differentiate the construct studied from any other similar construct (Diamantopoulos & Schlegelmilch, 1997:21; Cooper & Schindler, 1998:166-171).

To establish the construct validity for this measuring instrument, the instrument was related to the theoretical framework as discussed in the literature study to ensure that the measurement logically linked with other concepts in the framework.

All the items in Section A loaded favourably on Factor 1, strategic contribution, as extracted from the measuring instrument. By using the statistical method principal components analysis, and certain stepping criteria (eigenvalue criteria, percentage of variance criterion and scree test criterion), the one factor that could be extracted in Section A, accounted for 64% of the total variance.

The variables in Section B loaded favourably on two factors. The first factor that was extracted was regarded as the single best summary of linear relationships exhibited in the data. Variables V12 to V16, representing the one-way models, loaded on Factor 1, while variables V19 to V23, representing the two-way models, loaded favourably on Factor 2. The eigenvalues for these two factors were **3.082499** for Factor 1 and **3.056199** for Factor 2.

The variables in Section C loaded favourably on two factors. Variables V30 to V34, representing the construct public relations manager role, loaded on Factor 1, while variables V24 to V25 (public relations technician role) loaded on Factor 2. The eigenvalues for these two factors were **3.622883** for Factor 1 and **2.881288** for Factor 2.

This instrument can be regarded as valid, since the five factors that were extracted, explained 64% (Factor 1 in Section A), 61,4% (Factor 1 + Factor 2 in Section B) and 65% (Factor 1 + Factor 2 in Section C) of the total variance of the three measuring instruments respectively. The constructs or factors as identified can, therefore, be considered to be measuring what they are supposed to measure.

Table 6.18 – Summary of the results for factor analysis

Factors	Eigenvalue	% of total variance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Factor 1 extracted from measuring instrument A: Strategic contribution</li> </ul>	6.406358	64%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Factor 1 extracted from measuring instrument B: One-way public relations models</li> <li>Factor 2 extracted from measuring instrument B: Two-way public relations models</li> </ul>	3.082499 3.056199	61,4%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Factor 1 extracted from measuring instrument C: Public relations manager role</li> <li>Factor 2 extracted from measuring instrument C: Public relations technician role</li> </ul>	3.622883 2.881288	65%

### 6.5.5 Reliability and validity of the measuring instrument

When it is claimed that a measuring instrument is valid, it is at the same time implied that measurement is reliable, as reliability is a prerequisite for validity. The measuring instrument developed for this study can be regarded as reliable and valid, since the measurements for reliability (item-to-total correlation and Cronbach's alpha) and validity (factor analysis) were both above normal.

The item-to-total correlation for all the items, except two, was above .50 for the total measuring instrument; the Cronbach's alpha values for the total measuring instrument were between .936152 and .819267; and the five factors that were extracted from the measuring instrument, explained 64% (Factor 1 in Section A), 61,4% (Factor 1 + Factor 2 in Section B) and 65% (Factor 1 + Factor 2 in Section C) of the total variance of the three measuring instruments respectively.

## 6.6 HYPOTHESIS TESTING

The motivation for the formulation of hypotheses 1 to 12 was discussed in detail in Chapter 5. It was also stated in Chapter 5 that these hypotheses must be tested by using the statistical method ANOVA, which was also described. The procedure

followed in the ANOVA test in order to decide on the rejection or acceptance of the null hypothesis, is described in this Section. The procedure for the testing of hypotheses 1 to 12 can be described as follows:

The alternative hypothesis (i.e.  $H_1$ ) and the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) were stated. Where, as a result of testing, the null hypothesis was rejected, this was interpreted as signifying support for the alternative hypothesis. A statistical test was used in conjunction with a significance level to decide whether to accept or reject the null hypothesis (Diamantopoulos & Schlegelmilch, 1997:139).

The significance level is specified as a criterion for the rejection of the null hypothesis and indicates the maximum risk of rejecting the null hypothesis. It is specified as follows:

- For a 99% certainty level ( $\alpha = 0.01$ ), the non-directional null hypothesis 1 to 12 will be rejected if  $p < 0.01$ .
- For a 95% certainty level ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), the non-directional null hypothesis 1 to 12 will be rejected if  $p < 0.05$ .
- For a 90% certainty level ( $\alpha = 0.10$ ), the non-directional null hypothesis 1 to 12 will be rejected if  $p < 0.10$ .

For this study a 5% significance level (i.e. set  $\alpha = 0.05$ ) was selected to conduct all hypothesis tests. (The null hypothesis was only rejected when in fact it was true five times out of 100.)

The  $F$  distribution is also used to identify the acceptance or rejection area for the null hypothesis. This is done by reading the critical  $F$  value from the  $F$  distribution tables with the help of the degrees of freedom ( $df$ ).

Different tables exist for each significance level. The critical  $F$  values for  $\alpha = 0.05$ , as they will be used in this study and as they are indicated in the  $F$  table, are 3.00 (for degrees of freedom of 1) and 3.84 (for degrees of freedom of 2) (Steyn et al, 1999:686).



The  $F$  value is calculated by making use of the ANOVA technique in the *Statistica* software package. The  $F$  ratio was calculated by computer.

The associated  $p$ -value was also calculated. The  $p$ -value can be defined as the exceeding probability, in other words the probability that a Type 1 error will be made. A Type I error occurs when the null hypothesis is rejected while it is actually true. This  $p$ -value gives specific information on how far in the area of significance the result will be. It, therefore, has the same function as the critical  $F$  value (Diamantopoulos & Schlegelmilch, 1997:138-146).

When deciding to accept or reject the null hypothesis, the following two methods were used:

1. If the calculated  $F$  value was better (larger) than the critical  $F$  value as read from the  $F$  table, the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that there is a significant difference between population means. If the calculated  $F$  value was smaller than the critical  $F$  value, there was enough evidence not to reject the null hypothesis, in other words to accept that there is not a significant difference between the population means.
2. The  $p$ -value, as calculated, must be smaller than 0.05 (or 0.01 or 0.10) to reject the null hypothesis for a 95% (or 99% or 90%) certainty level respectively. If the calculated  $p$ -value was larger than 0.05 (or 0.01 or 0.10), the null hypothesis could not be rejected with a significance of 95% or 99% or 90% for the population.

The above steps were followed for each of the hypotheses to decide to accept or reject the null hypothesis. Although the calculated  $p$ -value is sufficient to take a decision, the critical  $F$  value and the calculated  $F$  value were also compared in this study.

The sums of squares ( $SS$ ), the mean squares ( $MS$ ) and the degrees of freedom ( $df$ ) are shown. Dividing the factor  $MS$  by the error  $MS$  produces the  $F$  statistic, followed by its significance level ( $p$ -value) in the last column (Siegel, 1997:595).

The following hypotheses are based on the perceptions of top communicators in South

African organisations about the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution made by the top communicator to organisational decision-making; the one-way and/or two-way models used by top communicators and communication departments in communication activities and organisational decision-making; and the public relations manager or public relations technician role senior management expects the top communicator to play in the organisation. The formulation of these hypotheses is guided by the research objectives as stated in Chapter 1.

### 6.6.1 Hypothesis 1 to 12

Hypotheses 1 to 12 will now be analysed and the results reported in detail.

#### Statistical analysis of Hypothesis 1

- H<sub>1</sub>: There is a significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the **strategic contribution** the top communicator predominantly playing the **public relations manager role** makes to organisational decision-making, and the expectations of senior management with regard to the **strategic contribution** the top communicator predominantly playing the **public relations technician role** makes to organisational decision-making.
- H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the **strategic contribution** the top communicator predominantly playing the **public relations manager role** makes to organisational decision-making, and the expectations of senior management with regard to the **strategic contribution** the top communicator predominantly playing the **public relations technician role** makes to organisational decision-making.

Table 6.19 - Test data for Hypothesis 1

<b>Summary table of means</b>	
<b>N = 202</b>	
<b>Strategic contribution</b>	
Both public relations manager role and public relations technician role	71.44
Public relations manager role	79.18
Public relations technician role	51.83

Table 6.20 - Results: Calculation of ANOVA for Hypothesis 1

<b>Analysis of variance</b>								
<b>Marked effects are significant at <math>p &lt; .05000</math></b>								
	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>		
	<i>Effect</i>	<i>Effect</i>	<i>Effect</i>	<i>Error</i>	<i>Error</i>	<i>Error</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Strategic contribution	18063.87	2	9031.936	55643.39	199	279.615	32.30133	0.00000

The perception of the top communicator in the South African organisation about senior management's expectations with regard to the strategic contribution the top communicator makes to organisational decision-making, was measured by items V2 to V11. These variables loaded favourably on Factor 1 (strategic contribution), as extracted from Section A of the measuring instrument.

The perception of the top communicator with regard to senior management's expectations of her to predominantly play the public relations manager role and/or the public relations technician role was measured by items V30 to V34 and V24 to V28 respectively.

The perception of the top communicator about senior management's expectations with regard to the role that she should predominantly play in the organisation and her strategic contribution to organisational decision-making, was established by calculating the means for responses indicating that the top communicator is expected to predominantly play the public relations manager role, or the public relations technician

role, or both, and cross-tabulating it with the mean for senior management's expectations with regard to the strategic contribution made by the top communicator.

The means in the above test data set for Hypothesis 1 indicate that senior management staff, to a greater extent, expect the top communicator predominantly playing the public relations manager role to make a strategic contribution to organisational decision-making (mean score, 79.18), than they expect the top communicator predominantly playing the public relations technician role to make a strategic contribution (mean score, 51.83).

The third category was created to establish the mean for top communicators predominantly expected to play both the public relations manager role and the public relations technician role. This was done by comparing the scores obtained for responses to items reflecting the public relations manager role and scores reflecting the public relations technician role. Scores that differed less than 20% were included in the category "both". It was assumed that scores that differed negatively by more than 20% indicated public relations manager role-playing, while scores that differed positively by more than 20% indicated public relations technician role-playing.

The mean score of 71.44 indicates that senior management staff, to a greater extent, expect the top communicator who plays both the manager and technician role to contribute strategically to organisational decision-making than they expect the top communicator playing the public relations technician role to make a strategic contribution.

Public relations manager role and strategic contribution correlates the highest, and the assumption can, therefore, be made that it is the perception of top communicators in the South African organisation that senior management expects them to predominantly play the public relations manager role in order to make a strategic contribution to organisational decision-making.

#### Decision:

The calculated  $p$ -value is 0.00000 for Hypothesis 1, which is smaller than 0.05. The null hypothesis can, therefore, be rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis at a 95% confidence level. This confirms that there is a statistically significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution the top communicator predominantly playing the public relations manager role makes to organisational decision-making, and the strategic contribution the top communicator predominantly playing the public relations technician role makes to organisational decision-making.

ANOVA does not indicate the direction of the difference. However, this can be inferred from the descriptive statistical means as described above. The test data set indicates that it is the perception of the top communicator that senior management expects the top communicator predominantly playing the public relations manager role to make a bigger strategic contribution to organisational decision-making than the top communicator predominantly playing the public relations technician role.

The calculated  $F$  value of 32.30133 is also larger than the critical  $F$  value of 3.00 as indicated in the  $F$  table, at a significance level of 0.05. This confirms that the null hypothesis can be rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis at a level of 5% significance.

#### Statistical analysis of Hypothesis 2

H<sub>2</sub>: There is a significant difference between the beliefs and expectations of senior management with regard to the top communicator using the **one-way public relations models** to make a **strategic contribution** to organisational decision-making, and the beliefs and expectations of senior management with regard to the top communicator using the **two-way public relations models** to make a **strategic contribution** to organisational decision-making.

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference between the beliefs and expectations of senior management with regard to the top communicator using the **one-way public**

**relations models** to make a **strategic contribution** to organisational decision-making, and the beliefs and expectations of senior management with regard to the top communicator using the **two-way public relations models** to make a **strategic contribution** to organisational decision-making.

Table 6.21 - Test data for Hypothesis 2

Summary table of means N = 200	
Strategic contribution	
Both one-way and two-way public relations models	72.87013
One-way public relations models	54.12788
Two-way public relations models	80.30635

Table 6.22 - Results: Calculation of ANOVA for Hypothesis 2

Analysis of variance Marked effects are significant at $p < .05000$								
	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>		
	<i>Effect</i>	<i>Effect</i>	<i>Effect</i>	<i>Error</i>	<i>Error</i>	<i>Error</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Strategic contribution	21370.51	2	10685.25	49528.99	197	251.4162	42.50025	0.00000

The perception of the top communicator in the South African organisation about senior management's expectations with regard to the strategic contribution the top communicator makes to organisational decision-making was measured by items V2 to V11. The perception of the top communicator about senior management's beliefs with regard to the top communicator using one-way and/or two-way public relations models in communication activities and organisational decision-making was measured by items V12 to V16 and items V19 to V23 respectively. The latter variables loaded favourably on Factor 1 (one-way models) and Factor 2 (two-way models), as extracted from Section B of the measuring instrument.

The means for responses indicating that senior management believes the top communicator uses one-way models, two-way models or both when contributing to organisational decision-making were cross-tabulated with the means for the responses

indicating the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution made by the top communicator.

The third category for the use of both one-way and two-way models was created to establish the mean for the use of both these models by top communicators.

This was done by comparing the scores obtained for responses to items reflecting the use of one-way models, and scores reflecting the use of two-way models in communication activities and organisational decision-making. Scores that differed less than 20% were included in the category “both”. It was assumed that scores that differed negatively by more than 20% indicated the use of two-way models, while scores that differed positively by more than 20% indicated the use of one-way models.

The mean scores in the above test data set for Hypothesis 2 indicate that the two-way public relations models correlate highly with “strategic contribution”. The assumption can, therefore, be made that it is top communicators’ perception that senior management believes and expects the top communicator who predominantly uses the two-way public relations models to rather make a strategic contribution to organisational decision-making (mean score, 80.30635) than the top communicator who predominantly uses the one-way models (mean score, 54.12788).

The mean score of 72.87013 indicates that senior management believes and expects the top communicator using both one-way and two-way models to rather make a strategic contribution to organisational decision-making than the top communicator using one-way models.

It can, therefore, be assumed that it is the perception of the top communicator in the South African organisation that senior management believes and expects that the top communicator will make a bigger strategic contribution to organisational decision-making when using the two-way public relations models for communication activities and organisational decision-making than when using the one-way public relations models.

Decision:

At 0.00000 the calculated  $p$ -value for Hypothesis 2 is smaller than 0.05. The null hypothesis can, therefore, be rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis at a 95% confidence level. There is, therefore, a statistically significant difference between the beliefs and expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution the top communicator makes to organisational decision-making when using the one-way public relations models and the strategic contribution the top communicator makes when using two-way public relations models.

ANOVA does not indicate the direction of the difference. However, the direction can be inferred from the test data set as described above, which indicates that senior management expects the top communicator using the two-way public relations models to make a bigger strategic contribution to organisational decision-making than the top communicator using one-way models.

The calculated  $F$  value of 42.50025 is also larger than the critical  $F$  value of 3.00 as indicated in the  $F$  table, at a significance level of 0.05. This confirms that the null hypothesis can be rejected at a level of 5% significance.

### Statistical analysis of Hypothesis 3

H<sub>3</sub>: There is a significant difference between senior management's beliefs and expectations of the top communicator predominantly playing the **public relations manager role** using the **one-way public relations models** in communication activities and organisational decision-making, and senior management's beliefs and expectations of the top communicator predominantly playing the **public relations technician role** using the **one-way public relations models** in communication activities and organisational decision-making.

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference between senior management's beliefs and expectations of the top communicator predominantly playing the **public**



**relations manager role** using the **one-way public relations models** in communication activities and organisational decision-making, and senior management's beliefs and expectations of the top communicator predominantly playing the **public relations technician role** using the **one-way public relations models** in communication activities and organisational decision-making.

*Table 6.23 - Test data for Hypothesis 3*

<b>Summary table of means</b> N = 202	
One-way models	
Both public relations manager and public relations technician role	65.22772
Public relations manager role	40.28571
Public relations technician role	67.15789

*Table 6.24 - Results: Calculation of ANOVA for Hypothesis 3*

<b>Analysis of variance</b> <b>Marked effects are significant at p &lt;.05000</b>								
	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>		
	<i>Effect</i>	<i>Effect</i>	<i>Effect</i>	<i>Error</i>	<i>Error</i>	<i>Error</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
One-way models	28225.18	2	14112.59	53867.67	199	270.6918	52.13526	0.00000

The perception of the top communicator in the South African organisation about senior management's expectations with regard to public relations manager role-playing by the top communicator was measured by items V30 to V34. Senior management's expectations with regard to public relations technician role-playing were measured by items V24 to V28. These variables loaded favourably on Factor 1 (technician) and Factor 2 (manager) respectively, as identified in Section C of the measuring instrument.

Items V12 to V16 measured the beliefs of senior management with regard to the top communicator's use of one-way models in communication activities and loaded favourably on Factor 1 (one-way models) as identified in Section B of the measuring instrument.

The means for the responses indicating that senior management expects the top communicator to play the public relations manager role, public relations technician role or both, were cross-tabulated with the means for responses indicating that senior management believes that the top communicator predominantly uses one-way models in communication activities and organisational decision-making.

These mean scores, as shown in the above test data set for Hypothesis 3, indicate that senior management, to a greater extent, believes and expects the top communicator playing the public relations technician role (mean score, 67.15789) to use the one-way models in communication activities and organisational decision-making, than they believe and expect the top communicator playing the public relations manager role to use one-way models in communication activities (mean score, 40.28571).

The third category for playing both the public relations manager role and the public relations technician role was again included in this calculation (for categorisation, see section on Hypothesis 1). The mean score of 65.22772 indicates that senior management, to a greater extent, believes and expects the top communicator playing both the public relations manager role and the public relations technician role to use one-way models in communication activities and organisational decision-making, than they believe and expect the top communicator as public relations manager to use one-way models (mean score, 40.28571).

The one-way public relations models correlate highly with the public relations technician role. The assumption can, therefore, be made that it is the perception of the top communicator in the South African organisation that senior management believes and expects the top communicator playing the public relations technician role, more than the one playing the public relations manager role, or both roles, to predominantly use one-way models in communication activities and organisational decision-making.

Decision:

At 0.00000 the calculated *p*-value for Hypothesis 3 is smaller than 0.05. The null hypothesis can, therefore, be rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis at a 95% confidence level. This indicates that there is a statistically significant difference

between the beliefs and expectations of senior management with regard to the top communicator predominantly playing the public relations manager role using one-way models in organisational decision-making, and the top communicator predominantly playing the public relations technician role using one-way public relations models in communication activities and organisational decision-making.

ANOVA does not indicate the direction of the difference. However, it can be inferred from the test data as discussed above.

The calculated  $F$  value of 52.13526 is larger than the critical  $F$  value of 3.00 as indicated in the  $F$  table, at a significance level of 0.05. This confirms that the null hypothesis can be rejected at a significance level of 5%.

#### **Statistical analysis of Hypothesis 4**

H<sub>4</sub>: There is a significant difference between senior management's beliefs and expectations of the top communicator predominantly playing the **public relations manager role** using the **two-way public relations models** in communication activities and organisational decision-making, and senior management's beliefs and expectations of the top communicator predominantly playing the **public relations technician role** using the **two-way public relations models** in communication activities and organisational decision-making.

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference between senior management's beliefs and expectations of the top communicator predominantly playing the **public relations manager role** using the **two-way public relations models** in communication activities and organisational decision-making, and senior management's beliefs and expectations of the top communicator predominantly playing the **public relations technician role** using the **two-way public relations models** in communication activities and organisational decision-making.

Table 6.25 - Test data for Hypothesis 4

Summary table of means N = 202	
Two-way models	
Both public relations manager and public relations technician role	63.5396
Public relations manager	66.78571
Public relations technician	41.15789

Table 6.26 - Results: Calculation of ANOVA for Hypothesis 4

Analysis of variance Marked effects are significant at $p < .05000$								
	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>		
	<i>Effect</i>	<i>Effect</i>	<i>Effect</i>	<i>Error</i>	<i>Error</i>	<i>Error</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Two-way model	17633.68	2	8816.84	65246.25	199	327.8706	26.89122	0.00000

The perception of the top communicator in the South African organisation about the senior management's expectations with regard to public relations manager role-playing by the top communicator was measured by items V30 to V34. Senior management's expectations with regard to public relations technician role-playing were measured by items V24 to V28. These variables loaded favourably on Factor 1 (technician) and Factor 2 (manager) respectively, as identified in Section C of the measuring instrument.

Items V19 to V23 measured the use of two-way models in communication activities and organisational decision-making and loaded favourably on Factor 2 (two-way models) as identified in Section B of the measuring instrument.

The means for responses indicating that senior management expects the top communicator to play the public relations manager role, public relations technician role or both, were cross-tabulated with the means for responses indicating that senior management believes that the top communicator predominantly uses two-way models in communication activities and organisational decision-making.

The means in the above test data set for Hypothesis 4 indicate that senior management, to a greater extent, believes and expects the top communicator playing the public relations manager role (mean score, 66.78571) to use the two-way models in communication activities and organisational decision-making, than they believe and expect the top communicator playing the public relations technician role to use two-way models in communication activities (mean score, 41.15789).

The mean score for items representing top communicators who play both the public relations manager role and the public relations technician role using two-way models, is 63.5396, which indicates that senior management, to a greater extent, believes and expects the top communicator playing both roles to use two-way models (mean score, 63.5396) in communication activities and organisational decision-making, than they believe and expect the top communicator predominantly playing the public relations technician role to use two-way models (mean score, 41.15789).

The two-way public relations models, therefore, correlate highly with the public relations manager role. The assumption can be made that it is the perception of top communicators in the South African organisation that senior management believes and expects the top communicator playing the public relations manager role, more than the top communicator playing the public relations technician role, to predominantly use the two-way models in communication activities and organisational decision-making.

#### Decision:

At 0.00000 the calculated  $p$ -value for Hypothesis 4 is smaller than 0.05. The null hypothesis can, therefore, be rejected at a 95% confidence level. There is a statistically significant difference between the beliefs and expectations of senior management with regard to the use of two-way public relations models by the top communicator predominantly playing the public relations manager role, and the use of two-way public relations models by the top communicator predominantly playing the public relations technician role.

ANOVA does not indicate the direction of the difference, although it can be inferred from the test data, as indicated in the discussion above.

The  $F$  value confirms the statistical significant difference. The calculated  $F$  value of 26.89122 is larger than the critical  $F$  value of 3.00 as indicated in the  $F$  table, at a significance level of 0.05. As indicated above, the null hypothesis is, therefore, rejected at a level of 5% significance.

### Statistical analysis of Hypothesis 5

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There is a significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the top communicator's **strategic contribution** to organisational decision-making when reporting to the **CEO** and the expectations of senior management with regard to the top communicator's **strategic contribution** to organisational decision-making when reporting to **any other senior manager**.

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the top communicator's **strategic contribution** to organisational decision-making when reporting to the **CEO** and the expectations of senior management with regard to the top communicator's **strategic contribution** to organisational decision-making when reporting to **any other senior manager**.

*Table 6.27 - Test data for Hypothesis 5*

	<b>Strategic contribution means</b>	<b>Strategic contribution N</b>
CEO	68.23773	86
Marketing, communication or other manager	71.15873	112

Table 6.28 - Results: Calculation of ANOVA for Hypothesis 5

Analysis of variance								
Marked effects are significant at $p < .05000$								
	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>		
	<i>Effect</i>	<i>Effect</i>	<i>Effect</i>	<i>Error</i>	<i>Error</i>	<i>Error</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Strategic contribution	415.0645	1	415.0645	72098.27	196	367.8483	1.128358	0.289433

The perception of the top communicator in the South African organisation about the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution made by the top communicator to organisational decision-making was measured by items V2 to V11. The reporting line of the top communicator to the CEO or other managers was measured by item V36, which is the first part of the contingency question 1 in Section D of the measuring instrument.

The qualitative responses to the open-ended item 36 were placed in two categories:

- Category 1: Directors or managers, apart from the most senior manager in the organisation (CEO, etc) such as the Marketing Manager, Financial Manager or Human Resources Manager.
- Category 2: Most senior manager in the organisation which were referred to as CEO, Managing Director, Group Executive Chairman, etc.

The mean score for senior management's expectations with regard to the strategic contribution made by the top communicator to organisational decision-making was cross-tabulated with the mean scores for responses indicating that the top communicator reports to the CEO or to any other senior manager. However, the difference between the mean scores is not large enough to be statistically significant.

This data set indicates that the strategic contribution made by the top communicator reporting to the other managers is slightly higher (mean score, 71.15873) than the strategic contribution made by the top communicator reporting to the CEO (mean score, 68.23773).

Decision:

At 0.289433 the calculated  $p$ -value for Hypothesis 5 is larger than 0.05 and the null hypothesis can, therefore, not be rejected. There is no statistically significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution made by the top communicator when reporting to the CEO and the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution made by the top communicator when reporting to any other senior manager.

The  $F$  value supports this finding. The calculated  $F$  value of 1.128358 is smaller than the critical  $F$  value of 3.84 as indicated in the  $F$  table, at a significance level of 0.05. The null hypothesis can, therefore, not be rejected.

### **Statistical analysis of Hypothesis 6**

$H_6$ : There is a significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the top communicator's **strategic contribution** to organisational decision-making when reporting to **senior management** in the organisation, and the expectations of senior management with regard to the top communicator's **strategic contribution** to organisational decision-making when reporting to **middle management** in the organisation.

$H_0$ : There is no significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the top communicator's **strategic contribution** to organisational decision-making when reporting to **senior management** in the organisation, and the expectations of senior management with regard to the top communicator's **strategic contribution** to organisational decision-making when reporting to **middle management** in the organisation.



Table 6.29 - Test data for Hypothesis 6

	Strategic contribution means	Strategic contribution N
Middle management	60.81818	11
Senior management	70.70273	191

Table 6.30 - Results: Calculation of ANOVA for Hypothesis 6

Analysis of variance								
Marked effects are significant at $p < .05000$								
	SS	df	MS	SS	df	MS		
	Effect	Effect	Effect	Error	Error	Error	F	p
Strategic contribution	1016.222	1	1016.222	72691.04	200	363.4552	2.796004	0.096063

The perception of the top communicator in South African organisations about senior management's expectations with regard to the strategic contribution made by the top communicator to organisational decision-making was measured by items V2 to V11.

The reporting line of the top communicator to junior, middle or senior management was measured by item 37. Item 37 is the second part of the contingency question 1 of Section D of the measuring instrument. After respondents had indicated to whom they reported in the organisation (V36), they had to indicate whether that person could be considered to be part of three categories of management (junior management, middle management or senior management).

Since no top communicator indicated that the person they report to could be considered part of junior management, this category was eliminated. Only the categories for middle management and senior management were considered for measurement.

The mean score for senior management's expectations with regard to the strategic contribution made by the top communicator to organisational decision-making was

cross-tabulated with the mean scores for responses indicating that the top communicator reports to middle management or to senior management.

The test data set indicates that it can be assumed that it is the perception of the top communicator in the South African organisation that senior management's expectations with regard to the strategic contribution made by top communicators reporting to senior management are slightly higher (mean score, 70.70273) than their expectations with regard to the strategic contribution made by top communicators reporting to middle management (mean score, 60.81818).

Decision:

At 0.096063 the calculated  $p$ -value for Hypothesis 6 is larger than 0.05. However, the null hypothesis can be rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis at a 90% level of confidence. (The alternative hypothesis is accepted at a 90% significance level because of the homogeneity of the sample of top communicators.) This indicates that there is a statistically significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution to organisational decision-making made by the top communicator reporting to senior management, and the strategic contribution made by the top communicator reporting to middle management.

ANOVA does not indicate the direction of the difference, but it can be inferred from the test data as indicated in the discussion above.

The calculated  $F$  value of 2.796004 is smaller than the critical  $F$  value of 3.84 as indicated in the  $F$  table, at a significance level of 0.05. The alternative hypothesis is, therefore, accepted at a 90% level of significance.

### Statistical analysis of Hypothesis 7

H7: There is a significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the **strategic contribution** made by the top communicator in a **small organisation**, and the expectations of senior management with regard to

the **strategic contribution** made by the top communicator in a **large organisation**.

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the **strategic contribution** made by the top communicator in a **small organisation**, and the expectations of senior management with regard to the **strategic contribution** made by the top communicator in a **large organisation**.

Table 6.31 - Test data for Hypothesis 7

	<b>Strategic contribution means</b>	<b>Strategic contribution N</b>
Large organisation (from 201 to 95 000 staff members)	68.86389	160
Small organisation (from 1 to 200 staff members)	75.13158	38

Table 6.32 - Results: Calculation of ANOVA for Hypothesis 7

<b>Analysis of variance</b>								
<b>Marked effects are significant at p &lt;.05000</b>								
	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>		
	<i>Effect</i>	<i>Effect</i>	<i>Effect</i>	<i>Error</i>	<i>Error</i>	<i>Error</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Strategic contribution	1206.295	1	1206.295	72247.55	196	368.61	3.27255	0.07198

The perception of the top communicator in the South African organisation about the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution to organisational decision-making made by the top communicator was measured by items V2 to V11. The qualitative variable “number of people in the organisation” was measured by V38.

A distinction was made between small and large organisations by classifying a small organisation as one with one to 200 people, and a large organisation as one with 201 to 95 000 people. The mean score for senior management’s expectations with regard to the strategic contribution made by the top communicator to organisational decision-

making was cross-tabulated with the mean scores for the responses indicating that the top communicator works in a small or in a large organisation.

From the above test data set for Hypothesis 7, it can be assumed that it is the perception of the top communicator in the South African organisation that senior management expects the top communicator in a small organisation to make a slightly bigger strategic contribution to organisational decision-making (mean score, 75.13158) than the top communicator in a large organisation (mean score, 68.86389).

Decision:

At 0.07198 the  $p$ -value for Hypothesis 7 is larger than 0.05. However, the null hypothesis is rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis at a 90% significance level. (The alternative hypothesis is accepted at a 90% significance level because of the homogeneity of the sample of top communicators.) There is, therefore, a statistically significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution made by the top communicator in a small organisation, and the strategic contribution made by the top communicator in a large organisation.

ANOVA does not indicate the direction in the difference, but it can be inferred from the above test data as indicated in the discussion above.

The  $F$  value supports this result. The calculated  $F$  value of 3.27255 is smaller than the critical  $F$  value of 3.84 as indicated in the  $F$  table, at a significance level of 0.05. This confirms that the alternative hypothesis can be accepted at a 90% significance level.

### Statistical analysis of Hypothesis 8

H<sub>8</sub>: There is a significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the **strategic contribution** the top communicator in a **small public relations department** makes to organisational decision-making, and the expectations of senior management with regard to the **strategic**

**contribution** the top communicator in a **large public relations department** makes to organisational decision-making.

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the **strategic contribution** the top communicator in a **small public relations department** makes to organisational decision-making, and the expectations of senior management with regard to the **strategic contribution** the top communicator in a **large public relations department** makes to organisational decision-making.

Table 6.33 - Test data for Hypothesis 8

	Strategic contribution means	Strategic contribution N
Small department (1 to 5 staff members)	68.66104	158
Large department (6 to 90 staff members)	75.56313	44

Table 6.34 - Results: Calculation of ANOVA for Hypothesis 8

Analysis of variance								
Marked effects are significant at $p < .05000$								
	SS	df	MS	SS	df	MS		
	Effect	Effect	Effect	Error	Error	Error	F	p
Strategic contribution	1639.531	1	1639.531	72067.73	200	360.3387	4.549973	0.034138

The perception of the top communicator in the South African organisation about senior management's expectations with regard to the strategic contribution to organisational decision-making made by the top communicator was measured by items V2 to V11. The qualitative variable "number of people in the department" was measured by V39.

A distinction was made between small and large communication departments by classifying a small department as one with one to five people, and a large department as one with six to 90 people.

The mean score for senior management's expectations with regard to the strategic contribution to organisational decision-making made by the top communicator was cross-tabulated with the mean scores for responses to the item measuring the size of the department, as indicated in the above test data.

According to the test data set for Hypothesis 8, it can be assumed that it is the perception of the top communicator in the South African organisation that senior management expects the strategic contribution made by top communicators in a small department to be smaller (mean score, 68.66104) than the strategic contribution made by top communicators in a large department (mean score, 75.56313).

**Decision:**

At 0.034138 the calculated  $p$ -value for Hypothesis 8 is smaller than 0.05. The null hypothesis can, therefore, be rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis at a 95% confidence level. This indicates that there is a statistically significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution made by the top communicator located in a small public relations department, and the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution made by the top communicator located in a large public relations department.

ANOVA does not indicate the direction of the difference, but it can be inferred from the test data, as indicated in the discussion above.

This is supported by the calculated  $F$  value of 4.549973, which is larger than the critical  $F$  value of 3.84 as indicated in the  $F$  table, at a significance level of 0.05. This confirms that the null hypothesis can be rejected.

### **Statistical analysis of Hypothesis 9**

**H<sub>9</sub>:** There is a significant difference between the beliefs and expectations of senior management with regard to the use of **one-way public relations models** for communication activities and organisational decision-making by the top

communicator in a **small public relations department**, and the beliefs and expectations of senior management with regard to the use of **one-way public relations models** for communication activities and organisational decision-making by the top communicator in a **large public relations department**.

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference between the beliefs and expectations of senior management with regard to the use of **one-way public relations models** for communication activities and organisational decision-making by the top communicator in a **small public relations department**, and the beliefs and expectations of senior management with regard to the use of **one-way public relations models** for communication activities and organisational decision-making by the top communicator in a **large public relations department**.

Table 6.35 - Test data for Hypothesis 9

	One-way models means	One-way models N
Small department (1 to 5 staff members)	58.35443	158
Large department (6 to 90 staff members)	55.86364	44

Table 6.36 - Results: Calculation of ANOVA for Hypothesis 9

Analysis of variance								
Marked effects are significant at $p < .05000$								
	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>		
	<i>Effect</i>	<i>Effect</i>	<i>Effect</i>	<i>Error</i>	<i>Error</i>	<i>Error</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
One-way models	213.5178	1	213.5178	81879.33	200	409.3967	0.521543	0.471028

The perception of the top communicator in the South African organisation about the beliefs of senior management with regard to the top communicator's use of the one-way models in communication activities and organisational decision-making was measured by items V12 to V16. The qualitative variable "size of the public relations department" was measured by item 39.

As explained above, a distinction was made between small and large departments by classifying a small department as one with one to five people, and a large department as one with six to 90 people.

The mean score for senior management's beliefs and expectations with regard to the top communicator's use of one-way public relations models in communication activities and organisational decision-making was cross-tabulated with the mean scores for responses to the item measuring the size of the department.

The above test data set for Hypothesis 9 indicates that it can be assumed that it is the perception of the top communicator in the South African organisation that senior management believes and expects the use of one-way models by the top communicator in a small department to be slightly higher (mean score, 58.35443) than the use of one-way models by the top communicator in a large department (mean score, 55.863634).

Decision:

At 0.471028 the calculated  $p$ -value for Hypothesis 9 is larger than 0.05. The null hypothesis can, therefore, not be rejected. This indicates that there is no statistically significant difference between the beliefs and expectations of senior management with regard to the top communicator's use of one-way public relations models for communication activities and organisational decision-making in a small public relations department, and the beliefs and expectations of senior management with regard to the top communicator's use of one-way models in a large department.

The result, that the null hypothesis cannot be rejected, is confirmed by the calculated  $F$  value of 0.521543, which is smaller than the critical  $F$  value of 3.84 as indicated in the  $F$  table, at a significance level of 0.05.

### **Statistical analysis of Hypothesis 10**

H<sub>10</sub>: There is a significant difference between the beliefs and expectations of senior management with regard to the use of **two-way public relations models** for communication activities and organisational decision-making by the top



communicator in a **small public relations department**, and the beliefs and expectations of senior management with regard to the use of **two-way public relations models** for communication activities and organisational decision-making by the top communicator in a **large public relations department**.

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference between the beliefs and expectations of senior management with regard to the use of **two-way public relations models** for communication activities and organisational decision-making by the top communicator in a **small public relations department**, and the beliefs and expectations of senior management with regard to the use of **two-way public relations models** for communication activities and organisational decision-making by the top communicator in a **large public relations department**.

Table 6.37 - Test data for Hypothesis 10

	Two-way models means	Two-way models N
Small department (1 to 5 staff members)	58.60127	158
Large department (6 to 90 staff members)	66.59091	44

Table 6.38 - Results: Calculation of ANOVA for Hypothesis 10

Analysis of variance								
Marked effects are significant at $p < .05000$								
	SS	df	MS	SS	df	MS		
	Effect	Effect	Effect	Error	Error	Error	F	p
Two-way models	2196.915	1	2196.915	80683.02	200	403.4151	5.445792	0.020609

The perception of the top communicator in the South African organisation about senior management's beliefs and expectations with regard to the top communicator's use of two-way public relations models in communication activities and organisational decision-making was measured by items V18 to V23. The qualitative variable "size of the public relations department" was measured by item 39.

As explained above, a distinction was made between small and large departments by classifying a small department as one with one to five people, and a large department as one with six to 90 people.

The mean score for senior management's beliefs with regard to the top communicator's use of two-way public relations models in communication activities and organisational decision-making was cross-tabulated with the mean scores for responses to the item measuring the size of the department.

The above test data set for Hypothesis 10 indicates that it can be assumed that it is the perception of the top communicator in the South African organisation that senior management believes and expects the use of two-way public relations models by the top communicator in a small department to be less (mean score, 58.60127) than the use of two-way models by the top communicator in a large department (mean score, 66.59091).

Decision:

At 0.020609 the calculated  $p$ -value for Hypothesis 10 is smaller than 0.05. The null hypothesis can, therefore, be rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis at a 95% confidence level. This indicates that there is a statistically significant difference between the beliefs and expectations of senior management with regard to the top communicator's use of two-way public relations models for communication activities and organisational decision-making in a small public relations department, and the beliefs of senior management with regard to the top communicator's use of two-way models in a large department.

ANOVA does not indicate the direction of the difference, but it can be inferred from the test data, as indicated in the discussion above.

The  $F$  value supports this result. The calculated  $F$  value of 5.445792 is larger than the critical  $F$  value of 3.84 as indicated in the  $F$  table, at a significance level of 0.05. This confirms that the null hypothesis can be rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis.

## Statistical analysis of Hypothesis 11

H<sub>11</sub>: There is a significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the **strategic contribution** to organisational decision-making made by the top communicator with a **graduate qualification**, and expectations of senior management with regard to the **strategic contribution** made to organisational decision-making by the top communicator with a **postgraduate qualification**.

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the **strategic contribution** to organisational decision-making made by the top communicator with a **graduate qualification**, and expectations of senior management with regard to the **strategic contribution** made to organisational decision-making by the top communicator with a **postgraduate qualification**.

Table 6.39 - Test data for Hypothesis 11

	Strategic contribution means	Strategic contribution N
Other	69.35484	31
Graduate qualification (degree or diploma)	68.71951	82
Postgraduate qualification (higher diploma, honours degree, masters' degree, doctorate)	71.65212	84
All groups	70.06994	197

Table 6.40 - Results: Calculation of ANOVA for Hypothesis 11

Analysis of variance								
Marked effects are significant at $p < .05000$								
	SS	df	MS	SS	df	MS		
	Effect	Effect	Effect	Error	Error	Error	F	p
Strategic contribution	375,6679	2	187.8339	71834.01	194	370.2784	0.507278	0.602929

The perception of the top communicator in the South African organisation about the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution made by the top communicator to organisational decision-making, was measured by items V2 to V11. The qualitative variable “highest qualification of top communicators” was measured by item V40. The qualitative variable “qualifications” was categorised as other qualifications (certificate, short courses, etc), graduate qualifications (degree or diploma), postgraduate qualifications (higher diploma, honours, masters’ or doctorate) and all groups.

The mean scores for the perception of the top communicator about senior management’s expectations with regard to the strategic contribution made by top communicators with a graduate qualification; those with a postgraduate qualification; those with other qualifications; and all groups, were cross-tabulated with the mean score for the responses to the items indicating the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution made by the top communicator.

The above test data set indicates that the mean scores for the categories “other qualifications” (mean score, 69.35484), “graduate qualification” (mean score, 68.71951), “postgraduate qualification” (mean score, 71.65212) and “all groups” (mean score, 70.06994) differ very little.

Decision:

At 0.602929 the calculated  $p$ -value for Hypothesis 11 is larger than 0.05. The null hypothesis can, therefore, not be rejected. This indicates that there is no statistically significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution made by the top communicator with a graduate qualification and the strategic contribution made by the top communicator with a postgraduate qualification.

The calculated  $F$  value of 1.083933 is smaller than the critical  $F$  value of 3.00 in the  $F$  table on a significance level of 0.05. This also indicates that the null hypothesis cannot be rejected.

## Statistical analysis of Hypothesis 12

H<sub>12</sub>: There is a significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the **strategic contribution** the top communicator with a **few years' experience** in the communications field makes to organisational decision-making, and the expectations of senior management with regard to the **strategic contribution** the top communicator with **many years' experience** in the communications field makes to organisational decision-making.

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the **strategic contribution** the top communicator with a **few years' experience** in the communications field makes to organisational decision-making, and the expectations of senior management with regard to the **strategic contribution** the top communicator with **many years' experience** in the communications field makes to organisational decision-making.

Table 6.41 - Test data for Hypothesis 12

	Strategic contribution means	Strategic contribution N
Few years experience (1 to 8 years experience)	66.25794	56
Many years experience (9 to 40 years experience)	71.58413	140

Table 6.42 - Results: Calculation of ANOVA for Hypothesis 12

Analysis of variance								
Marked effects are significant at $p < .05000$								
	SS	df	MS	SS	df	MS		
	Effect	Effect	Effect	Error	Error	Error	F	P
Strategic contribution	1134.732	1	1134.732	71558.23	194	368.8569	3.076348	0.081018

The perception of the top communicator in the South African organisation about the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution to

organisational decision-making made by the top communicator was measured by items V2 to V11. The qualitative variable “number of years’ experience of top communicators” was measured by item V41. This was categorised as “few years’ experience” and “many years’ experience” with “few” referring to one to eight years, and “many” referring to nine to 40 years’ experience.

The mean score for responses to items indicating senior management’s expectations with regard to the strategic contribution to organisational decision-making made by the top communicator was cross-tabulated with the mean scores for top communicators with a few years’ experience and those with many years’ experience.

The test data set for Hypothesis 12 indicates that the mean score for the perception of the top communicator in the South African organisation about the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution to organisational decision-making made by the top communicator with many years’ experience in the communications field is higher (mean score, 71.58413) than the mean score for the strategic contribution to organisational decision-making made by top communicators with a few years’ experience (mean score, 66.25794).

#### Decision:

At 0.081018 the calculated  $p$ -value for Hypothesis 12 is larger than 0.05. However, the null hypothesis can be rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis at a 90% significance level. (The alternative hypothesis is accepted at a 90% significance level because of the homogeneity of the sample of top communicators.) There is a statistically significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution a top communicator with a few years’ experience can make to organisational decision-making, and the strategic contribution a top communicator with many years’ experience can make to organisational decision-making.

ANOVA does not indicate the direction of the difference, but it can be inferred from the test data, as indicated in the discussion above.

The calculated  $F$  value of 3.076348 is smaller than the critical  $F$  value of 3.84 as indicated in the  $F$  table, which also indicates that the alternative hypothesis can be accepted at a 90% level of significance.

### **6.6.2 Summary of hypothesis testing: Hypothesis 1 to 12**

The most important results of the hypothesis testing for the 12 hypotheses will be discussed next.

#### **Hypothesis 1**

The calculated  $p$ -value for Hypothesis 1 is 0.00000, which is smaller than 0.05. The null hypothesis can, therefore, be rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis at a 95% confidence level. This confirms that there is a statistically significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution the top communicator predominantly playing the public relations manager role makes to organisational decision-making, and the strategic contribution the top communicator predominantly playing the public relations technician role makes to organisational decision-making.

ANOVA does not indicate the direction of the difference. However, this can be inferred from the descriptive statistics means. From the test data it can be assumed that it is the perception of top communicators that senior management expects the top communicator predominantly playing the public relations manager role to make a bigger strategic contribution to organisational decision-making than the top communicator predominantly playing the public relations technician role.

The calculated  $F$  value of 32.30133 is also larger than the critical  $F$  value of 3.00 as indicated in the  $F$  table, at a significance level of 0.05. This confirms that the null hypothesis can be rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis at a level of 5% significance.

## **Hypothesis 2**

At 0.00000 the calculated  $p$ -value for Hypothesis 2 is smaller than 0.05. The null hypothesis can, therefore, be rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis at a 95% confidence level. This indicates that there is a statistically significant difference between the beliefs and expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution the top communicator makes to organisational decision-making when using the one-way public relations models, and the strategic contribution the top communicator makes when using the two-way models.

ANOVA does not indicate the direction of the difference. However, the direction can be inferred from the test data as described above, which indicates that senior management believes and expects the top communicator using the two-way public relations models to make a bigger strategic contribution to organisational decision-making than the top communicator using the one-way models.

The calculated  $F$  value of 42.50025 is also larger than the critical  $F$  value of 3.00 as indicated in the  $F$  table on a significance level of 0.05. This confirms that the null hypothesis can be rejected at a level of 5% significance.

## **Hypothesis 3**

At 0.00000 the calculated  $p$ -value for Hypothesis 3 is smaller than 0.05. The null hypothesis can, therefore, be rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis at a 95% confidence level. This indicates that there is a statistically significant difference between the beliefs and expectations of senior management with regard to the top communicator predominantly playing the public relations manager role using one-way models in communication activities and organisational decision-making, and the top communicator predominantly playing the public relations technician role using one-way public relations models in communication activities and organisational decision-making.

ANOVA does not indicate the direction of the difference. However, it can be inferred from the test data set. According to the latter, the one-way public relations models correlate highly with the public relations technician role.



The assumption can, therefore, be made that it is the perception of the top communicator in the South African organisation that senior management believes and expects the top communicator playing the public relations technician role, more than the one playing the public relations manager role, or both roles, to predominantly use one-way models in communication activities and organisational decision-making.

The calculated  $F$  value of 52.13526 is larger than the critical  $F$  value of 3.00 as indicated in the  $F$  table at a significance level of 0.05. This confirms that the null hypothesis can be rejected at a significance level of 5%.

#### **Hypothesis 4**

At 0.00000 the calculated  $p$ -value for Hypothesis 4 is smaller than 0.05. The null hypothesis can, therefore, be rejected at a 95% confidence level. This indicates that there is a statistically significant difference between the beliefs and expectations of senior management with regard to the use of two-way public relations models by the top communicator predominantly playing the public relations manager role, and the use of two-way public relations models by the top communicator predominantly playing the public relations technician role.

ANOVA does not indicate the direction of the difference, although it can be inferred from the test data set. The latter indicates that the two-way public relations models correlate highly with the public relations manager role. The assumption can, therefore, be made that it is the perception of top communicators that senior management believes and expects the top communicator playing the public relations manager role, more than the top communicator playing the public relations technician role, to predominantly use the two-way models in communication activities and organisational decision-making.

The  $F$  value confirms the statistically significant difference. The calculated  $F$  value of 26.89122 is larger than the critical  $F$  value of 3.00 in the  $F$  table, at a significance level of 0.05. As indicated above the null hypothesis is, therefore, rejected at a level of 5% significance.

### **Hypothesis 5**

At 0.289433 the calculated  $p$ -value for Hypothesis 5 is larger than 0.05 and the null hypothesis can, therefore, not be rejected. There is no statistically significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution made by the top communicator when reporting to the CEO, and the expectations of senior management with regard to the top communicator when reporting to any other senior manager.

The test data set indicates that the strategic contribution made by the top communicator reporting to the other managers is slightly higher (mean score, 71.15873) than the strategic contribution made by the top communicator reporting to the CEO (mean score, 68.23773).

The  $F$  value supports this finding. The calculated  $F$  value of 1.128358 is smaller than the critical  $F$  value of 3.84 in the  $F$  table, at a significance level of 0.05. The null hypothesis can, therefore, not be rejected.

### **Hypothesis 6**

At 0.096063 the calculated  $p$ -value for Hypothesis 6 is larger than 0.05. However, the null hypothesis can be rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis at a 90% level of confidence. (The alternative hypothesis is accepted at a 90% significance level because of the homogeneity of the sample of top communicators.) This indicates that there is a statistically significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution to organisational decision-making made by the top communicator reporting to senior management, and the strategic contribution made by the top communicator reporting to middle management.

ANOVA does not indicate the direction of the difference, but it can be inferred from the test data set. The latter indicates that it can be assumed that it is the perception of the top communicator in the South African organisation that senior management's expectations with regard to the strategic contribution made by top communicators reporting to senior management are slightly higher (mean score, 70.70273) than the

expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution made by top communicators reporting to middle management (mean score, 60.81818).

The calculated  $F$  value of 2.796004 is smaller than the critical  $F$  value of 3.84 as indicated in the  $F$  table, at a significance level of 0.05. The alternative hypothesis is, therefore, accepted at a 90% level of significance.

### **Hypothesis 7**

At 0.07198 the  $p$ -value for Hypothesis 7 is larger than 0.05. However, the null hypothesis can be rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis at a 90% significance level. (The alternative hypothesis is accepted at a 90% significance level because of the homogeneity of the sample of top communicators.) There is a statistically significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution made by the top communicator in a small organisation, and the strategic contribution made by the top communicator in a large organisation.

ANOVA does not indicate the direction in the difference, but it can be inferred from the test data set. From the test data set it can be assumed that it is the perception of the top communicator in the South African organisation that senior management expects the top communicator in a small organisation to make a slightly bigger strategic contribution to organisational decision-making (mean score, 75.13158) than the top communicator in a large organisation (mean score, 68.86389).

The  $F$  value supports this result. The calculated  $F$  value of 3.27255 is smaller than the critical  $F$  value of 3.84 as indicated in the  $F$  table, at a significance level of 0.05. This confirms that the alternative hypothesis can be accepted at a 90% significance level.

### **Hypothesis 8**

At 0.034138 the calculated  $p$ -value for Hypothesis 8 is smaller than 0.05. The null hypothesis can, therefore, be rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis at a 95% confidence level. This indicates that there is a statistically significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution made by the top communicator located in a small public relations

department, and the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution made by the top communicator located in a large public relations department.

ANOVA does not indicate the direction of the difference, but it can be inferred from the test data set. According to the test data set it can be assumed that it is the perception of the top communicator in the South African organisation that senior management expects the strategic contribution made by top communicators in a small department to be smaller (mean score, 68.66104) than the strategic contribution made by top communicators in a large department (mean score, 75.56313).

This is supported by the calculated  $F$  value of 4.549973, which is larger than the critical  $F$  value of 3.84 as indicated in the  $F$  table, at a significance level of 0.05. This confirms that the null hypothesis can be rejected.

### **Hypothesis 9**

At 0.471028 the calculated  $p$ -value for Hypothesis 9 is larger than 0.05. The null hypothesis can, therefore, not be rejected. This indicates that there is no statistically significant difference between the beliefs and expectations of senior management with regard to the top communicator's use of one-way public relations models for communication activities and organisational decision-making in a small public relations department, and the beliefs and expectations of senior management with regard to the top communicator's use of one-way models in a large department.

The test data set for Hypothesis 9 indicates that it can be assumed that it is the perception of the top communicator in the South African organisation that senior management believes and expects the use of one-way models by the top communicator in a small department to be slightly higher (mean score, 58.35443) than the use of one-way models by the top communicator in a large department (mean score, 55.863634).

The result, that the null hypothesis cannot be rejected, is confirmed by the calculated  $F$  value of 0.521543, which is smaller than the critical  $F$  value of 3.84 as indicated in the  $F$  table, at a significance level of 0.05.

### **Hypothesis 10**

At 0.020609 the calculated  $p$ -value for Hypothesis 10 is smaller than 0.05. The null hypothesis can, therefore, be rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis at a 95% confidence level. This indicates that there is a statistically significant difference between the beliefs and expectations of senior management with regard to the top communicator's use of two-way public relations models for communication activities and organisational decision-making in a small public relations department, and the beliefs and expectations of senior management with regard to the top communicator's use of two-way models in a large department.

The test data set for Hypothesis 10 indicates that it can be assumed that it is the perception of the top communicator in the South African organisation that senior management believes and expects the use of two-way models by the top communicator in a small department to be less (mean score, 58.60127) than the use of two-way models by the top communicator in a large department (mean score, 66.59091).

The  $F$  value supports this result. The calculated  $F$  value of 5.445792 is larger than the critical  $F$  value of 3.84 in the  $F$  table at a significance level of 0.05. This confirms that the null hypothesis is rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis.

### **Hypothesis 11**

At 0.602929 the calculated  $p$ -value for Hypothesis 11 is larger than 0.05. The null hypothesis can, therefore, not be rejected. This indicates that there is no statistically significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution made by the top communicator with a graduate qualification, and the strategic contribution made by the top communicator with a postgraduate qualification.

The above test data set indicates that the mean scores for the categories "other qualifications" (mean score, 69.35484), "graduate qualifications" (mean score, 68.71951), "postgraduate qualifications" (mean score, 71.65212) and "all groups" (mean score, 70.06994) differ very little.

The calculated  $F$  value of 1.083933 is smaller than the critical  $F$  value of 3.00 in the  $F$  table at a significance level of 0.05. This also indicates that the null hypothesis cannot be rejected.

### **Hypothesis 12**

At 0.081018 the calculated  $p$ -value for Hypothesis 12 is larger than 0.05. However, the null hypothesis can be rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis at a 90% significance level. (The alternative hypothesis is accepted at a 90% significance level because of the homogeneity of the sample of top communicators.) There is a statistically significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution a top communicator with a few years' experience in the communication field can make to organisational decision-making, and the strategic contribution a top communicator with many years' experience can make to organisational decision-making.

The test data set for Hypothesis 12 indicates that the mean score for the perception of the top communicator in the South African organisation about the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution to organisational decision-making made by the top communicator with many years' experience is higher (mean score, 71.58413) than the mean score for the strategic contribution to organisational decision-making made by top communicators with a few years' experience (mean score, 66.25794).

The calculated  $F$  value of 3.076348 is smaller than the critical  $F$  value of 3.84 in the  $F$  table which also indicates that the alternative hypothesis can be accepted at a 90% level of significance.

## **6.7 SUMMARY**

In this chapter the data for this study was analysed by identifying patterns and themes in the data and drawing certain conclusions from them. The further interpretation of

the data will be done in the next chapter. The statistical techniques used for the measurement were also discussed briefly.

To analyse the data, statistical techniques such as descriptive statistics for the reliability analysis of the measuring instrument, factor analysis and ANOVA were used. The data collection of the sample was discussed in detail in Chapter 5. The 202 questionnaires received from top communicators were captured on the software packages *Microsoft Excel* and *Statistica*. In order to submit the most important characteristics of the samples, the demographic data as obtained from Part II of the measuring instrument was discussed. Data on reporting lines of the top communicator, the size of the organisation and communication department of which the top communicator is part, and the qualifications and experience of the top communicator, are visually depicted by means of pie and bar charts.

The descriptive statistics used were averages, standard deviations, Top2Box% and Low2Box % percentages. The reliability analysis of the measuring instrument was done by calculating the item-to-total correlation and the Cronbach's alpha values for Sections A, B and C of the measuring instrument.

The item-to-total correlation of Section A of the measuring instrument was above .50 for all the items; for Section B it was above .50 for all the items, except for V13 and V20; and for Section C it was above 0.50 for all the items.

The Cronbach's alpha values for the complete measuring instrument were between .936152 and .819267 (See Table 6.11). According to Du Plooy (1996:72), a reliability coefficient of 0.9 or higher is excellent and between 0.8 and 0.89 is good.

According to the above results, the measuring instrument can be regarded as reliable.

Factor analysis was done as a validity analysis and a deductive approach in hypothesising about the relationships that exist between factors. The method used for factor analysis was principle components analysis. The latent root/eigenvalue criterion, percentage of variance criterion and scree test criterion were used in this analysis.

The hypothesis testing was done with the statistical method analysis of variance (ANOVA). The means of the various responses were cross-tabulated to obtain a test data set that could be used for the statistical test ANOVA. Hypotheses 1 to 12 were tested and the results described in detail.



## CHAPTER 7

### RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Aim of this chapter:

*In this chapter the specific relationship between the research problem, the evidence collected, and the conclusions drawn on the basis of the evidence, are discussed. The main findings of the descriptive statistics, the implications of the factor analysis and the results of the hypothesis testing, related to the aims of the study, are addressed. The results, as presented in the previous chapter, are discussed, and conclusions on the strategic contribution of the top communicator to organisational decision-making are drawn. The implications of the findings for theory building will be shown. Constraints of the study are also pointed out and proposals are made for further research objectives. Chapter 7 is a final reaction to the research objectives as set out in Chapter 1.*

#### 7.1. INTRODUCTION

The constructs “power of the top communicator and the communication department”; “shared expectations between the top communicator and top management with regard to the use of one-way and two-way models of public relations”; and the “public relations manager or public relations technician role the top communicator plays in the organisation” were generated as the synthesis of the concept “shared expectations with regard to the strategic contribution the top communicator makes to organisational decision-making”. An explanation of the constructs, or building blocks, showed that the concept “strategic contribution” could be academically sound.

By analysing the components knowledge, was gained of the whole. The way in which the components are connected – the synthesis – was also investigated. The constitutive variables or factors relevant to understanding the phenomena were isolated through analysis, while the connections between the variables were again reconstructed to gain insight in the causes and contributory factors to the phenomena (Mouton & Marais, 1989:103).

A deductive strategy was followed in this study. The project was, therefore, started with a clear conceptual frame of reference – a theory. This framework led the conceptualisation, operationalisation and data collection and eventually formed the frame of reference for analysis and interpretation (Mouton & Marais, 1989:103). However, inductive reasoning was also used to establish the connections and patterns in the data.

The construct “power” was generated in Chapter 2 as the synthesis of the constructs “value top management attaches to the top communicator” and the “strategic contribution the top communicator makes to organisational decision-making”.

From the literature review it is clear that value is attached to and support given to those top communicators and communication departments that prove their worth to top management by their strategic contribution to organisational decision-making. The top communicator and communication department need power within senior management in order to make strategic contributions. These contributions, in turn, lead to greater power and influence in management decision-making. Power is the capacity to exert influence – a transaction in which one gets others to change their behaviour as one intended. Power is also necessary to be given the opportunity to contribute, while strategic contributions increase the value and support top management gives to communication departments.

In Chapter 3 the shared expectations between the top communicator and top management regarding the use of one-way public relations models (the press agency model and the public information model) and the two-way public relations models (the two-way asymmetrical model and the two-way symmetrical model) were discussed.

It was explained that organisations that achieve excellence have communication departments with the expertise for both traditional one-way practices and advanced two-way practices to negotiate with and persuade both senior management and publics toward mutually beneficial relationships.

The fact that excellent communication departments need CEOs and top managements that understand such practices (especially two-way practices) and expect them from their communication departments, was emphasised.

Top management needs to understand excellence in communication in order to enter into a set of shared expectations with the top communicator. The literature supported the view that organisations achieve excellence only when top management values and supports communication departments.

Chapter 4 focused on the role that the top communicator should play in the organisation to be able to make a strategic contribution to organisational decision-making. Dozier et al (1995:107) believe that changing the roles that top communicators play in the organisation provides the most direct path to excellence. From the literature it is clear that top communication departments combine knowledge of both manager and technician roles to provide the requisite foundation for excellence. To actually achieve excellence, however, top communicators must play advanced organisational roles of communication manager and senior adviser. Communicators must develop linkages to CEOs and top management to establish communication excellence. They must acquire the power to contribute to strategic planning and decision-making.

Generally, top communicators who play the communication manager and senior adviser roles run excellent communication departments. The top management in these organisations support the communication function and value the communication department. Communication makes substantial contributions to strategic management and planning in these organisations.

This study specifically linked to the above theory, aiming to establish whether it is the perception of top communicators in the South African organisation that senior management expects them to make a strategic contribution to organisational decision-making and add value to the operations of the organisation by using more sophisticated communication techniques such as two-way public relations models in their

communication practices and by playing the public relations manager role more often than the public relations technician role.

In Chapter 5 the research design and methodology of the empirical component of the study were discussed. It was explained how the sample of top communicators were selected; how items on “strategic contribution”, the “use of one-way and two-way models” and the “public relations manager and public relations technician roles” were developed and included in the measuring instrument; and how the propositions generated were formulated as hypotheses. The reliability and validity of measurement were also discussed, as well as the statistical methods that made it possible to obtain the data from the samples and to analyse it.

In Chapter 6 the results of the reliability and validity analysis were reported. The item-to-total correlation and Cronbach’s alpha values for Sections A, B and C of the measuring instrument were discussed. Extraction of five factors (strategic contribution, one-way public relations models, two-way public relations models, the public relations manager role and the public relations technician role), as well as the results of the hypothesis testing was reported.

The item-to-total correlation of Section A of the measuring instrument was above .50 for all the items; for Section B it was above .50 for all the items, except for V13 and V20; and for Section C it was above 0.50 for all the items.

The Cronbach’s alpha values for the total measuring instrument were between **.936152** and **.819267** (See Table 6.11). According to Du Plooy (1996:72) a reliability coefficient of 0.9 or higher is excellent and between 0.80 and 0.89 is good.

The results of these analyses indicate that the reliability of the measuring instrument is above normal and that it complies with internal and external reliability requirements.

A good indication of validity was made possible by a factor analysis of the measuring instrument. Through factor analysis it could be established whether the constructs or

factors, as identified, measured what it was supposed to measure (Mouton & Marais, 1989:69).

To establish the construct validity for this measuring instrument, the instrument was related to the theoretical framework as discussed in the literature study to ensure that the measurement logically linked with other concepts in the framework.

All the items in Section A of the measuring instrument loaded favourably on Factor 1, “strategic contribution”, as extracted from the measuring instrument. The statistical method principal components analysis, and certain stepping criteria (eigenvalue criteria, percentage of variance criterion and scree test criterion), were used to extract this factor.

The variables in Section B loaded favourably on two factors. The first factor that was extracted was regarded as the single best summary of linear relationships exhibited in the data. Variables representing the “one-way models”, loaded on Factor 1, while variables representing the “two-way models”, loaded favourably on Factor 2. The eigenvalues for these two factors were **3.082499** for Factor 1 and **3.056199** for Factor 2.

The variables in Section C also loaded favourably on two factors. Variables representing the construct “public relations manager role” loaded on Factor 1, while variables representing the “public relations technician role” loaded on Factor 2. The eigenvalues for these two factors were **3.622883** for Factor 1 and **2.881288** for Factor 2.

The total measuring instrument for this study can be regarded as valid, since the five factors that were extracted, explained 64% (Factor 1 in Section A), 61,4% (Factor 1 + Factor 2 in Section B) and 65% (Factor 1 + Factor 2 in Section C) of the total variance of the three measuring instruments respectively. The constructs or factors as identified, could, therefore, be considered to be measuring what they were supposed to measure.

The testing of the 12 stated hypotheses was done by means of ANOVA and the results were discussed in detail in Chapter 6.

The interpretation of the results, as reported in Chapter 6, is necessary for the conclusions drawn in this chapter. The results that are important for theory development purposes will be presented here. This will be done through a reaction to the research objectives and hypotheses as stated in Chapter 1.

This chapter and study will be concluded with a discussion of the strategic contribution top communicators can make in the organisation.

## **7.2 THE LINK TO RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

In this section a clear link will be established between the original study objectives (as described in Chapter 1) and the respective conclusions. The original objectives of the study will be stated again and the conclusions relating to each individual objective presented.

### **7.2.1 Strategic contribution expected from the top communicator**

This study aims to measure the perception of the top communicator in the South African organisation of the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution to organisational decision-making made by the top communicator. Questionnaires were sent to a sample of top communicators, representing professional organisations in South Africa (PRISA, IABC, SAKOMM, Unitech, and IMPRO) as well as the Top 200 companies as identified in the magazine *Finance Week*, Top 200, 1999.

A total of 202 questionnaires were returned, which was enough according to the minimum requirement for factor analysis. It was also sufficient to obtain ample responses to do statistical analysis on all cells.

From the demographic data it could be inferred that 43% of top communicators indicated that they report to the CEO, while 57% report to another senior manager. A total of 95% regarded the person they report to as a senior manager, while 5% regarded him/her to be a middle manager. It can, therefore, be assumed that most top communicators have ready access to senior management and a high percentage of top communicators have direct access to the most senior manager in the organisation – the CEO. The access that top communicators have to senior management is often an indication of the value and support senior management attaches to this function. With 95% of the respondents indicating that the person they respond to are part of senior management, it can be assumed that the communication function is valued in the South African organisation.

The descriptive statistics indicated that most respondents represented organisations with less than 10 000 staff members. It also indicated that most respondents are members of relatively small communication departments of less than 20 people.

It was hypothesised that the number of staff in the organisation and in the communication department could have an influence on the way in which communication is practised in the organisation. The results of the cross-tabulation of the means for the responses to items in the questionnaire measuring the size of the organisation and the size of the communication department with the means for the constructs “strategic contribution”, “one-way and two-way models” and “public relations manager and public relations technician role” will be discussed later in this chapter.

The qualitative variable “highest qualification of the top communicators” was classified. Qualifications were classified into three categories: graduate qualification (degree or diploma), postgraduate qualification (higher diploma, honours degree, masters' degree, doctorate) and other qualifications (certificates, short courses, etc). Some 82 respondents indicated that they had a graduate qualification, 84 indicated that they had a postgraduate qualification and 34 indicated that they had other qualifications. The mean score for these results was cross-tabulated with the mean score for “strategic contribution” to establish whether top communicators’

qualifications could be an indicator of the strategic contribution they make to organisational decision-making.

Respondents also had to indicate the number of years' experience they had in the communications field. The descriptive statistics indicated that most of the top communicators had between ten and 19 years' experience, followed by one to nine years' experience. This indicates that most top communicators have less than 20 years' experience in the field of public relations. This finding has been cross-tabulated with the mean score for the data representing the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution the top communicator makes to organisational decision-making, to determine whether the number of years' experience that top communicators have will influence the strategic contribution they make to organisational decision-making. The results are discussed below.

Research objective 1: To establish what the top communicator in the South African organisation perceives to be the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution to organisational decision-making made by the top communicator predominantly playing the public relations manager role, and the strategic contribution to organisational decision-making made by the top communicator predominantly playing the public relations technician role.

It can be assumed from the results of the descriptive statistics (averages, standard deviations, Top2Box%, Low2Box%) used for Section A of the measuring instrument that the strongest perception of top communicators in South African organisations is that they have ready access to senior management in their organisations (average, 83,23; Top2Box%, 61.88%). This is an important prerequisite for making a strategic contribution to organisational decision-making.

It can also be assumed that senior management expects the top communicator to play the public relations manager role by managing the communication function in the organisation strategically, because the communication department is expected to manage its own programme in line with the principles of strategic management (average, 77.08; Top2Box%, 39.6%). Top communicators are also expected to



contribute towards effectiveness by helping the organisation to meet its goals (average, 76.93; Top2Box%, 40.1%).

It can furthermore be assumed that it is the perception of top communicators that they are not in a favourable position to influence key strategic decisions of senior management (Low2Box%, 11.88%) and that their input is not necessarily valued before senior management makes decisions (Low2Box%, 6.93%). This finding suggests that top communicators in South African organisations cannot sufficiently fulfil their strategic management role by telling top management what publics know, how they feel and how they may behave to strategic decisions under consideration. As strategic public relations managers, communicators can act as advocates for publics, articulating these external points of view as they counsel top management. When decisions are made, excellent communicators design programmes and craft messages to effectively communicate in a fashion that achieves the top management's desired outcomes among target publics. To play this role as a two-way communicator, the top communicator has to sit at the decision-making table with other senior managers.

Dozier et al (1995:14) state that the top management in organisations with excellent communication programmes value communicators for their input before decisions are made. In this strategic role, the communicator acts as boundary-spanner, environmental scanner and an "early warning system".

It is nearly impossible to separate public relations policy from overall corporate strategy. According to Mason (1974:121) the bigger the decision, the larger the company, and the greater the number of people that are affected, the more significant the public relations component becomes. More often than not, however, the chief executive officer would not consult with public relations about major policy matters.

And yet major public relations problems continually arise from policy decisions in which public relations has had no part. The public relations director may not be sitting at the conference table, but the "publics" are

From the data it also seems as though senior management does not often expect the top communicator to use (formal and informal) research techniques to monitor trends in the organisation's environment for use in business decision-making (Low2Box%, 8.42%). This may be because senior management does not see the top communicator as the person who should do environmental scanning in the organisation in order to monitor trends and obtain information for strategic decision-making.

However, Dozier (in Grunig 1992:341) proposes that practitioners enacting the public relations manager role will engage in both scientific and informal programme evaluation and environmental scanning with greater frequency than practitioners not enacting the manager role. Furthermore, enactment of the public relations technician role is not related to frequency of scientific and informal programme evaluation and environmental scanning activities.

The difference between the perception of the top communicator about senior management's expectations with regard to the strategic contribution the top communicator can make when playing the public relations manager role and the strategic contribution she can make when playing the public relations technician role was tested in Hypothesis 1.

The ANOVA results of this hypothesis test indicated that there is a significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution made by the top communicator when predominantly playing the public relations manager role and the strategic contribution made when predominantly playing the public relations technician role.

The means in the test data set for Hypothesis 1 indicate that there is a strong correlation between "strategic contribution" and "public relations manager role".

The assumption can, therefore, be made that senior management has higher expectations with regard to the strategic contribution made by the top communicator predominantly playing the public relations manager role, than with regard to the strategic contribution made by the top communicator predominantly playing the public

relations technician role. These findings are supported by the theory as discussed in Chapter 2.

Dozier et al (1995:76) report that the dominant role played by top communicators, either manager or technician, provides key indicators of the communication department's power. Manager role enactment leads to power consequences for the public relations function. Serving in the manager role means that top communicators influence key strategic decisions of top management, while serving in the technician role means that top communicators implement, as service providers, decisions made by other senior managers. Participation in management decision-making also enhances the status of public relations practitioners in the organisation.

According to Dozier et al (1995:34) top management will not settle for tactical processes that do not affect the bottom-line. Public relations practitioners should think and act strategically. In Chapter 3 Dozier et al (1995:129) and Pincus & De Bonis (1994:226) state that top communicators and their staff provide expertise on the knowledge, opinions and behavioural predispositions of all publics affected by an organisation in excellent organisations. Senior managers in excellent organisations value this expertise and call on it frequently when strategic decisions are made. They value and support communication because communicators help managers make better decisions.

Dozier (in Grunig, J, 1992:343) states that the expert prescription, communication facilitation and problem-solving process facilitation components of the manager role are significantly and positively correlated with strategic decision-making. Technician scores, on the other hand, show only modest correlation with participation in meetings where decisions are made about implementing communication programmes. The technician role is negatively correlated with participation in meetings where new policies are decided.

Top management also sees no value in seating a technician or tactician in a support function like communications at the decision-making table, as they reason that they could not contribute to strategy formulation.

Allen (1979) furthermore contends that managers value the organisational roles that are part of their management teams. When public relations is excluded from the decision-making process one would expect managers to devalue its role. Maples (1981) found that managers value organisational roles that demand autonomous decision-making. Thus, the greater the autonomy, the greater the value that managers should have for public relations practitioners (Grunig, in Grunig, J, 1992:489).

Knowledge to enact the manager role was the single-most powerful correlate of excellence in public relations and communication management in the *Excellence Study* (Dozier & Broom, 1995:4).

According to the theory, the public relations manager role is, therefore, significantly and positively correlated with strategic decision-making, as was also the finding in this study. The public relations technician role is negatively correlated with participation in meetings where new policies are decided.

### **7.2.2 Strategic contribution by using one-way and two-way public relations models**

Research objective 2: To establish what the top communicator in the South African organisation perceives to be the beliefs and expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution to organisational decision-making made by the top communicator using one-way public relations models in communication activities, and the strategic contribution to organisational decision-making made by the top communicator using two-way models in communication activities and organisational decision-making.

This study aims, amongst others, to measure the perceptions of the top communicator with regard to the expectations of senior management about the strategic contribution made by her and the communication department when using one-way public relations models in communication activities and organisational decision-making and the

strategic contribution made by them when using two-way models in communication activities and organisational decision-making.

According to the theory as discussed in Chapter 3, organisations that achieve excellence have communication departments with the expertise for both traditional one-way and advanced two-way communication to negotiate with and persuade both senior management and publics toward mutually beneficial relationships. However, communication departments need CEOs and top managements that understand such practices and expect them from their communication departments.

Organisations with high overall excellence scores in the *Excellence Study* reported a strong preference for two-way symmetrical and two-way asymmetrical practices. Top communicators in these excellent organisations also reported high top management demand for two-way symmetrical and two-way asymmetrical practices. Communication departments in excellent organisations furthermore know how to deliver both two-way symmetrical and two-way asymmetrical practices. Such shared expectations presuppose new communication expertise (Dozier et al 1995:102).

According to the results of the descriptive statistics used for analysing the data in Section B of the measuring instrument (relating to the use of one-way and two-way models), it can be assumed that it is the perception of top communicators that the media relations role is still considered very important to senior management (as was also indicated by Grunig, L in the literature study). Respondents indicated that senior management believes that it is the task of the top communicator to prepare news stories that reporters will use (average, 69.85; Top2Box%, 34.65%) and that the purpose of communication is to prevent unfavourable publicity for the organisation in the media (Top2Box%, 21.78%).

This corresponds with the findings of the *Excellence* team that, although senior management prefers its top public relations person to play a manager role rather than a technician role, they also prefer them to play the media relations role. As discussed in Chapter 4, Grunig, L (1997:7) states that the *Excellence* team thought this reflects top

management's continuing preoccupation with the media, despite much evidence suggesting that the media plays a marginal rather than central part in the effectiveness of most organisations.

Top communicators also indicated in this study that senior management believes it is the role of communication to facilitate mutual understanding between the management of the organisation and the publics the organisation affects (average, 69.46; Top2Box%, 32.18%). This practice is typical of the two-way symmetrical model. It can, therefore, be assumed that senior management expects the top communicator to use the more sophisticated two-way models in their communication activities and organisational decision-making. Senior management furthermore believes that the top communicator should make sure that the organisation's policies are described in ways its publics would be most likely to accept (average, 66.47), which also indicates a preference for the use of two-way models (two-way asymmetrical models). This coincides with the theory, stating that two-way models are used to a greater extent in excellent organisations.

One can also assume that it is the perception of top communicators that senior management, to a lesser extent, believe that it is the purpose of communication to change the attitudes of management as much as it is to change the attitudes of publics (Low2Box%, 11.39%). According to the literature, this two-way symmetrical approach is one of the key indicators of excellence in communication practices, but it seems as though senior managements in South African organisations do not recognise this. Although it can be assumed that they acknowledge the role of communication to facilitate mutual understanding between the management of the organisation and the publics it affects, they do not see the necessity for management to change in order to accommodate publics and to ensure two-way symmetrical communication.

Top communicators can, therefore, to a greater extent, concentrate on sensitising senior management to the needs of clients and stakeholders and the way in which the organisation could respond to these needs. This could be done through formal and informal research.

According to Dozier et al (1995:124), an excellent communication department does its best work when it helps senior management understand organisational constituents. Persuasion cuts two ways. Savvy CEOs let excellent communicators persuade their senior managers as well as constituents. CEOs include excellent communicators in all strategic decisions, because nobody else knows better how those decisions will affect key constituents. On that basis, senior managers come to value the communication department in a new way, and support the communication function as an important component of organisational effectiveness.

As mentioned above, it can also be assumed that it is the perception of top communicators that senior management does not necessarily believe that research should be done after the completion of communication programmes to determine how effective the programmes were in changing people's attitudes (Low2Box%, 12.87%). This could be an indication that, measuring the success of communication programmes in terms of changing people's attitudes towards an issue or towards the organisation, is not very important to senior management. Senior management probably still measures the success of communication programmes in a non-strategic way by looking at the number of people attending events or using the products of the organisation.

However, it can be assumed that senior management believes that a clipping file is not the only way of determining the success of public relations and that other methods could also be used to measure this success (Low2Box%, 14.85%).

Top communicators indicated in this survey that there is a significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution made by the top communicator when using one-way public relations models in organisational decision-making and communication activities and when using two-way models (Hypothesis 2).

Although this ANOVA result does not indicate the direction of the difference, it can be assumed (from the test data set for Hypothesis 2) that senior management expects the top communicator, using two-way public relations models, to make a bigger strategic

contribution to organisational decision-making than the top communicator using one-way models. “Two-way models” correlate highly with “strategic contribution” in the test data set for Hypothesis 2. This finding is supported by the theory as discussed in Chapter 3.

Organisations that practice the one-way press agency and public information models need technicians who do not necessarily make a contribution to organisational decision-making. Communication staff in these organisations are not involved in strategic planning and problem-solving when using these models. Once strategic decisions are made and action plans drawn, the technician, practising the one-way models, is brought in to implement outward communication from the organisation to its target publics. The process is therefore one-way.

According to Dozier et al (1995:122), excellent company CEOs want communication that is strategically based on research and that involves communication with key publics. Excellent communication relies on two-way dialogue between the organisation and its publics. It is no longer enough for companies to use one-way communication to inform or try to persuade people to believe what it wants them to believe. Key publics must be able to communicate with the organisation and be heard. Excellent communication, therefore, requires research to take into account the interests and views of all internal and external audiences, and seeks to create understanding and dialogue (White & Mazur, 1995:22).

As a result, top communicators can serve as a kind of early warning system, able to alert the organisation to potential conflicts with strategic publics. (And in the process, to establish a base for themselves in strategic planning and management decision-making.) (Grunig, L 1997:7). However, senior management must also demand these practices for communication programmes to be excellent.



### **7.2.3 The use of one-way and two-way models by public relations managers and technicians**

Research objective 3: To establish what the top communicator in the South African organisation perceives to be the beliefs and expectations of senior management with regard to the top communicator predominantly playing the public relations manager role using one-way public relations models in communication activities and organisational decision-making, and the top communicator predominantly playing the public relations technician role using one-way public relations models in communication activities and organisational decision-making.

Research objective 4: To establish what the top communicator in the South African organisation perceives to be the beliefs and expectations of senior management with regard to the top communicator predominantly playing the public relations manager role using two-way public relations models in communication activities and organisational decision-making, and the top communicator predominantly playing the public relations technician role using two-way public relations models in communication activities and organisational decision-making.

In Section C of the measuring instrument, which measured the top communicator playing the public relations manager role and/or the public relations technician role, the three most important scores were:

- Senior management expects one to issue news releases (average, 76.07; Top2Box%, 50.99%). (Media relations role)
- Senior management expects one to take responsibility for the success or failure of one's organisation's communication programmes just as other managers take responsibility for their terrain (average, 81.19; Top2Box%, 50%). (Public relations manager role)
- Senior management expects one to develop strategies for solving communication problems because of one's experience and training (average, 77.52; Top2Box%, 47.52%). (Public relations manager role)

From the above results it can again be assumed that senior management expects the top communicator to play the media relations role, apart from the public relations manager role. Playing the manager role scored high and it can, therefore, be assumed that this is also important to senior management.

The ANOVA results of Hypothesis 3 indicated that there is a significant difference between the use of one-way models by the top communicator playing the public relations manager role and the use of one-way models by the top communicator playing the public relations technician role. Consistent with theory, as indicated in Chapter 4, the technician role is positively and significantly correlated with the one-way press agency and public information models in this study, as indicated by the results of the test data set for Hypothesis 3.

The results of ANOVA for Hypothesis 4 furthermore indicate that there is a significant difference between the use of two-way public relations models by the top communicator playing the public relations manager role and the use of two-way models by the top communicator playing the public relations technician role. The test data results indicate that public relations manager role-playing correlates highly with two-way models. This is supported by the theory, as indicated in Chapter 4.

In Chapter 4, Dozier et al (1995:112) state that the technician role indicates weak, negative correlations with the two-way models. However, the two-way models correlate positively with the public relations manager role. Lauzen & Dozier (1992:211) also state that the two-way public relations models correlated positively with the public relations manager role in several studies.

Practitioners in organisations practising the press agency and public information models of public relations will engage in few activities that define the public relations manager role. Practitioners in organisations practising the two-way asymmetric and two-way symmetric models of public relations are more likely to play the public relations manager role.

The following is therefore suggested:

- Manager role enactment is more frequent in organisations practising the two-way symmetric and asymmetric models of public relations.
- Manager role enactment is less frequent in organisations practising the press agency or public information models of public relations.
- Technician role enactment is more frequent in organisations practising the press agency and public information models of public relations (Dozier, in Grunig, J, 1992:347).

One explanation for these findings is that organisations have top managements with different strategic decision-making dynamics and different orientations toward environmental inputs. The process of strategic decision-making can be organised by type. The process is affected by both underlying beliefs of powerful members of the dominant coalition and the relative concentration of power in such coalitions. Both beliefs and power affect the negotiated belief structures of dominant coalitions (Dozier, in Grunig, J, 1992:348).

The open or closed mind-set of top management also strongly mediates the model of public relations followed and the roles that practitioners play (Dozier, in Grunig, J, 1992:344).

The assumption can, therefore, be made that it is the perception of top communicators that senior management expects the top communicator, predominantly playing the public relations manager role, to make use of two-way public relations models in organisational decision-making and communication activities and the top communicator predominantly playing the public relations technician role to make use of one-way models.

With the results for Hypotheses 1 and 2 as a point of departure, it can be assumed that the top communicator, predominantly playing the public relations manager role, and using two-way public relations models, can make a strategic contribution to organisational decision-making.

This can lead to excellent communication and can contribute to the top communicator eventually becoming part of top management.

#### **7.2.4 The top communicator's strategic contribution when reporting to senior management**

Research objective 5: To establish what the top communicator in the South African organisation perceives to be the expectations of senior management with regard to the top communicator making a strategic contribution to organisational decision-making when reporting to the CEO and when reporting to any other manager.

Research objective 6: To establish what the top communicator in the South African organisation perceives to be the expectations of senior management with regard to the top communicator making a strategic contribution to organisational decision-making when reporting to senior management and when reporting to middle management.

The descriptive statistics showed that 57% of the respondents reported to the CEO in their respective organisations, while 43% reported to other managers. A total of 95% of the respondents regarded the person they report to as part of senior management and 5% regarded them as part of middle management.

In Chapter 2 it was stated that Dozier et al (1995:84) found that top communicators who report directly to CEOs have slightly higher overall excellence scores for their organisations than do top communicators who report to CEOs through a longer chain of command. In this study, top communicators who reported to CEOs through a longer chain of command (i.e. who reported to other senior managers such as the Marketing Manager, the Financial Manager or the Human Resources Manager) had a slightly higher mean score in the test data set for Hypothesis 5 (the mean scores for “reporting lines” were cross-tabulated with the mean scores for “strategic contribution”), than those reporting to the CEO. However, the statistical test ANOVA indicated that the calculated *p*-value of 0.28943 is larger than the significance level of 0.05.

The null hypothesis can, therefore, not be rejected, which means that there is no statistically significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution made by the top communicator when reporting to the CEO and the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution made by the top communicator when reporting to any other senior manager.

The ANOVA results of the hypothesis test for Hypothesis 6 showed that there is a slight difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution the top communicator can make to organisational decision-making when reporting to middle management and when reporting to senior management. The null hypothesis was accepted at a 90% confidence level for Hypothesis 6. According to the test data set “strategic contribution” correlates higher with “senior management” than with “middle management”.

However, since the test data set for this hypothesis indicates that the mean score for top communicators making a strategic contribution to organisational-decision-making when reporting to senior management is only slightly higher than the mean score for top communicators making a strategic contribution when reporting to middle management, it can be assumed that reporting lines are not a very good indicator of strategic contribution.

It can, therefore, be assumed that these findings support the communication theory and that reporting relationships are necessary, but hardly sufficient for making a strategic contribution to organisational decision-making as indicated by Dozier et al (1995:84). Reporting relationships alone tell us little about the influence of individuals on senior management or on organisational decision-making. The critical factor is not whom one reports to, but rather whether one has access to any of the (corporate) officers at will.

Although top management membership of the top communicator was not tested in this hypothesis, it is interesting to note that the *Excellence Study* found that membership of

top management is an important characteristic but not a mandatory requirement for excellence in communication.

This furthermore confirms the fact that formal reporting relationships are important but not sufficient for strategic communication management (Grunig, L, 1997:6).

### **7.2.5 Strategic contribution and the use of one-way and two-way models in small and large organisations and departments**

Research objective 7: To establish what the top communicator in the South African organisation perceives to be the expectations of senior management with regard to the top communicator making a strategic contribution in a small organisation, and the top communicator making a strategic contribution in a large organisation.

Research objective 8: To establish what the top communicator in the South African organisation perceives to be the expectations of senior management with regard to the top communicator making a strategic contribution in a small public relations department, and the top communicator making a strategic contribution in a large public relations department.

Research objective 9: To establish what the top communicator in the South African organisation perceives to be the beliefs and expectations of senior management with regard to the use of one-way public relations models for communication activities and organisational decision-making by the top communicator in a small public relations department, and the use of one-way public relations models for communication activities and organisational decision-making by the top communicator in a large public relations department.

Research objective 10: To establish what the top communicator in the South African organisation perceives to be the beliefs and expectations of senior management with regard to the use of two-way public relations models for communication activities and

organisational decision-making by the top communicator in a small public relations department, and the use of two-way public relations models for communication activities and organisational decision-making by the top communicator in a large department.

The ANOVA results of Hypothesis 7 indicate that there is a slight difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution made by the top communicator in a small organisation (one to 200 people) and the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution made by the top communicator in a large organisation (201 to 95 000 people). (The alternative hypothesis for Hypothesis 7 was accepted at a 90% confidence level.)

According to Dozier et al (1995:113), organisational size does not affect communication manager, media relations or technician role-playing. Because of the results of Hypothesis 7, the assumption can, however, be made that organisational size could slightly influence the strategic contribution of the top communicator to organisational decision-making. The test data for Hypothesis 7 indicates that there is a slightly stronger correlation between “small organisations” and “strategic contribution” (mean score, 75.13158), than between “large organisations” and “strategic contribution” (mean score, 68.86389).

According to these results, it can be assumed that the top communicator in a small organisation would have a slightly better opportunity to make a strategic contribution to organisational decision-making than the top communicator in a large organisation. The reason for this could be because there are many other senior managers in a large organisation, apart from the top communicator, who can also make a strategic contribution to organisational decision-making. The top communicator’s input would, therefore, not necessarily be valued. In a small organisation every senior manager’s input is usually valued and the top communicator would probably have a better chance of being considered part of top management when she can make a strategic contribution to organisational decision-making in this organisation.

The results of Hypothesis 8 indicated that there is a significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution made by the top communicator as part of a small public relations department (one to five people) and the contribution made by the top communicator as part of a large public relations department (six to 90 people).

The null hypothesis was, therefore, rejected in this case. The test data for Hypothesis 8 indicates that the construct “large department” correlates highly with “strategic contribution”.

Dozier et al (1995:113) also state that departmental size impact on traditional role-playing. According to them, top communicators play the media relations and communication technician roles more frequently in small communication departments, in which top communicators cannot easily delegate such tasks.

Dozier et al (1995:113) furthermore indicate that the number of employees in the communication department does not affect advanced role-playing by top communicators. However, in this study it was found that the use of “two-way public relations models” correlated highly with “large department” which could indicate that advanced practices are used to a greater extent in large departments. It could, therefore, be assumed that communicators would use the two-way public relations models (and predominantly play the public relations manager role) in large public relations departments, as will be explained next.

The ANOVA results of Hypothesis 9 indicate that there is no difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the use of one-way public relations models in small public relations departments and the use of one-way models in large departments. (The null hypothesis for Hypothesis 9 could not be rejected.) The assumption can, therefore, be made that senior management expects top communicators in small and large departments to use one-way models in their communication activities.



However, the ANOVA results of Hypothesis 10 indicate that there is a statistically significant difference between the expectations of senior management with regard to the use of two-way public relations models in small public relations departments and the use of two-way models in large departments. The construct “two-way models” correlated highly with “large department” in the test data set and the assumption can, therefore, be made that two-way practices will be more prevalent in large departments.

It can, therefore, be assumed that top communicators will use the more sophisticated two-way public relations models and play the public relations manager role more often in large departments.

In summary, the assumption can, therefore, be made that it is the perception of top communicators in South African organisations that senior management, to a greater extent, expects them to make a strategic contribution to organisational decision-making when they are part of a small organisation. It can also be assumed that senior management, to a greater extent, expects the top communicator to make a strategic contribution to organisational decision-making in a large public relations department. Senior management expects small and large departments to use one-way public relations models in their communication activities, but they also expect large departments to use two-way public relations models in communication activities and organisational decision-making.

#### **7.2.6 Qualifications and experience when making a strategic contribution**

Objective 11: To establish what the top communicator in the South African organisation perceives to be the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution made by top communicators with a graduate qualification and the strategic contribution made by top communicators with a postgraduate qualification.

Objective 12: To establish what the top communicator in the South African organisation perceives to be the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution made by top communicators with a few years' experience in the communications field and the strategic contribution made by top communicators with many years' experience in the communications field.

The ANOVA results of Hypothesis 11 indicate that there is no statistically significant difference between the perception of the top communicator about the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution made by the top communicator with a graduate qualification, and the top communicator with a postgraduate qualification. The test data set for Hypothesis 11 indicates that the mean scores for the categories "other qualifications" (mean score, 69.35484), "graduate qualification" (mean score, 68.71951), "postgraduate qualification" (mean score, 71.65212) and "all groups" (mean score, 70.06994) differ very little. Most of the respondents had qualifications in the public relations, communications, languages, social sciences and commerce fields.

The assumption can, therefore, be made that qualification is a weak indicator of the strategic contribution the top communicator makes to organisational decision-making. This could indicate that skills and knowledge (as indicated in Chapter 2), rather than qualifications, are valued by senior management when the top communicator makes a strategic contribution.

Dozier et al (1995:103) asked what comes first – an enlightened coalition demanding excellence, or a knowledgeable communication department delivering excellence? They concluded that expertise typically – but not always – comes first. Top management tends to value and support communicators who first demonstrate their worth. Public relations will be considered to be part of top management if they can prove that they can do the job.

Dozier et al (1995:114) also state that education does not influence playing either advanced or traditional roles. Activities such as attending professional meetings,

holding office in professional associations, or making presentations to such associations, do not seem to influence role enactment by the top communicator.

Pollack (1986) found that practitioners included in the inner circle tend to have more training in public relations as opposed to just a few courses or seminars or no formal education in public relations.

This finding is consistent with Lawler and Hage (1973) who, more than a decade earlier, established that professional training, along with professional activity, decreases feelings of powerlessness (White & Dozier, in Grunig J, 1992:493).

The result of a lack of relevant knowledge is that organisations unfortunately sometimes look outside the ranks of their own communication and public relations technicians to find managers for this important function. Encroachment is the inevitable by-product of a calling that fails to rise above technique. The career failure of top practitioners to assume the management role within the organisation is also a failure to truly emerge as a professional from the communication skill cluster that operationally defines what practitioners do – and what the practice is (Dozier, in Grunig, J, 1992:352).

The ANOVA results of Hypothesis 12 indicated a statistically significant difference between the perception of the top communicator about the expectations of senior management with regard to the strategic contribution to organisational decision-making made by the top communicator with a few years' experience (one to eight years) in the communications field and the top communicator with many years' experience (nine to 40 years) in the communications field. The construct "many years' experience" correlates highly with "strategic contribution", as indicated in the test data set.

It can, therefore, be assumed that senior management expects the top communicator with many years' experience in the communications field to make a bigger strategic contribution to organisational decision-making than the top communicator with a few years' experience.

Although membership of top management was not tested in this hypothesis, it is interesting to note that Grunig, J & Grunig, L posited two explanations for the inclusion of public relations in top management: either public relations departments represented in the power elite are empowered to practice the two-way model of communication or only those practitioners with expertise to practice such a model will be included in that inner circle.

Because of the significant correlations between inclusion in top management and both education and expertise in public relations, they favoured the latter explanation (Grunig, L, in Grunig, J, 1992:493).

It can, therefore, be assumed that top communicators with the relevant public relations/communication knowledge, skills and experience should have a better opportunity to become part of top management.

The limitations experienced with this study, as well as the recommendations for further research will now be discussed.

### **7.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

The most notable limitation of this study was that the sources of information that were used were to a large extent limited to the writings of the members of the *Excellence* team, amongst others Dozier, Grunig, J & Grunig, L, since the most comprehensive research on this topic was done by this team. Where the work of other writers was consulted for this study, the research of the *Excellence* team was often quoted and discussed.

In the literature review it was indicated that top communicators should be managers with communication skills, rather than communicators with management skills. The focus should, therefore, be on the management and leadership skills of the top communicator. Although the knowledge level of top communicators was briefly

discussed in this study, more research needs to be done on the management skills of top communicators in their new role as facilitators, negotiators and strategists in the organisation.

Internal and external audiences furthermore need to be aligned with the strategic vision and objectives of the organisation in order for the latter to survive in a very competitive environment.

Because of the communication expertise and the holistic perspective of the top communicator, as well as her location as boundary-spanner in the organisation, she can act as the integrator of processes and strategies in the organisation in order to align the various stakeholders, shareholders, publics, staff and clients of the organisation. She is also in a favourable position to integrate organisational processes by means of communication practices in order to contribute to the efficiency and effectiveness of the organisation. However, further research needs to be done on the skills necessary to play this role and to truly become part of the decision-making process on top management level.

#### **7.4 CONCLUDING REMARKS**

This study has set out to contribute to communication theory building. In studying communication theory and identifying concepts, constructs and variables as well as the links between them, it was endeavoured to contribute to an understanding of the underlying principles of communication management in the modern organisation. Since the environment in which communicators operate is fast becoming more complex, with new communication sources, mediums, receivers and methods coming into existence every day, it is important for the communication manager to be knowledgeable about the theory of communication management. This study can help top communicators understand that it is now, more than ever, necessary to use more sophisticated two-way public relations models for communicating with constituencies and to make a strategic contribution to organisational decision-making by playing the public relations manager role.

Communicators in communication departments furthermore need to perform their technical work in a strategic manner in order to add value in the organisation. Top communicators in the South African organisation will have to position themselves as managers who can take part in management decision-making and who can be held accountable for their communication actions in the same manner as other senior managers are held accountable for their actions. In this way senior managers will come to value and support the top communicator and the communication department.

The findings of this study supported the assumption that it is the perception of top communicators in South African organisations that senior management expects them to make a strategic contribution to organisational decision-making by playing the public relations manager role, and using two-way public relations models in organisational decision-making and communication activities.

With the results for Hypotheses 1 and 2 as a point of departure, it can be assumed that the top communicator, predominantly playing the public relations manager role, and using two-way public relations models, can make a strategic contribution to organisational decision-making. This can lead to excellent communication and can contribute to the top communicator being valued and supported by top management.

Top communicators do not perceive reporting lines to the CEO (or any other manager) or senior management (or middle management) to be very good indicators of their strategic contribution to organisational decision-making. These findings support the communication theory that reporting relationships are necessary, but hardly sufficient for making a strategic contribution to organisational decision-making, as indicated by Dozier et al (1995:84). Reporting relationships alone tell us little about the influence of individuals on senior management or on organisational decision-making. The critical factor is not whom one reports to, but rather whether one has access to any of the (corporate) officers at will.

The assumption can also be made that it is the perception of top communicators that senior management expects the top communicator in a small organisation to make a

slightly bigger strategic contribution to organisational decision-making than they expect the top communicator in a large organisation to make. It can also be assumed that senior management expects the top communicator to make a bigger strategic contribution in large public relations departments, where technical tasks can be delegated to other staff. Senior management furthermore expects top communicators in small and large departments to use one-way public relations models in their communication departments, but they expect top communicators in large departments to also use two-way public relations models.

It can, therefore, be assumed that two-way public relations models will be practised more frequently in large departments where it will also be expected of the top communicator to make a strategic contribution to organisational decision-making (by playing the public relations manager role).

This study showed that the highest qualification of the top communicator is a weak indicator of the strategic contribution the top communicator makes to organisational decision-making. This could indicate that skills and knowledge, rather than qualifications, are valued by senior management when the top communicator makes a strategic contribution to organisational decision-making.

Senior management furthermore expects the top communicator with many years' experience in the communications field to make a bigger strategic contribution to organisational decision-making than the top communicator with a few years' experience.

As mentioned in Chapter 1 this cross-sectional study not only provides communication managers with information on how to become involved in strategic management in order to practice excellent communication, but can also be used by anyone wishing to contribute to excellence in the organisation through communication. This study highlighted the importance of the power of the top communicator and the communication department in the organisation; the expectations of senior management of the top communicator and the communication department with regard to the use of one-way and two-way public relations practices; and the public relations manager

and/or public relations technician role the top communicator plays in the organisation in order to contribute to communication excellence.