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## **Public relations practice and education in Africa: The view from South Africa**

### *ABSTRACT*

The first democratic elections in the history of South Africa have taken place, the Government of National Unity has been installed, and as the country at last starts moving towards establishing a non-racial society based on a constitution that embodies equal rights for every person, the need to establish an equitable and effective higher education system becomes a top priority.

This requires a transformation process that will necessitate the management of diversity, and organisational changes within all our institutions of higher learning.

## INTRODUCTION

### Background and goal of the study

A distinct characteristic of South Africa's readmittance to the international community after the country's democratisation is its increased involvement with the rest of Africa. As the most developed country in sub-Saharan Africa, South Africa could contribute to the advancement of the African continent in many areas. One such potential area is public relations education. Apart from contact with its neighbouring countries, the public relations profession and public relations education in South Africa have, however, up to now been largely isolated from the rest of Africa. Locally, very little is known about public relations practice and education in the rest of Africa. Local computer searches produced no reference material and only a few articles dealing with the topic could be found in local and international academic journals. The author is aware of only a few papers that have been delivered on the topic by South Africans experts in Africa and by African experts in South Africa.

South Africa has an established public relations profession organised into the Public Relations Association of Southern Africa (PRISA) which was established in 1957 and now has more than 4000 registered members (Skinner & Von Essen, 1995:21). The country also has extensive educational opportunities in public relations, which in many respects compare well with that of the United States of America, which is widely accepted as pace-setter in this field (Ferreira, 1990:37-39; Roodt, 1988:182). South Africa should thus be in a position to offer a contribution to the development of public relations on the continent by means of contributing towards the development of public relations education.

In order to offer such contribution, public relations educators in South Africa need knowledge of the existence of public relations practice and education in the rest of Africa.

This article is based on research undertaken by the author with this need in mind. The goal of the study is to supply South African public relations educators with an overview of the development and current state of public relations practice and education in the rest of Africa.

It should be noted that it is generally accepted in the available literature on public relations theory (e.g. Borhan, 1993:25; Grunig & Hunt, 1984:25-43; Kendall, 1992:17-19; Nartey, 1988:25; Van der Meiden, 1993:8-11 and Vestheim, 1992:23-40) that public relations is practised from different perspectives and definitions by different organisations and different countries, depending on, among other things, the culture

of a particular country and evolutionary level that public relations has attained in that particular country. In the scope of this article no attempt is made to determine from what perspective public relations is practised in different countries in Africa nor what the quality of educational programmes is as compared to South African and/or international standards. The purpose is simply to report on the existence of public relations practice and education or the lack thereof in countries, other than South Africa, on the African continent.

### **Research methodology, focus and limitations of the study**

The study was done between 1995 and 1997. The investigation was aimed at the whole of Africa other than South Africa, but excluding the islands. Information for this report was obtained by means of both a literature and empirical study. The literature survey of books and journals provided information on the developmental history of public relations practice and education in the rest of Africa. Information on the current state of public relations practice and education in the rest of Africa was obtained mostly by means of correspondence, which took the form of letters and facsimile messages, and in some instances electronic mail.

Initially letters were sent to all universities, polytechnics, colleges, embassies and high commissioners, and government ministries of African countries listed in the 1994 edition of *The World Book of Learning*. This included all the countries on the continent excluding Western Sahara and Equatorial Guinea, bringing the total number of countries contacted to 45.

The pilot study was followed up by other correspondence. Letters were also sent to development organisations (such as UNESCO), public relations societies, chapters of the African Council for Communication Education, the Federation of African Public Relations Associations, the International Public Relations Association, African chapters of the latter, as well as public relations practitioners, authors and educators.

The study was hampered by certain logistical problems. Examples included the following: The postal service in Africa is often slow and unreliable. In some cases returning letters were received more than seven months after the date it was written by the respondent. Letters to Angola and Somalia have been returned to the sender undelivered as the surface mail service to these countries has been suspended at the time.

Secondly, few organisations contacted had facsimile machines or e-mail addresses. In some instances none of the author's repeated attempts to send faxes to existing numbers were successful as telephone lines were out of order for months. Thirdly, a large section of Africa is French and/or Arabic speaking. Very few of these countries

responded.

Consequently, information was received on only 28 countries. This report is therefore, by no means comprehensive. It could, however, serve as a starting point for further investigation.

## **DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICE IN THE REST OF AFRICA**

In most countries in the rest of Africa professional organisation in public relations started later than in South Africa.

However, according to Nartey (1988:25) the concept of public relations was practised in Africa long before the era of colonialism. He draws a parallel between the task of a public relations practitioner and that of the spokesperson at the chief's palace in traditional African villages.

By tradition, no African chief or elder statesman in the village speaks directly to a visitor who calls at the Chief's palace. All interactions and communication are channelled through a spokesman, a linguist, or an interpreter or all in one. People who are appointed to such offices in the palace are known to be well versed in the custom and traditional practices of the village. Such persons assume eminent positions and are highly respected by the people.

According to Nartey, the concept of public relations also finds expression in the African marital affairs and in the use of traditional music, dancing and the sounds of drums used to communicate to the inhabitants of traditional African villages. A middle-man, for example, negotiates a marriage contract and the value of the dowry to be awarded to the family of the bride.

As far as public relations in its modern form is concerned, it is not possible to make a general statement about the state of the profession on the rest of the continent. While the profession is virtually non-existent in some countries it has reached quite an advanced level in others.

According to Pritchitt (in Fry, 1992:25) it is a mistake to think of Africa as unsophisticated in public relations. He mentions Uganda as an example of a country which received a United Nations international award for its public relations efforts against the spread of Aids. The profession in this country is organised into the Public Relations Association of Uganda (PRAU) which was formed in 1976. It had 70 active members in 1995 (Mutabaah, 1995). Zimbabwe also won a United Nations award as well as a Golden Award from the International Public Relations Association for an Aids

awareness campaign (Dickens, 1993:25).

Nartey (1988:25) mentions Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Uganda, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe as examples of countries whose public relations societies have constitutions and codes of ethics that encourage the observance and maintenance of high standards through education.

In Mali, on the other hand, public relations does not seem to exist as a career field. A spokesperson from the Ministry of National Education of Mali (Bellegarde, 1995) could supply no information on the nature of public relations in Mali and referred the author to the neighbouring country, Senegal, of which no response could be attained either. According to a spokesperson from the Pan African Institute of Development (Gbedo, 1995) there is a public relations association in Cameroon. However, none of the author's letters to this organisation were responded to. The author also did not get a response from an address of a public relations association in Tunisia, supplied by the Ministry of Communication (Boulares, 1995) of this country.

According to Traore (1995) public relations does exist in the Ivory Coast, but is not very well known. There are two societies for professional communicators in this country: Association des Professionnels de la Communication (APROCOM) and Agence de Communication (Stratégis).

According to Opukah (1992b:14-16) the public relations profession in Africa made most of its progress the past decade and a half. He argues that ten or more years ago it was evident that the profession of public relations in Africa had no focus and seemed to have no future. A move towards professionalism occurred only recently, closely allied with the emergence of democratisation all over the world. He sees the emergence of the era of freedom, transparency, accountability and social responsibility on the continent as another boost for the development of public relations as a profession in Africa (Opukah, 1992b:15-16).

According to Opukah (1993b:12-13) one can still distinguish between two types of practitioners in Africa. The first type is classified as the "early birds" of the profession. They are older and many of them occupy senior positions, mostly in the public sector, but they have very limited education. The second type are the professionals who occupy their positions mostly in the private sector and in consultancies, largely by virtue of meritorious achievement and tertiary education.

Nartey (1988:26) as well as Opukah (1992b:15) points out that many of the early professionals in Africa entered the profession through journalism and many were trained abroad as local training facilities were inadequate at the time.

Not only Opukah, but also Mersham (1992:54-59) relates the development of public relations in Africa to the level of democracy and press freedom. For example, in Malawi, where democracy was introduced only recently, formal training in and professional organisation of public relations do not exist as yet although informal training in public relations started recently. The London Chamber of Commerce and Industry, for example, has an examination centre in Malawi (Wicks, 1995). According to a spokesperson from The Polytechnic (Mang'anda, 1995), a constituent college of the University of Malawi, a course in journalism was introduced at this institution only after the recent political changes, since under the previous single-party rule, journalism, and consequently public relations, was frowned upon.

In Burkina Faso public relations is beginning to emerge as a career field in line with the establishment of private radio stations and newspapers since the advent of democracy in the country. Public relations staff are trained either in Europe or by their employers (Cesaire, 1995). The recently established Department of Communication Arts at the University of Ouagadougou does offer training in written and oral communication, and is planning a new course with options in journalism and public relations (Sawadogo, 1995).

The development of public relations on the continent is also influenced by the availability of mass media. The African countries with the most developed mass media also house the most thriving public relations societies. One example is Nigeria. Although currently once again under military rule the country has an extensive system of mass communication. In 1959 it was the first in Africa to introduce television and by 1981 the country had 15 daily newspapers, 25 radio stations and 20 television stations (Mytton, 1983:80-81, 118). Nigeria had 31 daily newspapers in 1990 with an average circulation of 1,7 million. In 1993 14 companies were granted licences to operate private television stations. For the population of 88,5 million (according to the 1991 census) UNESCO counted 19,35 million radio receivers and 3,65 million television receivers in the country in 1991 (Europa world year book, 1994:2241,2247). This accounts for the steady growth, despite state financial interest in several publishers (Jefkins, 1992:235).

Public relations in its modern form started in Nigeria not long after South Africa. Nigeria today has one of the most advanced public relations professions in Africa. Practitioners are licensed and the Nigerian Institute gets a government allowance (Pritchitt, in Fry, 1992:25). The first public relations office was established in Nigeria in 1944. It had a staff of ten, who were mostly British, posted to Nigeria to lend publicity support to British in the World War. In the private sector the United African Company played the pioneering role in establishing a public relations department in 1949. The first tertiary institution offering public relations training in Nigeria was

the Jackson College of Journalism established at the University of Nigeria in 1960. The College offered mass communication, journalism and public relations. After the oil boom the practice of public relations exploded in Nigeria. The Public Relations Association of Nigeria (PRAN) was established in 1963 and later became the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (Ogunmakin, 1993:71-73).

Another example of a country with a well developed mass communication infrastructure and a thriving public relations industry is Egypt. Despite a fairly high illiteracy rate in Egypt, Cairo is one of the biggest publishing centres in the Middle East and in Africa (Europa world year book, 1994:1035).

Some African countries at some stage used to have a formal association for public relations, which has since ceased to exist. One such example is Zaire (now called the Congo Democratic Republic). Although the 1994-95 membership of International Public Relations Association listed an address of a public relations society in this country, none of the author's letters sent to this address were answered. Enquiries by the South African Embassy in Kinshasa regarding a society also lead to nothing. According to a spokesman from the Embassy (Hough, 1995) public relations and related fields were also not taught at universities and colleges in this country at the time as these institutions were either closed or operating only partially due to financial problems.

Another such example is Zambia. According to a spokesperson from the Zambia Institute of Mass Communication (Sampa, 1995) there used to be a public relations society in the country which has been dormant for some time now. According to a spokesman from the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Services in Zambia (Kazeze, 1995) public relations is a new phenomenon in the country and is trying to gain ground. Although the International Public Relations Association directory of 1994 listed the Public Relations Association of Zambia as a chapter, none of the author's letters to this association were replied to.

### **Neighbouring countries of South Africa**

In the Southern African region the practice of public relations is most advanced in South Africa and Zimbabwe. In the other nine countries public relations is served by few practitioners although the industry is growing in size (Rhodes & Baker, in Lubbe & Puth, 1994:287).

According to the Director of the Public Relations Office of the Universidade Eduardo Mondlane in Mozambique (Lopes, 1995) there is a public relations society in the form of Associação de Empresas de Publicidade de Moçambique. There is also one journalism

training institution, Escola de Jornalismo, which is in Maputo. None of the author's repeated letters to these two organisations have been replied to, however.

Namibia, Swaziland, Lesotho, and Botswana do not have their own public relations societies but rely on neighbouring PRISA for professional organisation and training and development. Practitioners often travel from these countries to attend PRISA courses in South Africa (Ferreira, 1995b). According to a public relations executive in Namibia (Nakazibwe-Sekandi, 1995) practitioners' efforts in this country to form a professional body have been unsuccessful due to fragmented thinking among potential members. One school of thought supported the formation of a Namibian Public Relations Association while the other camp supported affiliation to PRISA. This matter was resolved in 1995 when the formation of a Namibian branch of PRISA was approved at a PRISA Executive Committee meeting. This new body is now affiliated to PRISA and acts as a regional office (Viall, 1995).

### **The Federation of African Public Relations Associations (FAPRA)**

The organisation that attempts to unite public relations practitioners in Africa is FAPRA. FAPRA was formed in 1975 in Nairobi (Opukah, 1992b:16). The organisation covers both the Francophone and Anglophone parts of Africa, although the Anglophone part is considered the most active half as far as public relations is concerned (Opukah, 1993a:15).

According to Okereke (Opukah, 1993a:15) the original objectives of FAPRA were to set standards of public relations practice in Africa and enforce the code of ethics to promote African unity and cooperation, especially as a consultant body to the Organisation of African Unity (O.A.U.), and to establish bulletins and journals on public relations in Africa.

According to Opukah (1992b:16) the goal of FAPRA is to sensitise African states not only to recognise public relations but also to fund its growth and development. However, he feels that the organisation so far has had little or no effect on the development of the profession in Africa, the reasons including a lack of resources, communication difficulties and a lack of foresight and general professional direction in public relations.

Opukah (1993a:15-17) believes that the original idea of a FAPRA composed of national associations also did not work due to the massive weakness of many of the so-called national associations. To solve this problem FAPRA recently took the step to open membership to individuals.

Other problems that beset FAPRA is firstly, the lack of consensus among practitioners



on what constitutes the body of knowledge of public relations and secondly, the barrier between the Francophone and Anglophone countries in Africa. The latter problem was addressed in 1992 when the first All Africa Public Relations Conference that embraced the Francophone and Anglophone Africa was held in the Ivory Coast.

FAPRA is represented in North Africa by the vice-secretary of the Sudan Public Relations Association. The latter organisation was formed in 1973 and has an executive office consisting of 15 staff members. The Sudan Public Relations Association publishes a monthly, quarterly and annual newsletter as well as a number of pamphlets (Suliman, 1995).

African public relations societies that are affiliated to the International Public Relations Association (IPRA)

IPRA, which was established in 1955 in Europe (*Connecting the world*, s.a.:1,8), held its first All African conference in 1975 in Nairobi (Oeckl, 1976:3).

Apart from PRISA, FAPRA and the then-Zairean Centre for Public Relations, the following public relations societies in Africa were also regarded as chapters of IPRA at the time the study was undertaken: the Arab Public Relations Society, The Institute of Public Relations in Ghana, the Public Relations Society of Kenya, the Public Relations Association (Mauritius), the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations, and the Zimbabwe Institute of Public Relations (Membership manual, 1994-95:LVI-LXIII).

The Arab Public Relations Society (APRS) was founded in 1966. It is based in Egypt, said to be the first country in the Middle East to look upon public relations as a profession. Borhan (1993:25), however, points out that before 1973 public relations had little breathing room for development in Egypt because much of the country's economy was in the public sector. It was only after the efforts of then-President Sadat to encourage the private sector that interest in modern public relations was stimulated.

The APRS is not limited to Egypt, but includes members from the rest of the Middle East. This society began with 20 members and in 1993 had approximately 1500 members. Since its inception the APRS has participated in more than 50 conferences and world congresses.

In 1966 the APRS formed the International Academy for PR and Information, a public relations research centre for academic studies. Another organisation formed was the Institute of PR and Information which is the only recognised institute in the Middle East devoted to teaching public relations.

In 1967 the APRS established a monthly magazine, Arab PR Journal. Distribution covers the Arab nations (Borhan, 1993:19).

The Public Relations Society of Kenya was formed in 1971. By 1995 the organisation had 100 members. The following membership categories exist: Fellow (15 years or more experience in public relations), Full (five year or more experience) and Associate (less than five years experience). This body does not offer any accreditation examination but organises seminars and workshops for its members. Membership is open only to people who have studied communication, journalism or a public relations or media related course (Njuguna, 1995).

The Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR) had more than 2000 members in 1993 (Okereke, 1993:23). The NIPR adopted its code of professional conduct in 1992. In the same year the organisation published a document on public relations and the law, setting out those areas where public relations practice in Nigeria abuts the law (Okereke, 1992b:43).

The NIPR has been empowered by Decree 16 of 1990 to register the practice of public relations in Nigeria. The Decree charged the NIPR with, among other things, determining what standards of knowledge and skills are to be attained by a person seeking to become a member of the public relations profession (Okereke, 1993:23).

The NIPR is highly involved in public relations training in Nigeria and offers certificate and diploma courses in public relations. Courses are also held for legislators and other public officials. The NIPR has also started a M.Sc. degree program in public relations in association with the University of Nigeria (Okereke, 1993:23).

The Zimbabwe Institute of Public Relations (ZIPR) was founded in 1957 and had 266 members in 1995 (Zimbabwe Institute of Public Relations, 1995:1). According to Dickens (1993:27) the ZIPR is small by world standards, but is one of the most active institutes in Zimbabwe, particularly in die fields of education and professional development. The organisation has a code of conduct, publishes a quarterly magazine and offers its own training courses.

The ZIPR introduced an accreditation system in 1991. Full members of the Institute may sit for the examination which upon passing allows them to use the letters APR(Z) after their names (Zimbabwe Institute of Public Relations, 1995:2).

No information could be obtained on the Institute of Public Relations in Ghana.

## **DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC RELATIONS EDUCATION IN THE REST OF AFRICA**

With the recent move towards professionalisation in public relations in Africa came a need for the enhancement of training. According to Opukah (1993b:12) this need has not been satisfied yet. He feels that Africa still experiences a serious lack of training facilities in public relations.

However, it is also not possible to make a general statement about the state of public relations education in Africa. While some countries have formalized public relations education into classroom situations, in other countries public relations training is done by employers and within government ministries rather than in educational institutions (Mazrui, 1995). While some countries have introduced sophisticated post-graduate courses in public relations, others have barely begun to introduce training in public relations.

According to Nartey (1988:26) public relations education in Africa can be divided into the formal sector and the informal sector. The formal sector relates to education that is offered in institutionalised settings such as universities and other tertiary institutions, whereas the informal sector relates to courses offered by private colleges and the national public relations societies.

### **Informal training**

The London based Rapid Results College and the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry both operate within Africa.

An example of informal training offered in Southern Africa is the public relations course offered by the Institute of Development Management in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. The Institute was established in 1974 as a regional organisation to help meet the management needs of the region through management development activities such as training, consultancy, research, etc. (Institute of Development Management, 1995:5). It concentrates on improving skills with on-the-job training (Moholisa, 1995). The duration of the public relations course is three weeks. Participants work in the private, parastatal and public sectors in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. Most of them are sponsored by their employers. Ten to 18 students are enrolled at a time. The courses rotate and are held once a year in each of the three countries. The academic qualification of participants range from a junior certificate to a master's degree (Mtshali, 1995). The Institute of Development Management also offers other communication related courses. Examples include written communication, communication for managers, public speaking, the news release and public relations publishing and customer relations (Institute of Development Management, 1995:72).

The PRISA Basic Principles course is another example of informal training. Apart from South Africa, this course is also available in Windhoek, Botswana and Zimbabwe through the Academy of Learning, in Kenya through the Technikon SA and in Botswana and Swaziland through Damelin Business College (Ferreira, 1995b). Further examples of South African courses available elsewhere in Africa are the course of the Institute for Administration and Commerce which is available in Zimbabwe, Botswana and Malawi (Ferreira, 1995c) and the Institute of Lifelong Learning which has been requested to offer public relations training in Namibia (Ferreira, 1995b).

The Dafina Institute is a training institution in Kenya offering tuition to qualified students in marketing and public relations for professional and semi-professional bodies in the United Kingdom. The Institute introduced the Public Relations Group Diploma of London Chamber of Commerce and Industry in 1993. The Certificate and Diploma courses for the Communication, Advertising and Marketing Foundation were introduced in 1991, but discontinued in 1994 due to low enrolment (Kimato, 1995).

In Egypt the Institute of PR and Information, established by the Arab Public Relations Society, is regarded as the official public relations training body in the Middle East. The Institute offers several informal courses and up to 1993 more than 4000 students have graduated (Borhan, 1993:19).

Apart from university and polytechnic courses the public relations diploma of the Business Education Examination Council (BEEC) is also recognised by the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations for full membership. BEEC examinations enjoy international recognition. An agreement was reached between the BEEC and the Communication, Advertising and Marketing Foundation in 1986 that BEEC would be the sole body to conduct examinations in marketing and public relations in Nigeria, since the two certificates are seen to be mutually exclusive. BEEC offers a certificate and diploma examination in public relations (Oyeneye, 1995). BEEC courses were also offered in Ivory Coast, Benin and Ghana in 1996 (Okereke, 1996).

Apart from the Institute's own courses public relations can also be studied at most of the adult education colleges in Zimbabwe. Many organisations either conduct their own courses or call lecturers from the Institute to assist. The PRISA course is offered at the Academy of Learning in Harare and Bulawayo (Macdonald, 1995).

The ZIPR started planning its own diploma course in 1989. The syllabus is based on the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry course and the IPRA Gold Paper No. 4, and was sent to both the British Institute of Public Relations and IPRA for approval. The year course was launched in 1990. A six month certificate course was also launched in 1995 (Zimbabwe Institute of Public Relations, 1995:2).

In Sudan public relations can be studied at university but also through the The Management Development Centre and the Sudan Academy for Management Science (Suliman, 1995).

### **Formal training**

As elsewhere in the world, many public relations programmes in Africa are taught at university level as part of a B-degree in communication or mass communication or journalism. However, like in the rest of the world and in South Africa, training in journalism was introduced on tertiary level in Africa before training in mass communication and public relations. According to Reeves (1993:170-173) formal training in journalism was introduced in Africa only after the rapid expansion of the mass media that followed independence. Prior to that, most journalists were trained on the job. By 1972 there were approximately 30 training programmes in journalism and mass communication in Africa. As mentioned in section 2, many formally trained public relations practitioners in Africa come from a journalism background.

Malawi and Swaziland are examples of countries that introduced journalism training before public relations training. While no form of training in public relations is included yet in the journalism course offered by the Polytechnic of Malawi, the University of Swaziland has extended its training programme in journalism in 1996 to include specialisation in public relations and advertising (Oyegoke, 1995).

In Tanzania, where the practice of public relations is organised into The Public Relations Association of Tanzania (Hamisi, 1995), formal public relations training is offered as part of training programmes in journalism. The Nyegezi Social Training Institute offers a three-year advanced diploma in journalism with advanced public relations as an elective. This diploma replaced a two-year diploma introduced in 1963 (Walters, 1995). The other journalism programme in the country is offered at the Tanzania School of Journalism. This institution started in 1975 with 15 students and offers a two-year diploma course in journalism with mass communication and public relations as two of the prescribed subjects. Candidates for this course need working experience of not less than two years in a mass medium or in public relations (Tanzania School of Journalism, 1994-96:1-5). This institute also provides a three-month in-service post-graduate certificate course for working journalists and broadcasters (Walters, 1995).

A further example is Zambia, where most public relations practitioners have a journalistic background (Kazeze, 1995). Training of mass communication personnel in this country started in 1959 when the Africa Literature Centre introduced a four-month journalism certificate. The duration of the course was later increased to six months. It became a year course in 1978. Today the course still draws students from all over Africa

(Nyirenda & Kasoma, 1983:351-353). Nearly all Zambian students are sponsored by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

The course offered by the Africa Literature Centre involves five months of intensive theoretical training, four weeks of practical experience in the industry and four weeks of field work in rural areas. The course equips graduates to work in publishing, journalism, public relations and journalism training (Africa Literature Centre, 1995). Journalism training was also introduced at the Evelyn Hone College in Zambia in 1964. The certificate course has since been upgraded to a three-year diploma, still offered today.

Mass communication training has been introduced in the mid 1980s at the Zambia Institution of Mass Communication (ZAMCOM) and the University of Zambia (UNZA). ZAMCOM offers a pre-service and in-service practical training programme whereas UNZA offers a degree programme (Nyirenda & Kasoma, 1983:351-353). ZAMCOM introduced a master's degree in mass communication in 1994. By 1995 this was the only master's degree in mass communication in East and Central Africa. To be admitted candidates should be in possession of a first degree in mass communication/journalism/communication/media studies or related fields. Since ZAMCOM believes that the issue of development will remain predominant in Africa, and in Zambia in particular, this course is biased towards development communication and stresses the role of mass media in enhancing development (University of Zambia, 1995:1,12). ZAMCOM also introduced a master's degree in Communication for Development in 1997 (Kasoma, 1997).

Formal public relations training in Uganda is, for example, offered as part of a degree in mass communication at the Makerere University in Kampala or a nine-month diploma in journalism offered by the Uganda Management Institute. Makerere University offers a B.A. (Mass Communication) with public relations as one of four possible areas of specialization in the third year of study. This university is also in the process of introducing a post-graduate diploma in mass communication (Goretti, 1995).

Another example is the University of Sierra Leone in Freetown. According to Cole (1995) this university introduced a course in mass communication in 1993, training students for the following career fields: print journalism, broadcasting, public relations and advertising. A further example is the University of Ghana that offers a one-year post-graduate diploma in journalism, communication and some aspects of public relations (Jackson, 1988:26; Onyame, 1995) as well as an M.A. and M.Phil. in Mass Communication (Yahaya, 1996). Journalism can also be studied at the Ghana Institute of Journalism (Afeti, 1995).

Although there are several universities in Sudan, only one of those contacted by the

author, namely the Sudan University College for Girls, indicated that they offered any training programmes related to public relations. Public relations can be studied as part of a four year programme in Journalism and Mass Communication at this university (Ahmed Khalil Hamid, 1995).

Some universities in Africa also teach public relations to complement other disciplines such as marketing and business management (Nartey, 1988:26). One example is the University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania, that includes public relations as a marginal course in their programme in marketing management (Okoso-Amaa, 1995).

In Namibia the Technikon Namibia does not offer a formal course in public relations but offers Communication Science 1, 2 and 3 as an ancillary in the curricula of the National Diploma: Public Administration, National Diploma: Personnel Management and the National Diploma: Commerce. This subject covers aspects such as mass communication, media studies, persuasive communication, intercultural communication, and organisational communication. Communication Science 1, 2 and 3 are also offered through the Centre for External Studies by distance learning under the auspices of the University of Namibia. Public Relations is a compulsory one-year subject prescribed for the National Diploma: Executive Secretary offered by the Technikon Namibia (Brown, 1995).

In the Ivory Coast, mass communication training is offered by the National University of the Ivory Coast, but this training does not offer specialization in public relations. Practitioners are trained mostly by private businesses and through the French School of Press Agents (Ecole Française des Attachés de Presses [EFAP]) (Traore, 1995).

The organisation that attempts to unite communication educators in Africa is the African Council for Communication Education (ACCE) based in Nairobi. The ACCE was established in 1974 in Accra, Ghana, as a UNESCO initiative to put African communication development in the hands of African professionals. It is non-political and has 20 chapters throughout Africa, including the Anglophone and Francophone sectors (Africom, 1994:13). The ACCE now also has a South African chapter, which organised the Council's biennial conference held in Cape Town in 1996. The ACCE publishes an academic journal, *Africa Media Review*, and a newsletter, *Africom*, as well as academic books. It also organises academic conferences.

### **Formal training in countries affiliated to IPRA**

The following is an outline of the scope of public relations training available in the IPRA affiliated countries whose professional organisation in the form of public relations societies have been discussed in section 2.

Public relations education seems to be thriving in Egypt. All universities in the country offer public relations as a course of study (Borhan, 1993:19). The American University in Cairo (established in 1919), for example, offers a degree in journalism and mass communication with a professional sequence in public relations. Graduates can enrol for a master's degree in journalism and mass communication (American University in Cairo, 1994/95:156,278). Mass communication can also be studied at the Cairo University (Abdel Wahhab, 1995). The International Academy for PR and Information will also be authorized to offer B.A., M.A. and Ph.D. public relations degrees in future (Borhan, 1993:19).

According to Kimato (1995), Principal Officer of the Dafina Institute in Nairobi, public relations education in Kenya can best be described as being in its very early stages. Present day practitioners come from different backgrounds such as marketing, journalism and personnel.

Training opportunities in public relations in Kenya range from short courses to a B-degree in Communication or Journalism. A master's programme in public relations is also soon to be introduced at Daystar University College in Nairobi (Njuguna, 1995).

A training programme which has existed since the late 1960s is a diploma in Mass Communication offered by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. A post-graduate diploma in Journalism was introduced at the University of Nairobi in the early 1970s. A degree course in public relations has recently been introduced at the Daystar University (Kimato, 1995).

Apart from the training courses mentioned before, public relations is also studied as part of journalism/mass communication in Nigeria. According to Okon (1995) public relations courses are always an integral part of mass communication programmes in Nigeria. The University of Nigeria was the first in the country to introduce a journalism training programme in 1961. This university's School of Mass Communication now offers courses up to master's level. The Institute of Management and Technology introduced the first mass communication education on the polytechnic level in 1978. Today there are over 40 schools of journalism/mass communication in Nigeria. By 1992, however, the University of Lagos was the only one in the country that offered mass communication training up to the level of a doctorate (Okuna, 1992:51).

Major journalism/mass communication training institutions in Nigeria include the following: University of Lagos, University of Nigeria, Bayero University, University of Maiduguri, Anambra State University, Ogun State Polytechnic, The Polytechnic (Ibadan), The Polytechnic (Calabar), Federal Polytechnic (Bida), Institute of Management and Technology, Auchu Polytechnic, Times Journalism Institute, Nigeria Institute of



Journalism, Federal Radio Co-operation of Nigeria Training School, Anambra State Polytechnic, Ogwashi-Uku Poytechnic, Nigerian Institute of Mass Communication Technology, Nigerian Television College, Federal Institute of Public Information, School of Management and Technology, College of Opencast Mining and Management Studies, Plateau School of Accountancy and Management Studies, Institute of Management Technology, College of Information Technology, Television College, University of Jos, University of Ibadan, Ahmadu Bello University, University of Benin, University of Ilorin, University of Calabar, and University of Uyo State (Okon, 1995).

Three examples of specific training institutions are mentioned here: The Department of Mass Communication at the University of Jos trains journalists, public relations practitioners, information officers, photo-journalists and advertising practitioners. The following qualifications are offered: A three month and nine month Certificate and a two year Ordinary National Diploma. 150 Students were enrolled for the diploma programme in 1995 (Galadima, 1995).

The Department of Mass Communication at The Polytechnic in Calabar, offers an Ordinary National Diploma in Mass Communication which includes Principles and Practice of Public Relations as a course, as well as a Higher National Diploma which includes Public Relations Copy and Media and Public Relations Case Studies as subjects (Okon, 1995).

The Plateau School of Accountancy and Management Studies runs a Ordinary and Higher National Diploma in Mass Communication. About 500 students were enrolled in 1995. The Ordinary National Diploma includes Principles of Public Relations 1 and 2 and Public Relations Techniques 1 and 2 as courses. The Higher National Diploma includes Intermediate Public Relations 1 and 2, Advanced Public Relations 1 and 2, Public Relations in Government, Public Relations Planning Policy and Strategy, Public Relations for Commercial Organisations, Public Relations for Non-commercial Organisations and Public Relations Practice as subjects (Oyeneye, 1995).

According to Macdonald (1995) training courses in public relations are abundant in Zimbabwe. Apart from the informal courses mentioned before, public relations can also be studied as part of a two-year course in mass communication offered by the Harare Polytechnic's Mass Communication Division. This course offers specialisation in print journalism, radio and television broadcasting, government information service and public relations (Nartey, 1988:26). Media and communication training are offered by the English Department of the University of Zimbabwe in Harare (Africom, 1994:8) and the National University of Science and Technology in Bulawayo plans to introduce a Faculty of Communication and Information Technology in due course (Makhurane, 1995).

### **Training abroad or within government ministries**

In countries in Africa where no form of organisation exists to unite those working in public relations, training is often done abroad or within government ministries. One example is Angola. According to a spokesperson from the *Jornal De Angola* (Cortez, 1995) public relations does not exist as a formal career field in Angola. If training is needed in this field, officials are sent abroad. International trainers have visited the country on a few rare occasions. According to Cortez a few private institutions in Angola have been teaching so-called public relations courses which are not really related to public relations in the true sense of the word. The only formal training in journalism in Angola is offered by the *Curso médoi de jornalismo*, a "kind of high school" established in Luanda in 1984 by the former single-party government.

In Eritrea many government ministries have their own public relations officers, but no formal public relations society exists yet. There is no formal training programmes available in public relations. However, the Eritrean Ministry of Information and Culture does offer basic training in journalism, public relations and languages (Hailemariam, 1995).

According to a spokesman from the Ministry of Information and Tourism in The Gambia (Sarr, 1995) public relations exists in this country, but it is small and in its beginning stages. There is no public relations society and no formal training in public relations in The Gambia. Public relations officers are trained abroad at their own expense or at the expenses of their employers.

According to a spokesperson from the South African High Commission in Botswana (SA High Commissioner, 1995) civil servants in Botswana have in the past been sent to countries like Britain and America to receive training in public relations. However, training opportunities in South Africa are also being considered since the normalisation of political relations between the two countries.

### **Training by means of correspondence**

Although formal training in the form of mass communication exists in Zambia, Kazeze (1995) mentions that some public relations practitioners in this country study public relations by means of correspondence or at overseas institutions.

It should be noted that a number of British and South African distance learning public relations programmes are available to students in Africa. Examples of South African courses include the B.A. Communication and higher degrees offered by Unisa and the

public relations management course offered by the Institute of Administration and Commerce (Ferreira, 1995b).

Examples of British courses include the Communication, Advertising and Marketing Foundation Certificate in Communication Studies and the Communication, Advertising and Marketing Foundation Diploma in Public Relations; the public relations examinations of the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry; and the distance learning M.Sc. degree in Public Relations offered by the University of Stirling in Scotland.

Examinations for Communication, Advertising and Marketing Foundation courses are administered by the Communication, Advertising and Marketing Education Foundation Limited of the United Kingdom (CAM Foundation, 1995/1996:2-4).

The London Chamber of Commerce and Industry examinations are done world wide in over 80 countries. The examination board of the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry appoints agents in the different regions. Examination centres exist in the following African countries: Botswana, Namibia, Malawi, Lesotho, Zimbabwe, Zambia and South Africa (Wicks, 1995).

Of the 60 students enrolled in 1995 for the M.Sc. distance learning degree offered by the University of Stirling, only two were from Africa (Kenya). According to the Programme Director of this course (Pieczka, 1995) the small number of African students could be attributed to the cost both in terms of fees and the recommended annual residential school held in Stirling.

### **Training by foreign governments and development agencies**

Lastly, foreign governments and development agencies also sponsor communication related training in African countries. One example is the Dutch government that sponsors communication and journalism training programmes in Mali, Burkina Faso, Benin, Botswana, Kenya and Tanzania (Ukpabi, 1997). Another example is the Norwegian Agency for Development Co-operation which sponsors the Nordic-SADC Journalism Centre, a journalism training institution based in Mozambique and operating within the Southern African Development Community countries. This institution offers training courses to improve the skills of journalists (Dept. of External Projects, s.a.). Some other western donor agencies that offer communication, media and public relations related training courses in Africa include UNICEF, UNESCO, UNFPA, SIDA-Swedish Development Agency, CIDA-Canadian Development Agency, Radio Netherlands Training Centre, Deutsche Welle of Germany, Friedrich Ebert Foundation of Germany and the Ford Foundation of the United States of America (Ukpabi, 1997).

## CONCLUSION

This article provided an overview of the developmental history and current state of public relations practice and education in the rest of Africa.

The level of development of the profession in the rest of Africa is varied and ranges from being limited to mostly government departments in some countries to being well developed and organised into large professional institutes in other countries.

Training courses in public relations education in the rest of Africa are also varied and range from short course and in-service training to tertiary diplomas, degrees and post-graduate degrees.

Contact between public relations professionals and educators in South Africa and those in the rest of Africa is limited at this stage and further research into what goes on in public relations north of the Limpopo could serve to encourage more contact and co-operation.

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