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# **INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH**

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## **Selection process**

The December 2015 issue of the *International Journal of Interdisciplinary Research (IJIR)* has been the result of a rigorous process in two stages:

- Stage 1: all papers that were submitted to the 2015 IABD conference went through blind reviews, and high quality papers were recommended for presentation at the conference.
- Stage 2: approximately ten percent of the articles which were presented at the conference and one invited manuscripts (originally reviewed by the Chief Editor) were selected for possible publication in *IJIR*, and the respective authors were contacted and asked to resubmit their papers for a second round of reviews. These manuscripts went through a rigorous blind-review process by the editorial board members and external reviewers. In the end, four articles were recommended for publication in the December issue of *IJIR*.

*IJIR* is listed in *Cabell's* Directory of peer-reviewed publications. The Editorial Board members are committed to maintaining high standards of quality in all manuscripts published in *International Journal of Interdisciplinary Research*.

Ahmad Tootoonchi, Chief Editor

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## EXPANDING PUBLIC RELATIONS EDUCATION

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### ABSTRACT

This paper argues for the incorporation of public relations courses in the curricula of multiple disciplines, including such programs as business, human resources, justice studies, art history, education, culture and hospitality, political science, and health. This paper specifically explores how cultivating an understanding of basic public relations principles—such as communication strategy, media relations, international corporate responsibility, and reputation management—in a wide variety of disciplines can have a direct impact on a myriad of professions. The inclusion of these courses and key principles is not meant to create new communication professionals, but to instill a deep understanding and appreciation of the need to incorporate public relations in all fields. Introducing additional fields beyond business to what public relations does and how it can be used will expand public relations jobs and opportunities while increasing communications for and between organizations. This paper examines antidotal evidence and presents four key tenets from the excellence theory of public relations underpinning the reason public relation courses should be included into a multitude of applied academic programs: participative culture & diversity, symmetrical communication, sustainability and ethical practices.

*Keywords:* Public Relations, Marketing, Communication Strategy, Excellence Theory

### INTRODUCTION

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics in the United States, the need for public relations is rising due to an increase in global business. As more businesses recognize the necessity of social media to create and maintain corporate reputation, and respond to the demand from stakeholders for direct engagement, they are reaching out to PR agencies and practitioners for support. Public relations professionals provide valuable communications counsel and generally are responsible for managing dialogue between an organization and its public. This in part, explains why PR's importance has risen. While in many cases the public relations professional does draft press releases, limiting the scope of the public relations definition to publicity alone greatly

underestimates the growing influence and reach of PR. Public relations has greatly expanded into areas such as public diplomacy and human resources in addition to product positioning and reputation management. More than ever, today public relations professionals are the public face of clients. The PR professional organizes community outreach and volunteer programs, and cultivates relationships with potential investors. Despite the function of public relations becoming incorporated in a variety of business segments, academically public relations remains buttonholed. Public relations courses are commonly only taught within communication programs, or within the coursework of majors. As an example, public relations co-exists with corporate public affairs, social issues management, and corporate political strategy. These paradigms, for example, lie at the interface of business and society studies and concern the area of political science also (Windsor, 2002). However, public relations, along with “corporate public affairs, social issues management, and corporate political strategy[,] deals with...related areas that are but poorly integrated theoretically and empirically; nor has there been markedly productive cross-disciplinary or cross-institutional collaboration” (Windsor, 2002, p.383) to ensure students of these fields understand the role and importance of public relation activities.

Reasons for the inclusion of public relations’ principles and course work in a variety of fields stems directly from the excellence theory headed by James E. Grunig and funded by the Foundation of the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) in 1985. Constructed upon a number of middle-range theories, and tested with surveys and interviews of professionals and CEOs in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada, the excellence theory provides a benchmark *The Fall of Advertising and the Rise of PR* (Ries & Ries, 2002) that is both theoretical as well as empirical and provides credence for expanding public relations education. It should be noted that while this paper argues that basic public relations principles or courses should be included in a variety of disciplines, it is not done to produce communication professionals from these disciplines, but to instill a deep understanding and appreciation of the need for to incorporate public relations in all field. By introducing additional fields beyond business to what public relations does and how it is needed, will expand public relations jobs and opportunities while increasing communications for and between organizations.

## **DEFINING PUBLIC RELATIONS**

There has been confusion for decades over the meaning of the term *public relations*. Most of this confusion stems from the current lack of consensus on a single definition that accurately depicts all of what public relations entails. Some of the earliest definitions of the term “public relations” represented it as a communications tool for publicity and press agency. Yet, as the times changed, these definitions evolved. The founders of public relations, Edward Bernays and Ivy Lee, originally defined public relations as a "management function, which tabulates public attitudes, defines the policies, procedures and interest of an organization followed by executing a program of action to earn public understanding and acceptance" (Penning, 2008, pp. 344-358). By the late 1970's, there were over 400 different definitions of public relations available to the public. In an attempt to rectify this, Harlow (1977) developed a “global definition” of public relations, maintain public relations is a “distinctive management function which helps establish and maintain mutual lines of communication, understanding,

acceptance and cooperation between an organization and its publics; involves the management of problems and issues; helps management to keep informed, serve the public interest; helps management anticipate trends; and uses research and sound and ethical communication as its principal tools" (Harlow, 1977, pp. 34-42).

Due to this definition's inherent complexity and detail, public relations scholars redefined public relations as "the management of communication between an organization and its publics, and emphasize that this definition equates public relations and communication management" (Lages & Simkin, 2003, pp. 298-328). The Public Relations Society of America incorporated this definition in 2011 when the organization revamped the definition of public relations, stating public relations is a "strategic communication process that builds mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics" (Corbett, 2012). According to PRSA, public relations is also a management function. Thus, public relations is not simply the fourth "P" in the marketing mix (the four "P's"). However, public relations cannot be separated completely from marketing. The two fields are similar, and these inherent similarities are another reason why the confusion about public relations exists. However, teaching marketing principles is decidedly different than teaching public relation principles. Generally speaking, public relations communicates with a variety of publics (groups that influence the company) and stimulate awareness and demand for a company while strengthening a company's image and how it is perceived. Marketing works with customers (current or potential) and seeks customer interaction to increase customer conversions. One discipline is not better than the other. While marketing had been the field of choice in the past, in modernity it has become apparent that something more is needed to remain competitive, thus the field of public relations has grown.

Regardless of the confusion surrounding a definition of public relations, there is evidence that the value of public relations is broadening. According to *The Fall of Advertising and the Rise of PR*, "public relations has become the most effective way to build a brand." Examples of widespread use of public relations can be found in a myriad of professional fields such as city and state building, public administration, public affairs, political campaigning, health care, and education. Organizations in the agri-food industry use communication activities. However, a review of such communication efforts "identified an extremely fragmented delivery to consumers and a distinct lack of resources to effectively communicate the information" and shows difficulty in the evaluation of "its impact on the attitudes, perceptions and behavior of consumers" (Duffy, Fearne, & Healing, 2015, p. 27). This example illustrates how a basic public relations education can assist in solving a variety of communication issues in a variety of disciplines and industries.

Public relations is a management function that today is used to counsel the C-Suite. This idea originally emerged from the findings by Grunig (2008) in his excellence theory, where the counseling function of public relations and the cooperation it entails, was noted as one of the primary tenets of an organization being "excellent." This theory, updated in 2011, purports that businesses must continue to use public relations as a strategic managerial function, requiring someone to go beyond budgeting and hiring and firing and actually take part in strategic decision making of the organization (Grunig & Grunig, 2011, p. 41-54). Positioning public relations as a strategic management function allows someone in the organization to anticipate the risk of different decisions before they are made, and then communicate the decision. With these



concepts in mind, and considering the close relationship between marketing and public relations, at the very least, "MBA students should be required to learn about public relations, including social media and crisis communication" (Hagan, 2011, pp. 43-48).

In America at least, the inclusion of public relations in business programs, specifically Masters of Business Management (MBA) programs, began fall of 2014. Launched with a pilot program in 2012, this initiative stemmed from a 2008 research study sponsored by the Public Relations Association of America Foundation. The study encompassed 20 percent of the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) member schools, representing approximately 32 universities. Findings revealed that only 23 percent of graduate business schools consistently provided instruction in reputation management, corporate communications, and related ethical dimensions and only 6 percent of the schools required communications programs in their program. A follow-up study discovered the communications courses by MBA programs differed greatly from the idea of communications held by most public relations practitioners and educators. The courses focused on business writing, presentation skills, interpersonal communication or organizational behavior rather than communication as an essential element of management (Byrum, 2013).

Closely related to business programs, programs in leadership especially would specifically benefit from having public relations principles taught to students. Leadership plays an important role in institutions. "The key tasks of leaders include the identification of intuitional mission and role; the institutional embodiment of; the defense of institutional integrity purpose and the ordering of internal conflict" (Fleck, 2007, p. 68). Public relations principles would assist future leaders to understand how even the most basic communication principles assist leaders in achieving the missions set out for them and create an appreciate for the function of public relations.

However, due the sprawling need for public relations principles in a variety of fields, students beyond MBA programs should be taught the basics of communication—specifically media relations, corporate responsibility, and reputation management in order to instill an appreciation for the need for public relations in all organizations.

## **SPECIFIC SKILLS INHERENT IN PUBLIC RELATIONS**

The inclusion of public relations courses in a wide array of programs makes sense for a variety of reasons. This is because promoting cooperation, through interdisciplinary or trans disciplinary programs, plants and nurtures the idea that people must work together to sustain the world we live in. The collaboration among multiple academic departments, necessary for the inclusion of public relations into existing applied academic programs, leads to increased creativity. This creativity extends far beyond the boardrooms of companies and is indeed useful in solving basic society problems. Creativity that stems from the marketing and public relations functions can lead to conversations and strategic plans that could include working to increase volunteerism, mobility, agriculture, education, and transportation issues, just to name a few. A partnership between diverse academic areas and public relations can support manufacturing, human

resources, and creative and cultural sectors, as well as education. Public relations education uses scenario-building that can assist fields “to embed creative, forward looking thinking into their practices and explore beyond expectations of business as usual” (McKie & Munshi, 2007, p. 134). This is important as creativity; specifically, diversity-fuelled creativity (Hampden-Turner & Trompenaars, 2000) is seen as increasingly essential for success in business and organizations (Kao, 1997).

The need for effective communication and coordination drives organizational design and managerial behavior (Thompson, 1967), and drives corporate and organizational reputation. Public relations is the driving force behind this. Mass and social media has become such a pervasive presence in society that nearly every profession deals with some kind of media outlet. Learning how to reach out to media outlets and dealing with them when they reach out to your organization goes hand-in-hand with reputation management. “It is vital that all...activists have regular media training, as more and more situations are arising where a nurse or midwives opinion is being sought on a particular issue. And health will always be on the news agenda” (World of Irish Nursing & Midwifery, 2014). Regardless of the field, it is important to promote the organization in a positive light. “In today’s Internet-savvy world, you have to pay attention to how patients can easily affect your online reputation” (Romano & Baum, 2014, p. 370) and this type of basic training would be provided through public relations courses, leading to a deeper understanding for the need for public relations in all organizations.

Public relations can also drive consumer social responsibility (CSR). “A CSR orientation argues that financial concerns should not be the only concern of corporations” (Öksüz & Görpe, 2014, p. 245). Businesses need to take into consideration their effects on all of their stakeholder groups, and must consider the effects of business decisions on a variety of environments (Coombs & Holladay, 2012, p. 6). Ewing (2014) found that “corporate responsibility attempts are more effective when they are integrated and understood by all levels of people in an organization” (p. 367). Public relations has a special role in the communication of CSR (Öksüz & Görpe 2014, 245), and public relations already has an established role in managing communication and relationships (Bartlett, 2011, p. 81). As there are a variety of tools used to communicate CSR, creating a baseline of understanding public relations in a variety of disciplines can lead to stronger global communication efforts.

Recognizing the need for public relations by understanding basic principles can provide “a significant opportunity to communicate with our executive teams about how...issues feed into the organization's larger risk position. Furthermore, it is an excellent opportunity to influence our organizations' strategic direction” (American Society of Safety Engineers, 2014). From the corporate reputation management perspective, public relations assists managers and firms in enhancing their firms’ cumulative reputations (Fombrun & Shanley, 1990).

Expanding basic courses/principles of public relations will have a direct impact on business and non-profits of America. However, if graduates are not introduced to public relations as a viable business solution in multiple disciplines, such as human resources, political science, public health, science, justice studies, visual arts, education, and culture and hospitality (just to name a few), corporate and organizational sustainability are not being built for future generations. This is because in the most simplistic terms “communication equals understanding” (Murray, 1967).

Communication is critical “for countries, companies, and individuals to remain competitive in a global market where historical and geographical divisions are becoming increasingly irrelevant” (Friedman, 2005).

It should be noted that the field of communications is expanding in academia with the creation of new programs such as public interest communications (a growing discipline that uses science-based, strategic communications to drive positive social change on issues like education, better health and climate change), health communication (communicating promotional health information, such as in public health campaigns, health education, and between doctor and patient), science communication (presenting science-related topics to non-experts), and agricultural communication (providing issue education for public issues). However, adding new programs that indeed use public relations principles within communication programs is not enough to craft ethical, targeted, creative, and strategic communication in the plethora of fields that both use and need communication and public relations efforts. Therefore, at the very least, basic public relations courses should be included into a multitude of academic programs because having students from a wide variety of academic areas understand the theories supporting the strategic management function of public relations will only assist in making the world a better place, and creating mutually beneficial relationships between diverse groups of interconnected people.

## **THE EXCELLENCE THEORY AS JUSTIFICATION**

In addition to the anecdotal support presented above, specific justification for an expansion of public relations into a broad spectrum of academic disciplines can be found from the excellence theory of public relations. The excellence theory first explained the value that public relations has to organizations and indeed society based on the social responsibility inherent in managerial decisions as well as the quality of corporate/organizational relationships with stakeholders. The theory posits that for an organization to be effective, it must behave in ways that both solve problems and satisfy goals of stakeholders and management. The theory confirmed that organizations “must scan their environment to identify publics who are affected by potential organizational decisions or who want organizations to make decisions to solve problems that are important to them” (Grunig, 2002, p. 9), and behave within strict ethical guidelines. Organizations must also communicate symmetrically with publics (weighing the interests of both the organization and publics when making determinations). This two-way communication model cultivates the high-quality, long-term relationships necessary to sustain a corporation/organization.

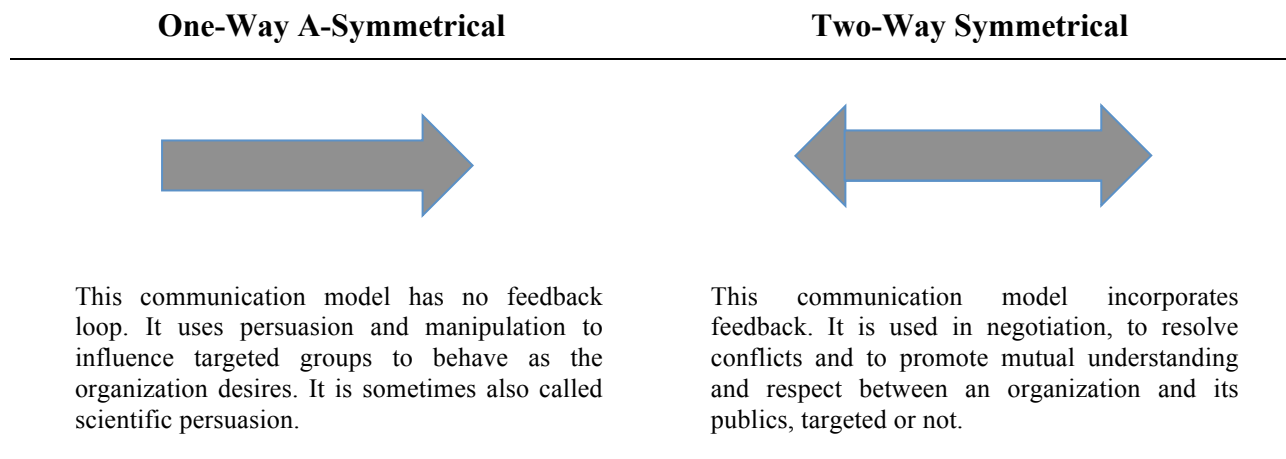
While investigating public relations activities that would form the excellence theory, a theoretical premise was formed about the value of public relations (Grunig, 2002) and several principles/tenets were derived. Since the completion of the excellence study, significant research concerning environmental scanning, scenario building, ethics, relationships, return-on-investment (ROI), relationship cultivation strategies, conflict resolution, and global strategies (Grunig, 2006) have been undertaken using the excellence theory as a basis (Toth 2007). Therefore, support for an expansion of public relations education fits within a growing body of

literature concerning expansion of public relations duties and overall empowerment of the field. Specifically four key principles/tenets present in the excellence theory support the argument for public relations education expansion: 1) participative culture & diversity, 2) symmetrical communication, 3) sustainability, and 4) ethical practices (Grunig & Grunig 2011).

### ***Tenet One: Participative Culture & Diversity***

The idea of a “participatory culture” is a key component to life today. Adding public relations and communication courses to a wide array of academic programs promotes a “participative culture” in which internal dialogue within the organization is valued and welcome (Laskin, 2009). Related to this idea is the principle of diversity. Having a participative culture allows for a wider view, and provides more creativity regarding solving problems and overcoming challenges. For instance, the number of women joining the workforce is a growing trend in western culture. Thus, we need to be concerned about the role of women in management positions. “Women are especially well suited to meet the global challenges of the next decade” (Toth & Grunig, 1992, p. 194). Without the addition of multiple voices in business decisions, we “risk continuing to reinforce the existing knowledge base that was provided by only one-voice, the white male voice, of what is known of reality” (Toth & Grunig, 1993). Including the communication function, specifically public relations, into additional programs in universities will provide a foundation for students to learn how to engage others in conversation, understand cultural and gender differences in communication styles, and build stronger ties to key publics. This baseline will create stronger collaborations and shape organizational culture, general management styles and strategy-making models across disciplines (Moss, Vercic, & Warnaby, 2002). In fact, wider inclusion creates new “alliances, cooperative efforts, joint efforts, and even business-as-usual carried out across cultural lines” (Jelinek & Alder, 1998, pp. 11-19).

Organizations with predominantly participative cultures infuse employees with shared values. This method ensures employees pull together as a team to accomplish a common mission. This type of management style is open to outside ideas and favor innovation and adoption over traditional and domination. This culture provides a “superior setting for excellent communications” (Dozier, Grunig & Grunig 1995, p. 17). Participative cultures are known as being nurturing, and feature teamwork, involved employees and have a greater openness to new ideas and people. High job satisfaction and empowerment are also found in this type of the dominant coalition.



**FIGURE 1.**  
**GRUNIG & HUNT'S COMMUNICATION MODELS**

***Tenet Two: Symmetrical Communication***

The sublimation of the public relations and/or communication function, in any field, focuses attention only on the stakeholder, such as onto consumers for marketing. This strategy results in a more asymmetrical approach, where “organizations lose the valuable function.... of managing interdependencies with publics that constrain the autonomy of organizations to pursue and meet their goals” (Toth, 2009). This is detrimental to any organization, as organizations need to be concerned about the welfare and the interest of their stakeholders as well as the organization’s interest itself. Despite “bilateral communication” efforts being discussed in recent marketing literature, marketing communications typically is all about persuasion and advocacy. Generally, public relations theory is more likely to be symmetrical, whereas marketing theory is asymmetrical (Figure 1). Symmetrical communication requires “sophisticated use of knowledge and understanding of publics” (Dozier, Grunig, & Grunig, 1995, p. 13), and provides a feedback loop for targeted publics. This two-way communication manages conflict and promotes mutual understanding with a variety of key publics. This communication model also greatly assists in “relationship marketing,” which assists organizations in capturing clients and the process by which to keep them. Thus, symmetrical communication provides the mechanisms for a diverse participative culture in any type of organization.

***Tenet Three: Sustainability***

Symmetrical communication/two-way communication supports social responsibility. A key concept in any sustainable business is that community relations and social responsibility must be integrated into overall business strategy. More succinctly, businesses must consider the impact of managerial decisions on a variety of publics beyond those the traditional stakeholders of customers. The idea of sustainability is a newer concept that has incorporated what we used to

call CSR, corporate social responsibility, or corporate responsibility. The inclusion of public relations into courses or lessons in curriculums of digital media, and culture and tourism, human resources and other applied programs, provides students with a basis from which to make decisions for organizations based on social responsibility. According to the Stakeholder theory, an organization is only effective by behaving in ways that solve the problems and satisfy the goals of various publics as well as of management (Freeman, 2010). “Organizations must scan their environment to identify publics who are affected by potential organizational decisions or who want organizations to make decisions to solve problems that are important to them” (Grunig, 1992). In this way, symmetrical communication allows organizations to take the interests of both the organization and publics into account, thereby cultivating high-quality, long-term relationships (Jakubowska, 2006).

Training students in various disciplines to use the principles of public relations creates better decision-making. Grunig, in his 2011 speech at the Public Relations Association of America International Conference, used this example to explain how considering community relations when making business decisions makes an impact on the organizational goals:

One of the people we interviewed was talking about a marketing decision his company took and put a gas station on a particular corner at an intersection where there wasn't a service station existing at that time. He said this made really good sense from a marketing perspective because here was an underserved market, but then he said from a public relations perspective it was a very poor decision because we knew the community. They had a strong community relations program there and they knew that children would be walking past that intersection on their way to and from school. A quick mart or whatever fast food place it was that was attached to the chain of gas stations would be something that kids would be tempted to stop in everyday after school and their parents would not appreciate this. So he said the CEO had to make this decision. They made their best case for public relations, and the marketing people made their best case, and fortunately the decision came down on the side of community. They didn't want to risk children being hurt by being hit by a car in the gas station as they crossed the parking lot. We didn't want them eating junk food and so forth. But things that make perfect sense from that marketing perspective may look very different when public relations looks at it. (Grunig & Grunig, 2011)

#### ***Tenet Four: Ethical Practices***

Lastly, the inclusion of public relations courses into a variety of applied academic programs on the university level will impact ethical communication in organizations across the U.S. Ethics must play a key role in any communication effort. However, it is not just the action of communication that must be ethical; any organization's employees must provide the base for ethical decision-making. Employees and management must be counselors and supporters of ethics in the organization itself and champion ethical decision-making across all divisions. Ethics are considered both an inherent feature of symmetry (symmetrical communication) and a stand-alone principle of ethics. The ethics within the excellence theory stem from a Kantian ethical model where management has the autonomy to determine what makes a good action. This action

must take into consideration the interest of the publics in addition to those of the organization, including profit margins. While it is a challenge to truly have symmetrical communications between an organization and the publics in ethical determinations, organizations must “do the right thing.” This is where basic public relations courses and principles can assist organizations to make the most ethical communication determination. Public relations has long advocated for the ethical practice of communication, and organizations dedicated to the practice of PR stand behind this today, implementing and enforcing strict codes of ethics. These organizations include the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC), the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), the UK based Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR), and the International Public Relations Association (IPRA).

The codes of ethics from these organizations have been found to be generic enough to be applied differently to different societies and cultures in a variety of settings. These principles, including concepts such as transparency, protecting the free flow of information, avoiding conflicts of interest, and protecting confidential information, provide a strong foundation for any study of public relations practices. These universal ideals form a common set of principles that are needed throughout the world to provide a solid base from which to build or sustain an ethical corporate culture. Incorporating public relations into course work and program design in the fields of business, human resources, diplomacy, public policy, and culture and tourism assure that young people familiar with the local culture learn to apply the principles.

The four tenets of excellence (participative culture and diversity, symmetrical communication, sustainability, and ethical practices), are fused into any course on public relations. This is important in gaining positive public opinion for any organization. Modern publics are opinion controlled. To remain competitive in the world market, it's vital for organizations to control the message using public relations principles in tandem with marketing's persuasive techniques. To accomplish this, academic institutions must incorporate public relations into various academic programs. It is no longer enough to just teach marketing principles. It is now necessary to teach future business and organization leaders how to *participate* in the conversations that are taking place around the organizations and within organizations as well as about organizations.

## CONCLUSION

When contemplating the incorporation of strategic communications courses into existing academic programs, institutions are encouraged to consider their particular market approach and discern how strategic communications and reputation management will fill the academic and career-based needs of students (Byrum, 2013). The collaboration among multiple academic departments, necessary for the inclusion of public relations into existing applied academic programs, leads to increased creativity and problem-solving techniques needed to keep organizations sustainable.

This paper argued for the incorporation of public relations courses/core principles in the curricula of universities with programs not only in business, but human resources, justice studies, visual arts, education, and culture and hospitality as well. This inclusion will provide

respect and better understanding of the role public relation has in a myriad of fields, and hopefully will lead to wider adoption of public relations in management structures. This paper specifically explores the impact that lessons in public relations—such as communication strategy, media relations, international corporate responsibility, and reputation management—can have in a variety of professions ranging from business to visual arts and presents four key tenets underpinning the reason public relations courses should be included into multiple applied academic programs. These tenets are present in the excellence theory, and are prudent for all universities to consider: participative culture & diversity, symmetrical communication, sustainability, and ethical practices (Grunig & Grunig, 2011).

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# **AN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS OF CONSUMERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD PHYSICIANS' ADVERTISING**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Advertising by physicians is a relatively recent phenomenon. Historically, most professions prohibited licensed members from engaging in speech activities that proposed a commercial transaction—advertising. However, the history of a physician's legal right to advertise is not the main focus of this article. A brief review of the past, present, and possible future of such rights might assist readers in understanding the revolutionary constitutional and commercial speech changes that have occurred over the past three decades. A physician's legal right to advertise has developed as part of the evolutionary interpretation of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. The purposes of this study were to determine (a) consumers' attitudes toward advertising by physicians and (b) whether age, race, marital status, and sex of the consumer accounted for any significant difference in attitude toward physicians who advertise. The intent was to discover information that would be useful to physicians in planning marketing strategies and improving the quality of their advertising. The study seems to confirm the belief of many marketing professionals that advertising and marketing clearly have a place in the future of health care services.

## **INTRODUCTION**

For the health professions, marketing has traditionally been a controversial issue, and the notion of using advertising to promote a professional's practice is relatively new. However, according to Rizzo and Zeckhauser (1992), physicians' advertising has increased dramatically during the past decade, and this trend seems likely to continue (Rizzo & Zeckhauser, 1992; Moser, 2008). Many professionals find themselves ill equipped to handle the dynamics of a changing environment, especially without some form of ongoing marketing plan. Most professional societies and associations have prohibited the marketing of their services (Lee, 2002; Carabello, 2003; Altman, 2003; Johns Hopkins, 2013). A study conducted by Allen, Wright, and Raho of 2,000 physicians in Kentucky found strong sentiments against their advertising. These physicians believed that advertising would have an adverse effect on the image of the profession in general and no impact on competitive price reduction (Allen, Wright, & Raho 1985; Duffus, 1990). Also,

a survey conducted by Wright, Raho, and Berkowitz concludes that advertising and marketing are controversial topics among health care professionals. The study further states that the opinion of the evils of advertising is no longer present. Physicians are increasingly recognizing themselves as a business. The study also states the fear that advertising would lead to fraud and hucksterism has not materialized. The chance of false advertising is beginning to be remote in a modern society in which such practices would not be tolerated by consumers, other physicians, or other health care professionals (Wright, Raho, & Berkowitz, 1989). However, in a study conducted by Stevens, McConkey, and Loudon in 1990 of marketing professionals in a southern metropolitan area, very strong sentiments against their advertising were noted. The results indicated that physicians were concerned advertising would impair public confidence in the profession, not be credible, not help a patient make more informed decisions, and not help patients choose the most competent physician for a specific problem (Stevens, McConkey, & Loudon, 1990).

In 1975, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) began an investigation into anticompetitive practices in the health care profession (*American Medical Association v. FTC*, 1980-1982). A Federal Trade Commission (FTC) administrative law judge issued a decision that the American Medical Association (AMA) had caused substantial injury to the public by restricting advertising and other business practices of physicians. The decision says there is no doubt that the AMA had made substantial contributions toward improving the nation's health care, but its restriction on advertising "served to deprive consumers of the free flow of information about the availability of health care services," had deterred "the offering of innovative forms of health care," and had "stifled the use of almost every type of health care delivery that would potentially pose a threat to the incomes of fee-for-service physicians in private practice" (FTC Judge, 1978, p. 4). Consumers can experience advertising by professionals through a variety of media including television, radio, newspapers, billboards, telephone, direct mail, professional magazines, and popular magazines (Gadish, 2008).

Alfred F. Dougherty, Jr., deputy director of the FTC's Bureau of Competition, said the trade commission complaint against the AMA was not designed to force physicians to advertise. All the commission desired was to change the AMA's code of ethics to permit enough advertising to give patients "a decisional basis for selecting one doctor as opposed to another" (Nicholson, 1976, p. 63).

## **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

During the past several years, physicians have become highly competitive in marketing their services to the public. It has become common to see physicians advertising their services via a number of media. The purposes of this study were to determine (a) consumers' attitudes toward advertising by physicians and (b) whether age, race, marital status, and sex of the consumer accounted for any significant difference in attitude toward physicians who advertise. The intent of this study was to discover information that would be useful to physicians in planning marketing strategies and improving the quality of their advertising. The results of this study may be useful to physicians and other professional providers who want to create more effective

promotional strategies and could also provide numerous consulting and employment opportunities for people with promotional expertise, including academicians as well as advertising and public relations firms (Freeman and Moser, 2009).

## **BACKGROUND AND GENERAL RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

During the past 30 years, practices of health care professionals have undergone many changes. Consumers are becoming more involved in their own health care, seeking the type of drugs or pharmaceutical products that best meet their needs, and are willing to take more responsibility for obtaining adequate information for treatments than in the past (Paul, 1988; Berndt, Bui, Reiley, & Urban, 1995; Handlin, Mosca, Forgione, & Pitta, 2003). Another change is the frequent use of advertising. Today it is fairly common in most parts of the country for people to see one of the many thousands of physicians' advertisements shown on television every day, receive a spam e-mail advertisement from a physician, view one of the many hundreds of physicians' ads in the yellow pages of the telephone book, or even see some of the hundreds of highway billboards promoting a hospital's or physician's services that are permitted in some areas of the nation (Endresen & Wintz, 2002; Carabello, 2003). A marketing budget has become critical for most medical practices. Many health care and legal professionals now use marketing consulting firms or have their own internal marketing/advertising committees (Sahl, 2003; Gadish, 2009).

While the attitude of health care professionals toward advertising is mixed and the attitude of most state regulators has generally been negative, the attitude of consumers has historically been fairly positive (Yasny, 1988; Hekmat & Heischmidt, 1991; Moser, 2008). Today professional advertising has become commonplace, and there have been many studies by professional associations and academicians designed to measure consumers' and health care providers' attitudes toward advertising. A study conducted by Leventhal (1995) concluded that opposition to physicians' advertising appears to center on ethical issues, whereas arguments favoring advertising focus on information needs, economic and competitive issues, and the right to advertise (Leventhal, 1995; IFPMA, 2014). The results of a study conducted by Moncrief and Bush (1988) revealed consumers felt advertising by professionals was somewhat helpful in making a decision about health care providers (Moncrief & Bush, 1988; Pickett, Grove, & Ratcliff, 1992).

Whether advertising by physicians attracts patients, the main concern of practicing healthcare professionals, has been the focus of several academic studies (Arora, 2002; Bernstein & Gauthier, 1999; Lubalin & Harris-Kojetic, 1999). The answer has been a definite "yes." These studies show most physicians who advertise will likely see an increase in the number of middle- to lower-income patients. Physicians who advertise discover quickly that advertising is usually very expensive but works if done properly and ethically. One study found the return on dollars invested by professionals in advertising was four to six times the cost (Freedman, 2001).

The above discussion shows that professional advertising usually works, produces an increase in patient flow, yields a good return on physicians' advertising dollars, and is protected by the First

Amendment. It shows that historically consumers have not always had a positive view of physicians who advertise but believe physicians' advertisements provide useful information. This study includes items that explore opinions regarding the informational function of, importance of price in, deception in, future of, and appropriate media for physicians' advertising. Specifically, the study examines attitudes concerning whether physician advertising would (1) provide useful information to the public, (2) increase the costs of physicians' services, (3) improve the quality of physicians' services in the future, (4) help consumers make more intelligent choices between physicians, (5) tend to lower the credibility and dignity of their services, and (6) make the public more aware of the qualifications of physicians.

## **PROCEDURE**

Much of the initial planning of this study was based on Hite's study at the University of Arkansas (Hite, 1982). The Hite study indicated that advertising and marketing can be advantageous to health care professionals. Most health care professionals will generally find that consumers are aware of their advertising and appreciate the information that is communicated to them through advertisements. Hite suggested the health care professional who researches his or her target market and its significant attitudes is likely to enjoy a competitive advantage over the competition. Acknowledgement is given to Hite's research instrument as well as to the instrument of Miller and Waller (1979), which served as bases for the questionnaire in the current study. Also, acknowledgment is given to the organization and writing style of Hite's study, which served as a model for this paper.

The first section of the questionnaire concerned demographic characteristics of the respondents including city of residence, occupation, age, sex, race, marital status, number of children in household, total family household income, and education. The second section included 19 statements designed to measure how favorably consumers perceived advertising by physicians. The respondents were asked to answer Likert-type questions regarding the strength of their agreement on a scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." Tables 1 through 5 contain these 19 statements.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

The researchers asked the Marketing System Group to draw a random sample of 4,000 individuals from the 10 metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) in Tennessee: Memphis, Nashville, Clarksville, Chattanooga, Cleveland, Knoxville, Jackson, Morristown, Kingsport-Bristol, and Johnson City. Appropriate numbers from each MSA were drawn according to the ratio of each MSA's population to the total population of all 10 urban areas. The research instrument was mailed to these individuals, and 424 usable questionnaires were received and used in this study. This sample of 424 respondents represents a subset of the United States, more specifically a subset of the residents of the state of Tennessee.

## **STATISTICAL TEST**

The data obtained from the 424 respondents via the research instrument were analyzed by tabulating the frequency percentages for each item on the questionnaire. Cross-tabulations were then performed between the demographic factors (city of residence, occupation, age, sex, race, marital status, number of children in household, total family household income, and education) and the 19 attitudinal statements in Section 11 of the questionnaire. Chi-square tests were then performed to detect any significant differences between the cross-tabulations. In general, the chi-square analysis is employed when researchers want to determine whether there is an association between two or more populations or variables on some characteristics being studied.

The significance level is the point at which a relationship is significant. This value lies between 0.0 and 1.0. Values closer to zero have greater significance. A level of significance of 0.05 means that a conclusion is correct between 95 and 99 percent of the time. Chi-square probability of 0.05 is commonly used by social scientists doing business research (Lind, Marchal, & Wathen, 2005). The level of significance for all statistical tests for this study was set at 0.05.

## **FINDINGS**

The data obtained from the 424 respondents via the research instrument were analyzed by tabulating the frequency percentages for each item on the questionnaire.

### **Consumer Attitudes toward Advertising of Physicians' Services**

The percentages given in Table 1 illustrate the distribution of consumer responses to five statements in the questionnaire about physicians with respect to advertising. With regard to consumers' present image of physicians (statement 9), 68.2 percent agreed they presently have a high image of physicians, 20.0 percent had no opinion, and 11.8 percent did not have a high image. In general, consumers indicated a somewhat favorable image of physicians. In response to statement 10, opinions were rather mixed. More than 24 percent of consumers agreed their opinion of physicians would be lowered as a result of advertising, 46.7 percent disagreed (6.4 percent strongly disagreed), and 28.8 percent had no opinion. The percentage of respondents who agreed it is proper for physicians to advertise was 50.7 (statement 4), while 19.8 percent disagreed. Further, 26.9 percent agreed with statement 15 that advertising would lower the credibility and dignity of physicians' services. However, 49.3 percent of respondents disagreed.

**Table 1**  
**FREQUENCY PERCENTAGES OF CONSUMER RESPONSES TOWARD ATTITUDE**  
**STATEMENTS (IN PERCENT) ABOUT PHYSICIANS**

Statement	Agree	Strongly Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
4. It is proper for physicians to advertise.	41.7	9.0	29.5	17.7	2.1
9. I presently have a high image of physicians.	54.0	14.2	20.0	10.4	1.4
10. In general, my image of physicians would be lower as a result of advertising.	21.2	3.3	28.8	40.3	6.4
15. Advertising by physicians would tend to lower the credibility and dignity of their services.	23.6	3.3	23.6	43.4	5.9
19. I would use the services (if needed) of physicians who advertise.	58.0	8.5	21.5	9.7	2.4

Finally, when asked (statement 19) if they would use the services of physicians who advertise, 66.5 percent expressed agreement, while only 12.1 percent said they would not use these services. These results indicate consumers' image of physicians generally does not suffer as a result of advertising.

### **Information Function of Advertising Physicians' Services**

The percentages given in Table 2 illustrate the importance of information in physicians' advertising and show opinions are somewhat mixed in this area. The results show 68.6 percent of respondents agreed while 15.4 percent disagreed with statement 1 that the public would be provided useful information through advertising by physicians. Also, 74.5 percent felt physicians' advertising would be a useful means of informing potential patients about services and specialties (statement 5), while only 12.2 percent disagreed, and 65.8 percent agreed with statement 16 that advertising makes the public more aware of the qualifications of physicians. Finally, 50.3 percent agreed advertising would help consumers make more intelligent choices between physicians (statement 11), while 25.9 percent disagreed.

**Table 2**  
**FREQUENCY PERCENTAGES OF PUBLIC'S RESPONSES TO ATTITUDE**  
**STATEMENTS (IN PERCENT) ABOUT THE INFORMATIONAL ASPECT OF**  
**PHYSICIANS' ADVERTISING**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Undecided</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
1. The public would be provided useful information through advertising by physicians.	56.1	12.5	16.0	13.7	1.7
5. Advertising by physicians would be a useful means of informing potential clients about services and specialties.	58.5	16.0	13.2	9.4	2.8
11. Advertising would help the public make more intelligent choices among physicians.	42.0	8.3	23.8	24.5	1.4
16. Advertising makes the public more aware of the qualifications of physicians.	55.4	10.4	14.4	17.7	2.1

### **Importance of Price in Advertising Physicians' Services**

The percentages given in Table 3 illustrate the importance of price in physicians' advertising.

**Table 3**  
**FREQUENCY PERCENTAGES OF PUBLIC'S RESPONSES TO ATTITUDE**  
**STATEMENTS (IN PERCENT) ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF PRICE IN**  
**ADVERTISING PHYSICIANS' SERVICES**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Undecided</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
2. When physicians advertise, the costs are passed on to their clients through higher prices.	44.3	15.8	20.5	16.5	2.6
7. It is good to deal with physicians who offer the lowest prices for routine services.	23.1	6.4	23.8	38.2	8.5
13. When physicians advertise, prices are lowered due to more competition.	20.8	4.0	28.5	39.9	6.8
18. It is better to deal with reputable physicians than with one who offers the lowest prices.	47.2	31.4	13.7	6.8	0.9



In response to statement 7 that it is good to deal with physicians who offer the lowest price for routine services, 46.7 percent disagreed, 23.8 percent were undecided, and 29.5 percent agreed. However, 78.6 percent agreed it is better to deal with a reputable physician than one who offers the lowest price (statement 18). With regard to statement 13, 46.7 percent of respondents disagreed that physicians' advertising lowers prices due to more competition. Consumers believed (60.1 percent) that prices were increased rather than lowered because of the costs of advertising (statement 2). It would appear the primary benefit of physician advertising is not the communication of price but information regarding health care services. Respondents also indicated the reputation, image, and qualifications of the physician are more important than specific price information.

### Deception in Advertising Physicians' Services

The percentages given in Table 4 illustrate the distribution of consumer responses to statements in the questionnaire concerning deception in advertising physicians' services. In response to statement 6 that advertising by physicians would be more deceptive than other forms of advertising, 44.4 percent expressed disagreement, while 29.9 percent agreed. Also, 51.8 percent of respondents disagreed with statement 12 that they would be suspicious of physicians who advertise.

**Table 4**  
**FREQUENCY PERCENTAGES OF PUBLIC RESPONSES TO ATTITUDE**  
**STATEMENTS (IN PERCENT) ABOUT DECEPTION IN**  
**PHYSICIANS' ADVERTISING**

Statement	Agree	Strongly Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
6. Advertising by physicians would be more deceptive than other forms of advertising.	25.9	4.0	25.7	37.3	7.1
8. You generally can rely more on what a friend tells you about physicians than on advertising.	51.2	23.1	15.1	8.3	2.4
12. I would be suspicious of physicians who advertise.	22.4	4.7	21.5	43.4	8.0
17. Advertising by physicians would benefit the uninformed citizenry.	56.1	8.7	17.2	15.8	2.1

Finally, 64.8 percent agreed with statement 17 that advertising by physicians would primarily benefit quacks and incompetents. However, consumers agreed (74.3 percent) with statement 8

that people can rely more on what friends tell them about physicians than on advertising, although a recent study of 4,531 adult consumers found that 57 percent who receive healthcare information do so through the Internet, compared to 53 percent who receive information from friends and family (McKillen, 2002). The responses indicate consumers feel the image or reputation of physicians is more important than specific price information. These results indicate that, in general, consumers do not view physician advertising as being more deceptive than other forms of advertising.

### **The Future of Physicians' Advertising**

The percentages given in Table 5 illustrate the public's responses to statements in the questionnaire concerning the public's attitudes toward the future of physicians' advertising. When asked whether they would like to see more advertising by physicians (statement 14), 39.4 percent of respondents were undecided, 32.0 percent disagreed, and 28.5 percent agreed. In addition, a majority of respondents (40.8 percent versus 32.1 percent) did not feel advertising would increase the quality of physicians' services in the future (statement 3).

**Table 5**  
**FREQUENCY PERCENTAGES OF PUBLIC'S RESPONSES TO ATTITUDE**  
**STATEMENTS (IN PERCENT) ABOUT THE FUTURE OF PHYSICIANS'**  
**ADVERTISING**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Undecided</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
3. Advertising will increase the quality of physicians' services in the future.	25.0	7.1	27.2	35.8	5.0
14. I would like to see more advertising by physicians.	25.7	2.8	39.4	25.9	6.1

### **Impact of Demographic Characteristics on Consumers' Attitudes**

Significant differences in consumers' attitudes were found with regard to age, race, marital status, and sex. Since the cross-tabulations of income, education, occupation, and number of children in household were not significant for any of the 19 statements, it appears the perceptions/attitudes within these demographics toward physicians' advertising are similar to the responses for all respondents. Findings follow for cross-tabulations for age, race, marital status, and sex for all statements where significant differences (.05 level) in attitudes were found.

## **Age of Consumers and Advertising by Physicians**

The sample of 424 respondents was divided by age into two groups: consumers under 46 and consumers 46 and older. Table 6 shows the significant differences between the attitudes of respondents with regard to advertising by physicians. Significant differences in consumers' attitudes were found regarding statement 1 that the public would be provided useful information through advertising by physicians: of younger respondents, 76.3 percent agreed and 9.3 percent disagreed; of older respondents, 71.1 percent agreed, and 3.1 percent disagreed. Significant differences in consumers' attitudes were found regarding statement 5 that advertising by physicians would be a useful means of informing potential patients about services and specialties: of older respondents 88.8 percent agreed and 1.9 percent disagreed; 80.4 percent of younger respondents agreed, while 8.91 percent disagreed. Significant differences in consumers' attitudes were found regarding statement 7 that it is good to deal with physicians who offer the lowest prices for routine services: of younger respondents, 46.3 percent disagreed and 35.2 percent agreed; of older respondents, 45.6 percent disagreed, and 25.6 percent agreed.

**Table 6**  
**DIFFERENCES IN CONSUMERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD ADVERTISING BY**  
**PHYSICIANS BASED ON AGE**

Statement Age	Attitude Response			Significance  Overall Chi Square Probability
	Agree or Strongly Agree	Undecided	Disagree or Strongly Disagree	
1. The public would be provided useful information through advertising by physicians.				
Younger	206 (76.3)*	39 (14.4)	126 (09.3)	0.032
Older	136 (71.1)	19 (11.9)	5 (03.1)	
5. Advertising by physicians would be a useful means of informing potential patients about services and specialties.				
Younger	217 (80.4)	29 (10.7)	24 (08.9)	0.012
Older	142 (88.8)	15 (09.4)	3 (01.9)	
7. It is good to deal with physicians who offer the lowest prices for routine services.				
Younger	95 (35.2)	50 (18.5)	125 (46.3)	0.002
Older	41 (25.6)	46 (28.7)	73 (45.6)	
9. I presently have a high image of physicians.				
Younger	141 (52.2)	63 (23.3)	66 (24.4)	0.010
Older	66 (41.2)	59 (36.9)	35 (21.9)	
15. Advertising by physicians would tend to lower the credibility and dignity of their services.				
Younger	65 (24.1)	45 (16.7)	160 (59.3)	0.011
Older	20 (12.5)	26 (16.2)	114 (71.2)	

\* Parentheses indicate row percentages

Significant differences in consumers' attitudes were found regarding statement 9 ("I presently have a high image of physicians"); of younger respondents, 52.2 percent agreed and 24.2 percent disagreed; of older respondents, 41.2 percent agreed and 21.9 percent disagreed. A study by Yavas and Riecken in 2001 reported that attitudes toward professional advertising are not consistent or homogeneous across consumer and the health care segment. They also reported that younger consumers hold more positive attitudes toward advertising by health care professionals than their older counterparts (Yavas & Riecken, 2001). Significant differences in consumers' attitudes were found regarding statement 15 that advertising by physicians would tend to lower the credibility and dignity of their services: of younger respondents, 46.3 percent disagreed and 35.2 percent agreed; of older respondents, 45.6 percent disagreed and 25.6 percent agreed.

## **Race of Consumers and Advertising by Physicians**

Table 7 shows the significant differences between the attitudes of the 424 respondents. The sample was divided into two groups: white and nonwhite. Table 7 shows the seven areas of disagreement between the two groups on their overall opinion. Both the nonwhite group (69.9 percent) and the white group (52.3 percent) agreed with statement 3 that advertising will increase the quality of physicians' services in the future. Both groups agreed with statement 5 (86.2 percent for the white group) and (74.8 percent for the nonwhite) that advertising by physicians would be a useful means of informing potential patients about services and specialties. More of the white group (48.9 percent) disagreed with statement 7 that it is good to deal with physicians who offer the lowest prices for routine services, while 45.6 percent of the nonwhite group agreed. More of the nonwhite group (45.6 percent) agreed with statement 13 that when physicians advertise, prices are lowered due to more competition, while 37.3 percent of the white group disagreed. Both the nonwhite (54.4 percent) and white group (41.6 percent) agreed with statement 14 that they would like to see more advertising by physicians. A rather large percentage of the white group (79.2) agreed with statement 16 that advertising makes the public more aware of the qualifications of physicians, while the nonwhite group also agreed (68.9 percent). A large percentage of both groups also agreed with statement 18 that it is better to deal with a reputable physician than one who offers the lowest prices, with the white group agreeing more strongly (75.2 percent) than the nonwhite group (61.2 percent).

**Table 7**  
**DIFFERENCES IN CONSUMERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD ADVERTISING BY**  
**PHYSICIANS BASED ON RACE**

Statement Race	Attitude Response			Significance  Overall Chi Square Probability
	Agree or Strongly Agree	Undecided	Disagree or Strongly Disagree	
3. Advertising will increase the quality of physician's services in the future.				
White	171 (52.3)*	70 (21.4)	89 (26.3)	0.007
Nonwhite	72 (69.9)	13 (12.6)	18 (17.5)	
5. Advertising by physicians would be a useful means of informing potential patients about services and specialties.				
White	282 (86.2)	26 (08.0)	19 (05.8)	0.013
Nonwhite	77 (74.8)	18 (17.5)	8 (07.8)	
7. It is good to deal with physicians who offer the lowest prices for routine services.				
White	89 (27.2)	78 (23.9)	160 (48.9)	0.002
Nonwhite	47 (45.6)	18 (17.5)	38 (36.9)	
13. When physicians advertise, prices are lowered due to more competition.				
White	96 (29.4)	109 (33.3)	122 (37.3)	0.002
Nonwhite	47 (45.6)	35 (34.0)	21 (20.4)	
14. I would like to see more advertising by physicians.				
White	136 (41.6)	119 (36.4)	72 (22.0)	0.043
Nonwhite	56 (54.4)	25 (24.3)	22 (21.4)	
16. Advertising makes the public more aware of the qualifications of physicians.				
White	259 (79.2)	22 (06.7)	46 (14.1)	0.003
Nonwhite	71 (68.9)	21 (20.4)	11 (10.7)	
18. It is better to deal with reputable physicians than one who offers the lowest price.				
White	246 (75.2)	43 (13.1)	38 (11.6)	0.016
Nonwhite	63 (61.2)	24 (23.3)	16 (15.5)	

\* Parentheses indicate row percentages

## Income of Consumers and Advertising by Physicians

The sample was divided into three groups based on the level of annual household income: families earning \$30,000 or less, families earning \$30,001 to \$60,000, and families earning more than \$60,000. As Table 8 indicates, three areas were found in which a significant difference existed between the attitudes of the three groups. The overall opinion of the three statements was the same. More of the high and middle-income group than the low-income group agreed with statement 5 that advertising by physicians would be a useful means of informing potential patients about services and specialties. More of the high and lower-income group than the middle-income group disagreed with statement 12 ("I would be suspicious of physicians who advertise"). More of the high and middle-income group than the low-income group disagreed with statement 15 that advertising by physicians would tend to lower the credibility and dignity of the services offered.

**Table 8**  
**DIFFERENCES IN CONSUMER ATTITUDES TOWARD ADVERTISING BY**  
**PHYSICIANS BASED ON INCOME**

	Attitude Response			Significance
Statement Income	Agree or Strongly Agree	Undecided	Disagree or Strongly Disagree	Overall Chi Square Probability
5. Advertising by physicians would be a useful means of informing potential patients about services and specialties.				
Low	81 (77.1)*	16 (15.2)	08 (07.6)	0.024
Middle	146 (82.5)	15 (08.5)	16 (09.0)	
High	132 (89.2)	13 (08.8)	03 (02.0)	
12. I would be suspicious of physicians who advertise.				
Low	22 (21.0)	08 (07.6)	75 (71.4)	0.006
Middle	32 (18.1)	19 (10.7)	126 (71.2)	
High	12 (08.1)	27 (18.2)	109 (73.6)	
15. Advertising by physicians would tend to lower the credibility and dignity of their services.				
Low	33 (31.4)	14 (13.3)	58 (55.2)	0.002
Middle	36 (20.3)	30 (16.9)	111 (62.7)	
High	16 (10.8)	27 (18.2)	105 (70.9)	

\* Parentheses indicate row percentages

## Marital Status of Consumers and Advertising by Physicians

The sample of 424 respondents was divided into two groups based on marital status: single and married/once married. As shown in Table 9, there were four areas in 2015 with disagreement among groups in their overall opinion. In response to statement 1 that the public would be provided useful information through advertising by physicians, more of the married/once married group agreed (83.9 percent) than the single group (73.5 percent). A large percent of the married/once married group agreed (86.7) with statement 5 that advertising by physicians would be a useful means of informing potential clients about services and specialties than the single group (79.0). More of the married/once married group (58.6 percent) disagreed with statement 6 that advertising by physicians would be more deceptive than other forms of advertising than the single group (44.2 percent). More of the married/once married group disagreed (63.5 percent) with statement 10 that in general, their image of physicians would be lower as a result of advertising, while 58.6 percent of the single group also disagreed with this statement.

**Table 9**  
**DIFFERENCES IN CONSUMERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD ADVERTISING BY**  
**PHYSICIANS BASED ON MARITAL STATUS**

	Attitude Response			Significance
Statement Marital Status	Agree or Strongly Agree	Undecided	Disagree or Strongly Disagree	Overall Chi Square Probability
1. The public would be provided useful information through advertising by physicians.				
Single	133 (73.5)*	30 (16.6)	18 (09.9)	0.022
Married/Once Married	209 (83.9)	28 (11.2)	12 (04.8)	
5. Advertising by physicians would be a useful means of informing potential clients about services and specialties.				
Single	143 (79.0)	27 (14.9)	11 (06.1)	0.024
Married/Once Married	216 (86.7)	17 (06.8)	16 (06.4)	
6. Advertising by physicians would be more deceptive than other forms of advertising.				
Single	48 (26.5)	53 (29.3)	80 (44.2)	0.010
Married/Once Married	44 (17.7)	59 (23.7)	146 (58.6)	
10. In general, my image of physicians would be lower as a result of advertising.				
Single	43 (23.8)	32 (17.7)	106 (58.6)	0.042
Married/Once Married	36 (14.5)	55 (22.1)	158 (63.5)	

\* Parentheses indicate row percentages



## Sex of Respondents and Advertising by Physicians

The sample was divided into males and females. As Table 10 indicates, a significant difference between the attitudes of the two 2015 groups existed in four areas. Significant differences in consumers' attitudes were found regarding statement 6 that advertising by physicians would be more deceptive than other forms of advertising: of female respondents, 61.5 percent disagreed, and 14.4 percent disagreed, and 24.0 percent were undecided; of the male respondents, 44.1 percent disagreed, and 27.9 percent agreed. Significant differences in consumers' attitudes were found regarding statement 10 that in general my image of physicians would be lower as a result of advertising: of female respondents, 67.8 percent disagreed, and 13.0 percent agreed, and 19.5 percent were undecided; of male respondents, 55.4 percent disagreed, 23.4 percent agreed and 21.2 percent were undecided. Significant differences in consumers' attitudes were also found regarding statement 12 ("I would be suspicious of physicians who advertise"): of female respondents, 77.9 percent disagreed, 10.1 agreed, and 12.0 percent were undecided; of male respondents, 66.7 percent disagreed, and 20.3 percent agreed. A rather large percentage of the female group (69.7) disagreed with statement 15 that advertising by physicians would tend to lower the credibility and dignity of their services with the male group also disagreeing (58.1 percent).

**Table 10**  
**DIFFERENCES IN THE PUBLIC'S ATTITUDE TOWARD ADVERTISING BY**  
**PHYSICIANS BASED ON SEX**

Attitude Response				Significance
Statement Sex	Agree or Strongly Agree	Undecided	Disagree or Strongly Disagree	Overall Chi Square Probability
6. Advertising by physicians would be more deceptive than other forms of advertising.				
Male	62 (27.9)	62 (27.9)	98 (44.1)	0.000
Female	30 (14.4)	50 (24.0)	128 (61.5)	
10. In general, my image of physicians would be lower as a result of advertising.				
Male	52 (23.4)	47 (21.2)	123 (55.4)	0.010
Female	27 (13.0)	40 (19.2)	141 (67.8)	
12. I would be suspicious of physicians who advertise.				
Male	45 (20.3)	29 (13.1)	148 (66.7)	0.010
Female	21 (10.1)	25 (12.0)	162 (77.9)	
15. Advertising by physicians would tend to lower the credibility and dignity of their services.				
Male	59 (26.6)	34 (15.3)	129 (58.1)	0.001
Female	26 (12.5)	37 (17.8)	145 (69.7)	

\* Parentheses indicate row percentages

## CONCLUSIONS

The results of this study have a number of implications. First, although consumers' opinions about advertising by physicians are mixed, they look for and generally favor advertising as a means of obtaining some kinds of information about health care services. The results in Tables 1 and 2 indicate consumers desire more information about the services of physicians and feel that advertising by physicians could help them learn about services and specialties of particular physicians. Physicians and other health care providers should be informed of these and similar survey results so they can begin to satisfy the health care needs and desires of the public. However, it is interesting to note that, as indicated in Table 5, 39.4 percent of respondents were undecided about wanting see more advertising by physicians, 32 percent did not wish to see more advertising, and 28.5 percent agreed with this statement.

Second, opinion leaders among the health care industry should be encouraged to use information advertising. Much has been written about the ethical implications of advertising by professionals and the attitudes of those professionals who must make the decision whether to advertise or not. Although many physicians have indicated they would not advertise even if others did, it is likely that some of these physicians could be encouraged to try advertising if they were convinced it could be done tastefully and for the purpose of informing and serving the community.

From the marketer's viewpoint, the rapid change of attitudes based on changing demographic and cultural factors dictates a greater need for understanding a physician's market. The results in Table 6 indicate that consumers of all ages are not in favor of physicians advertising their professional services; however, older consumers disagreed more strongly than the younger group. Both age groups also agreed that advertising will increase the quality of physicians' services in the future. Here again, the older consumers showed stronger disagreement. Both groups strongly agreed it is better to deal with reputable physicians than one who offers the lowest price. Older consumers are more likely to identify with advertisements that depict them in roles similar to the ones they occupy in real life. Physicians and other health care professionals who market services must closely monitor the changing attitudes of various age groups and be prepared to make whatever adjustments are necessary to keep pace with their expectations. Physicians must clearly define potential consumers and devise well-defined marketing strategies.

Opinions based on race regarding the use of advertising by physicians were mixed, according to Table 7. The results indicate that the nonwhite groups viewed advertising as an information tool more favorably than did the white group. The white group felt that advertising by physicians would provide useful information, make the public more aware of the qualifications of physicians, and help consumers make more intelligent choices between physicians. The nonwhite group also agreed regarding this information function. However, more of the white group disagreed that advertising by physicians would be more deceptive than other forms of advertising, while more of the nonwhite group agreed. More of the nonwhites agreed that when physicians advertise, prices are lowered due to more competition, while more of the whites disagreed. Both groups agreed when asked if they would like to see more advertising by physicians.

The results in Table 9 indicate that all three groups agreed the public would be provided useful information through advertising by physicians. Also, all three groups strongly agreed that advertising would help the public make more intelligent choices among physicians. The results in Table 10 indicate that both the male and female groups disagreed that advertising by physicians would be more deceptive than other forms of advertising. Both groups disagreed that their image of physicians would be lower as a result of advertising. Both gender groups strongly disagreed they would be suspicious of physicians who advertise.

This study seems to confirm the belief of many marketing professionals that advertising and marketing clearly have a place in the management and operation of professional services. Although the present image of physicians is positive, opinions were rather mixed as to whether it is proper for physicians to advertise. The study also confirmed the quality of service and the reputation of physicians were more important to the consumer than the price. Physicians will now find that consumers are generally receptive to the use of advertising by their profession as a means of communicating information about their services to consumers (Barr and McNeilly, 2003). Physicians who carefully research the market and investigate attitudes and preferences of specific socioeconomic groups are likely to enjoy a competitive advantage over other physicians.

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## **MAINTAINING ACADEMIC HONESTY IN ONLINE COURSES**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Today, more and more students are enrolling in online courses because of the flexibility and convenience of having the Internet provide them with the course content. While most faculty agree that using the Internet as a tool for delivering course content may be more convenient for students and provide greater flexibility than teaching in a traditional format, many of these same faculty are concerned about maintaining academic honesty in online courses. In this paper, we first determine what technologies and techniques are available and are actually being used by instructors at different universities in the United States to maintain academic honesty in online courses. Second, we assess the perceptions of online educators about cheating in online courses. Additionally, we recommend ways to preserve the integrity of online degrees.

### **INTRODUCTION**

In today's economy, more and more people find themselves realizing the value of an education for advancement in the job market. When these people enter into an educational environment, they must do so while maintaining their current jobs and other responsibilities. These students realize the most sensible way to fulfill their goals of obtaining college degrees is to take courses online. Once registered, some may find that the burdens of taking classes while juggling home and work are more than they were prepared to handle. They may feel it would be easy to resort to dishonest methods such as cheating, plagiarism, and collusion to complete the coursework and take the required exams (Young, 2012). Some may even have others take the classes for them. While there is disagreement regarding whether academic dishonesty occurs more often in online classes compared to traditional classes, there is agreement that cheating on exams or assignments dilutes the quality of learning. Also, it must be taken into consideration that online cheating methods are varied and complex (Stuber-McEwen, et al., 2009). Student perceptions of cheating

behavior, attitudes, values, and beliefs play a significant role in the assessment of academic dishonesty, which has mostly been self-reported (Stuber-McEwen et al., 2009).

Some researchers believe that our culture contributes to academic dishonesty. Kitahara and Westfall (2009) write about a growing problem in online courses in which students cheat on exams and assignments, then seek redress for wrongs against them when they are caught. A study by Raine et al. (2011) found that some students did not even consider any dishonest academic behavior to be cheating unless they were caught. Kitahara and Westfall (2009) found that up to 75 percent of students reported engaging in some form of academic dishonesty. McCabe et al. (2006) reported that “graduate students in general are cheating at an alarming rate, and business school students are cheating even more than others” (p. 304). Prior research has pointed out several reasons for cheating, such as the desire to get a better grade, the need to pass the class, the desire to help others, procrastination, the difficulty of the course, etc. (Moten et al., 2013). Whatever the reasons for cheating are, academic dishonesty costs institutions administrative time, loss of integrity within the school, and student lack of respect for ethics and values (Boehm et al., 2009).

Campuses offering online courses must find ways to prevent students from engaging in cheating behaviors. Schools and instructors need to establish preventive measures to ensure academic integrity in the courses they offer (Apampa et al., 2010; Jennings et al., 2014; Paullet et al., 2014). By having administrators use procedural techniques at their disposal and by requiring the use of specific hardware and software that force students to identify them upon sign-in and periodically throughout the curriculum, educational institutions and professors can serve as “watchdogs” to oversee and control student activity.

The purpose of this research is to investigate what technologies and techniques are available and are actually being used by instructors in maintaining academic honesty in online courses. Via survey research, we examined the methods used to deliver course content in an online environment. We assessed the use of interactive tools and the identification process of online students. We investigated what percentage of the students’ final grades were determined by various evaluation methods, such as exams, projects, quizzes, assignments, discussions, research papers, etc. We also examined the use of proctoring services for assessment. In cases where proctoring was not used, we inquired about the methods that were used to deliver unproctored exams and the reasons for not using proctoring. We also investigated the perceptions of educators about different aspects of cheating in an online environment. Following the results of our survey research, we propose several recommendations to promote academic integrity in online courses.

## **RESEARCH DESIGN**

Data were collected using survey research. The link to an online survey was e-mailed to deans at several U.S. Universities. The deans were requested to forward the link to all faculty members in their colleges who had ever taught an online course. The survey included questions relating to the online instructors’ perceptions and experiences relating to maintaining academic integrity in

online courses. Altogether, 435 usable responses to the survey were received. The results of the data analysis are presented next.

## DATA ANALYSIS

The relevant general characteristics of the survey respondents are presented first. Table 1 shows the number of respondents with various academic ranks.

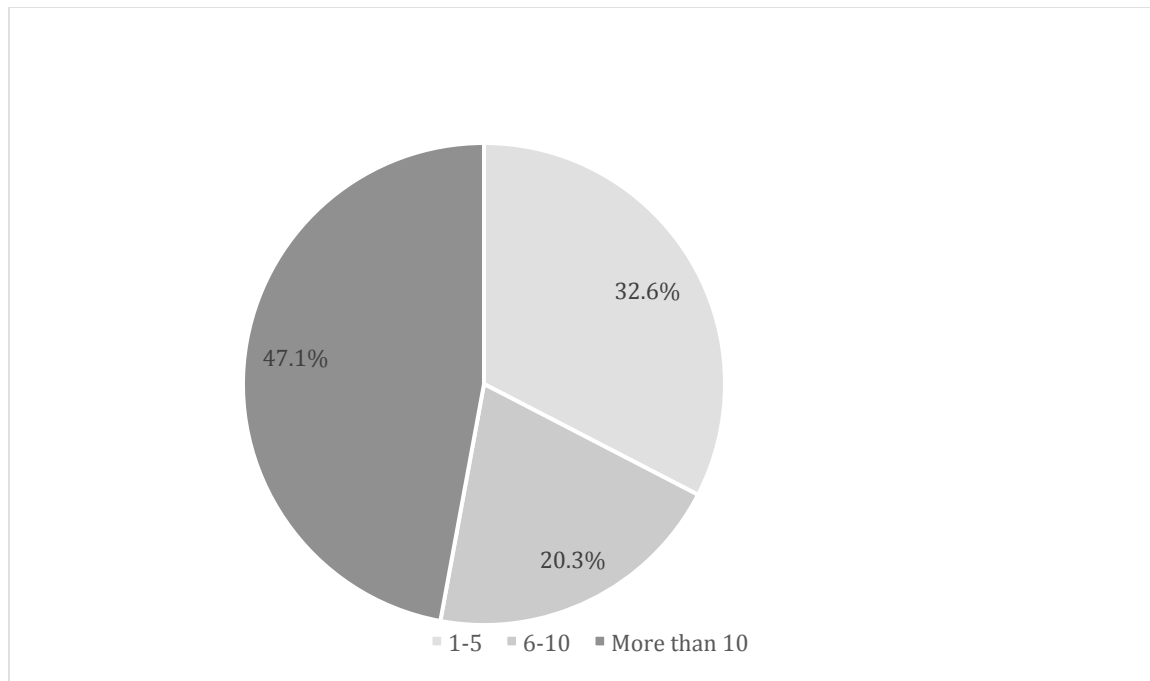
### Respondent Characteristics

**TABLE 1: ACADEMIC RANK OF ONLINE INSTRUCTORS**

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Assistant Professor	99	23
Associate Professor	110	25
Professor	94	22
Chair/Administrator	24	5
Adjunct Instructor	55	13
Full-Time Instructor	53	12
Total	435	100

Figure 1 shows the experience of the respondents in teaching online classes. We found that 32% (143) percent of the respondents taught online courses between 1 and 5 times, 20% (89) have taught between 6 and 10 times, and 47% (203) taught online courses more than 10 times.

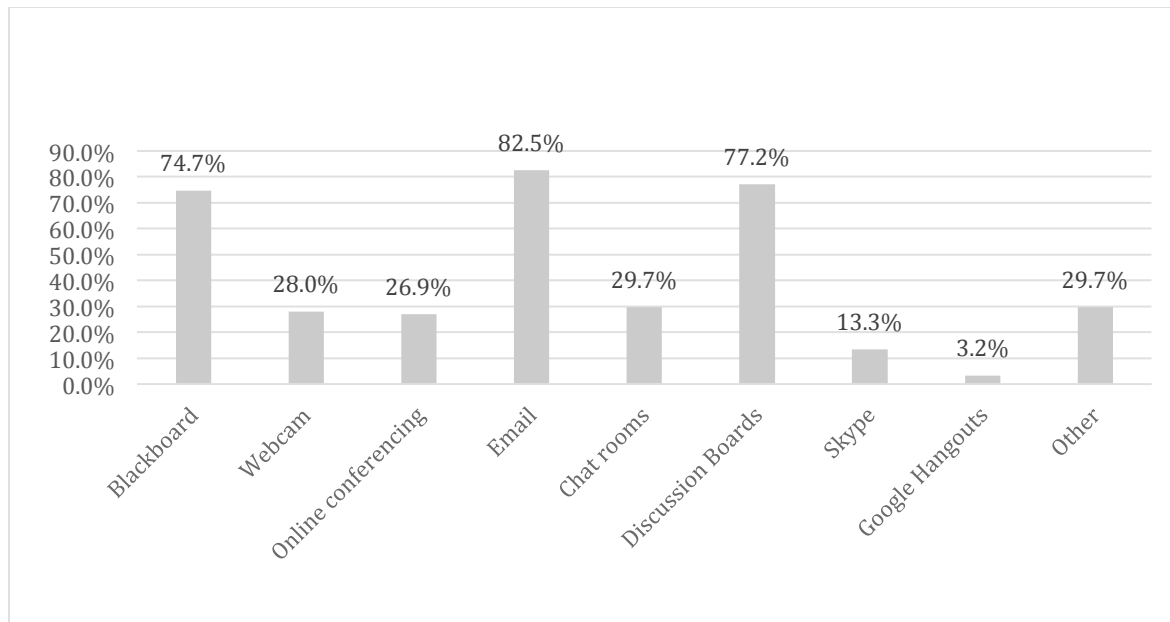




**FIGURE 1: FREQUENCY OF ONLINE TEACHING**

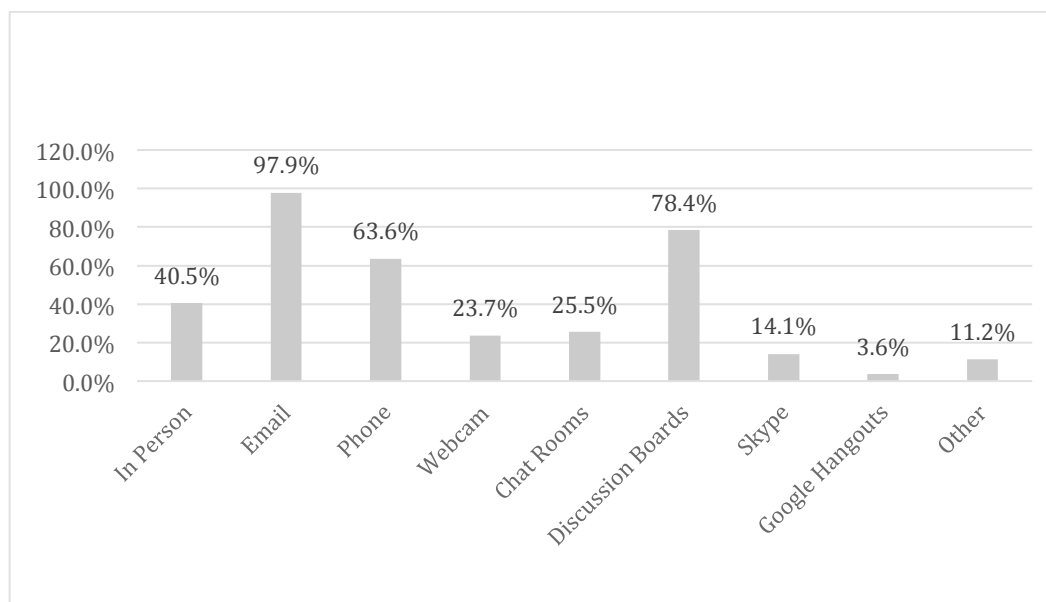
### **Tools and Methods Used in Online Courses**

Figure 2 shows the frequencies of different online course delivery methods used by the respondents. The sum of the percentages exceed 100 because multiple course delivery methods were used by many instructors. The most common method used was e-mail (82.5%), followed by discussion boards (77.2%), and Blackboard (74.7%).



**FIGURE 2: METHODS FOR ONLINE COURSE DELIVERY**

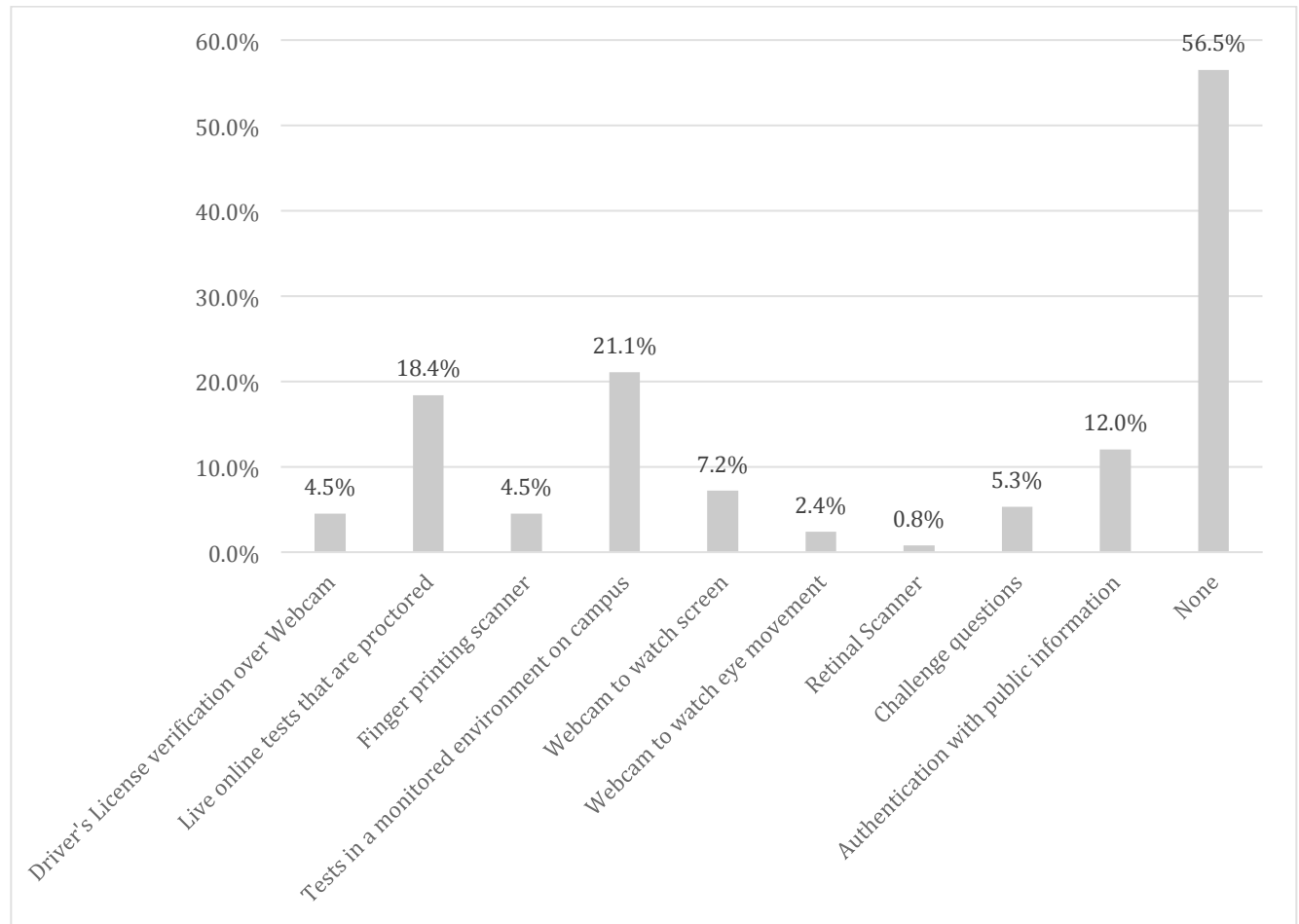
Next, Figure 3 shows the frequency of use of various methods by online instructors to interact or communicate with their students.



**FIGURE 3: METHODS OF INTERACTION WITH ONLINE STUDENTS**

Almost 98 percent of the instructors used email to communicate with their online students, but a big majority of 78.4 percent also used discussion boards. Over 63 percent used the phone. A relatively smaller percentage of instructors used chat rooms (25.5%), webcams (23.7%), and Skype (14.1%). More than 40 percent of the instructors met with their students face-to-face.

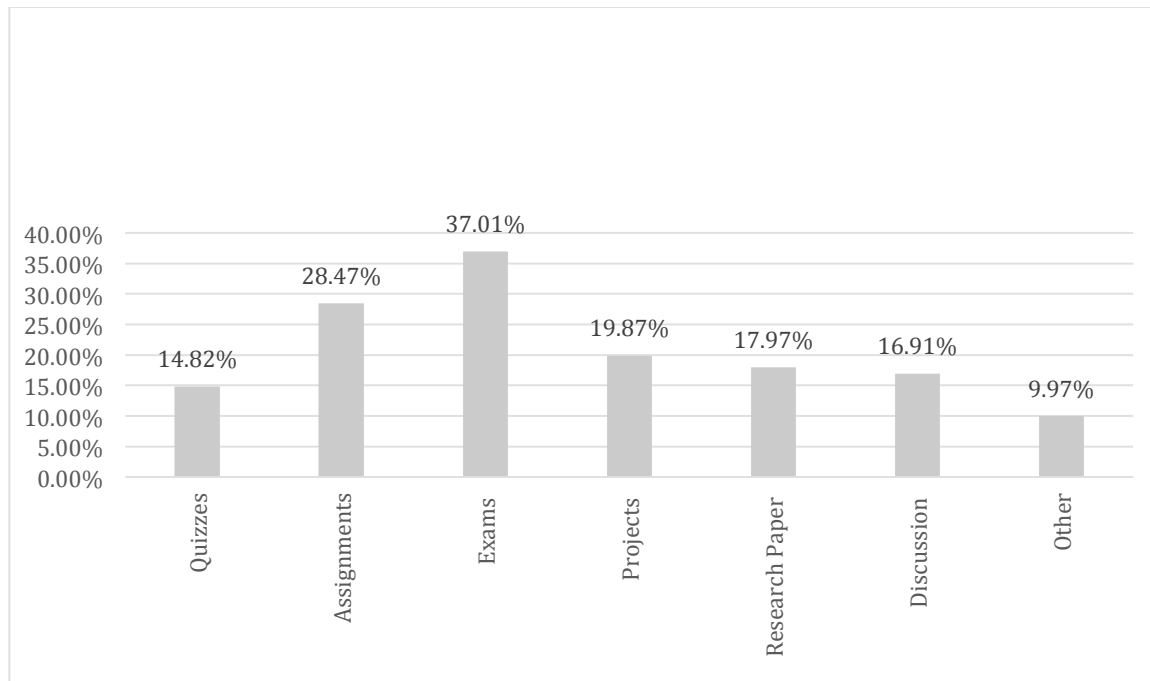
Figure 4 presents the frequency of methods used by instructors to identify their online students.



**FIGURE 4: METHODS USED FOR ONLINE STUDENT IDENTIFICATION**

The possible methods available for verifying the identity of an online student were: using a webcam to monitor the student, using a retinal scanner, using a fingerprint scanner, having a monitor in the room when exams are given, using challenge questions, and a variety of other techniques. As illustrated in Figure 4, the majority, or 56 percent, did not use any kind of method for verifying student identity. Less than one-third conducted exams in a monitored environment. The fewest percentage of respondents, less than 1 percent, used retinal scanners.

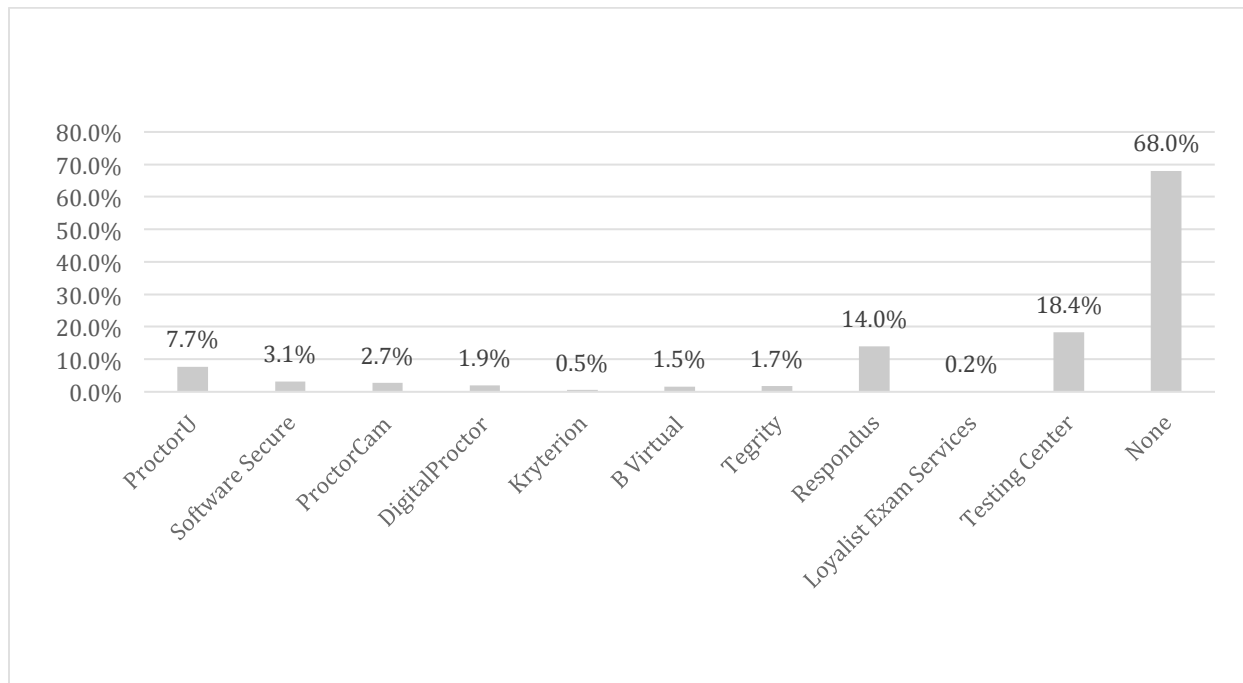
Next, we addressed methods of evaluating online students. We mentioned several evaluation methods, such as exams, projects, quizzes, assignments, and research papers. We asked the respondents to confirm the specific evaluation methods they used. The results are shown in Figure 5.



**FIGURE 5: EVALUATION METHODS FOR ONLINE STUDENTS**

As can be seen, the largest proportion of respondents, almost 37 percent, used exams as their evaluation method. The second most popular evaluation method was assignments, used by 28 percent of the respondents. The third most popular method of evaluating students was the use of projects, as indicated by almost 20 percent of the respondents.

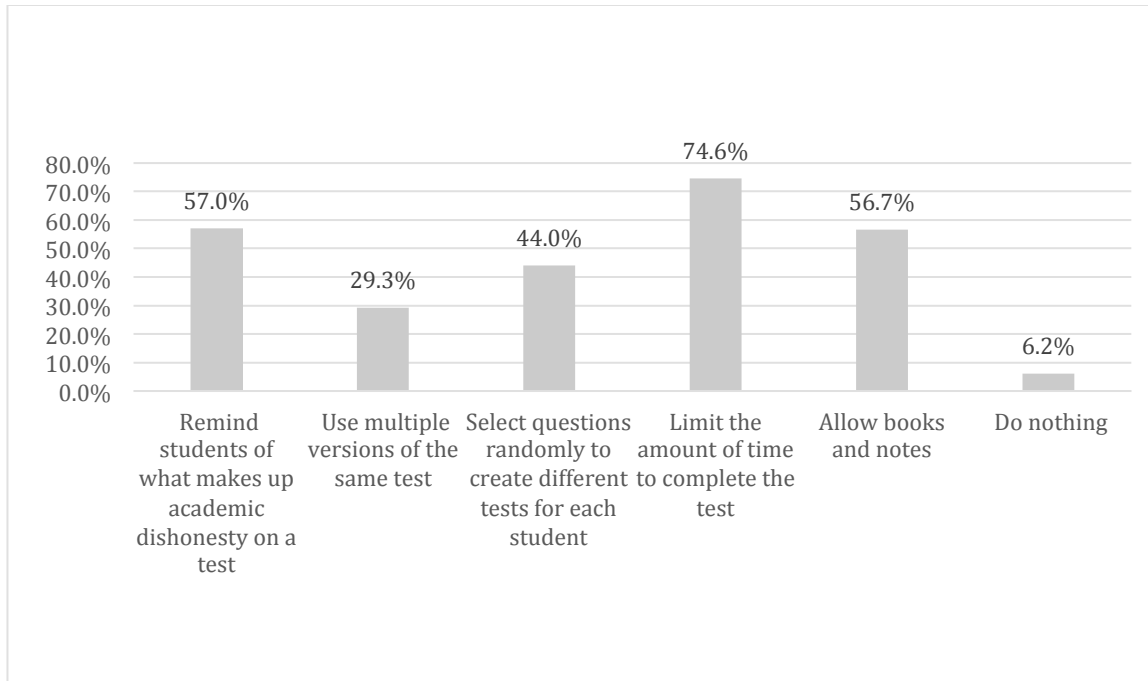
Following the evaluation methods, the respondents were asked if they used any type of proctoring service in their online classes. The results are presented in Figure 6.



**FIGURE 6: PROCTORING SERVICES USED IN ONLINE COURSES**

It was found that the vast majority (68%) did not use any proctoring service. Over 18 percent used a testing center, 14 percent used Respondus, and 8 percent used ProctorU. Several other proctoring services are noted in Figure 6, but only a very small percentage of respondents used them.

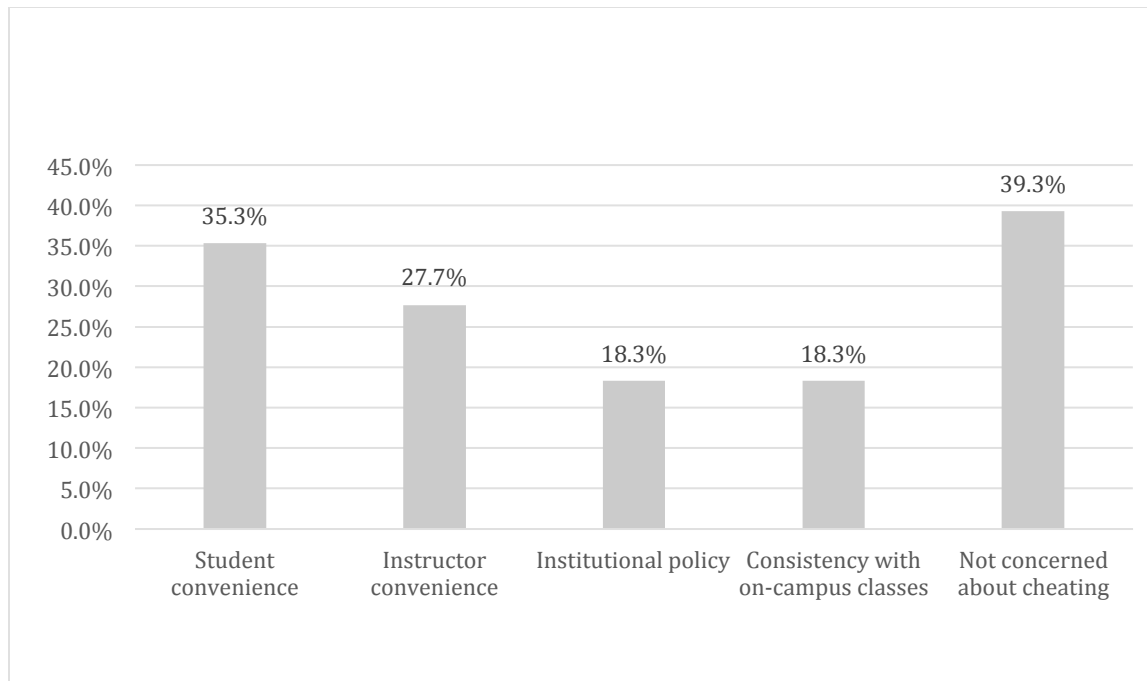
A follow-up question asked the respondents how their online exams were administered if they did not use any kind of proctoring service. Figure 7 presents the results.



**FIGURE 7: METHODS USED TO ADMINISTER UNPROCTORED ONLINE EXAMS**

The largest percentage of respondents (74.6%) indicated they limited the amount of time to complete the exam. The second most popular method, as expressed by 56.7 percent of the respondents, was to allow the students to use their book or notes. Fifty seven percent of the respondents told their students what academic dishonesty on an exam meant. About 6 percent did not do anything when giving exams.

Figure 8 illustrates the results when the respondents who had indicated that they did not use any proctoring services for their online exams stated the reasons for doing so.



**FIGURE 8: REASONS FOR UNPROCTORED TESTING**

Thirty-nine percent of the faculty responding said they were not concerned about the cheating that may take place in their online course. Another 35 percent said they did not proctor the assessment in order to make it more convenient to the student. Eighteen percent said they were following their institutional policy.

### **Perceptions Regarding Cheating in Online Courses**

The respondents were asked to give us their opinion to several statements concerning cheating in online courses. The respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with each statement on a Likert scale (1= Strongly Disagree, 5= Strongly Agree). The results are presented in Table 2.

**TABLE 2: INSTRUCTOR PERCEPTIONS OF CHEATING IN ONLINE COURSES**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
A. The way the test is designed plays a large part in whether the student will be able to cheat.	3%	6%	16%	49%	26%
B. There is really no way to stop a student from cheating if he/she really wants to do so.	5%	9%	16%	42%	16%
C. Universities MUST use more modern technology if they want to curb the cheating problem in online classes.	3%	38	29%	38%	21%
D. Having classes online negates the integrity of a college degree since online cheating is more widespread.	21%	33%	24%	16%	5%
E. From a percentage standpoint, as many students cheat in traditional classes as they do online.	7%	21%	37%	16%	6%
F. Proctoring of online students should be utilized to minimize cheating in online classes.	3%	13%	36%	33%	15%
G. Students know they can easily cheat on assignments and tests. That is why online classes are growing in popularity.	15%	39%	27%	13%	6%
H. It is a violation of privacy to require online students to use webcams and other intrusive equipment in their homes.	27%	32%	28%	10%	3%
I. As an instructor, I am concerned about students' cheating in online classes.	4%	16%	21%	39%	19%
J. A student is less likely to cheat in an online class.	19%	38%	37%	5%	0%

Seventy-five percent of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the way the exam is designed plays a large part in whether the students will be able to cheat. About 58 percent agreed or strongly agreed that there really is no way to stop a student from cheating if he or she really wants to cheat. Fifty-nine percent agreed or strongly agreed that universities must



use more modern technology if they want to deter the cheating problem in online courses. About 54 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed that having online classes negates the honesty of a college degree. A large majority of respondents, or 37 percent, were neutral to the statement that from a percentage viewpoint, as many students cheat in a traditional class as in an online class. About 48 percent of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that proctoring of online students should be done in an online class, but about 36 percent were neutral about this statement. The largest percentage of respondents, 39 percent, disagreed with the statement that online classes are popular because students can easily cheat in them. Almost 59 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that it was a violation of the student's privacy to use a webcam or other intrusive equipment for assessment purposes in online classes. As high as 58% of the instructors surveyed either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that they were concerned with students' cheating in online courses. Only 4% strongly disagreed. Also, 57% either strongly disagreed or disagreed that a student is less likely to cheat in an online class.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of a literature review (Barnes & Paris, 2013; Farisi, 2013; Michael & Williams, 2013; McAllister & Watkins, 2012; Miller, 2012; Royer, 2013; Tovani, 2014), careful analysis of our nationally collected data, and comments from the survey respondents, several recommendations are proposed to promote academic integrity in online courses by simultaneously preventing cheating and enhancing student learning skills. These are:

1. Spell out exactly what constitutes plagiarism and honor declarations.
2. Create student awareness about the importance of honesty in online courses.
3. Make use of discussion boards in every online course. Make a discussion on plagiarism so that the students understand what constitutes plagiarism. Also, ask students to reflect on the academic integrity policy and how it relates to online education.
4. Make the students watch a plagiarism tutorial, such as (<http://www.lib.usm.edu/legacy/plag/plagiarismtutorial.php>)
5. Compare student writing on the discussion board with that on assignments. A writing sample collected at the beginning of the semester can be helpful.
6. Use plagiarism detection services such as Turnitin, Google phrases, SafeAssign, etc.
7. Give each student a different version of the exam. Change at least one-third of the exam questions each semester.
8. Time all exams.
9. Lock down the student's browser during testing.
10. Use online proctoring services.
11. Require the use of web cams in online courses.
12. Design assignments that require creative analysis.
13. Enhance student learning skills. Students and professors should have online forum sessions where they can discuss about the course content. Students should be reminded of the due dates of assignments so that they do not have to rush at the last minute for submission. Rushing at the last minute may lead to copying and cheating from their friends or from the Internet.

14. Provide feedback to students on their submitted assignments and the exams so that students will be motivated to do better the next time.
15. If students need help regarding course work, then professors must make themselves available on specific days and times. This helps students to work on the assignments on their own with the help of professors and to improve in areas where needed.

## CONCLUSION

The online movement can have a positive impact on all stakeholders of the education system if instructors maintain the integrity of the courses they offer while giving students the convenience they seek. Online cheating affects everyone. Online classes present many challenges for instructors wanting to maintain academic honesty (Moten et al., Leonard, & Brown, 2013). Many techniques are, however, available to minimize cheating while allowing the students to have the flexibility they desire (Hill, 2010).

According to The University Professional and Continuing Education Association's Center for Research and Consulting (2013), the credibility of the online/distance learning field is at stake when controls and standards are not put in place. For example, in 2005, the U.S. Department of Education reported just 16 cases of fraud regarding online learning. In 2011, the department had over one hundred open cases, potentially representing thousands of potential fraud participants.

In trying to deliver quality in online education, if even a single case of cheating or fraud happens and spreads through the media, it can hurt the entire distance education community as administrators, lawmakers, the media, faculty, and others question the viability and quality of online instruction. More recently, a number of for-profit institutions were investigated for questionable practices that were driven by federal financial funding motivations where they "raced" their online students through courses (The University Professional and Continuing Education Association's Center for Research and Consulting, 2013).

Academic integrity and reputation are a university's most influential tools for attracting committed, high-caliber students. This translates into improved graduation rates, leading to a stronger program and consistent accreditation. Ensuring the integrity of online education programs is essential for ensuring the integrity of the university itself. The online movement could be seen as both a blessing and a curse, depending on how the instructors maintain the integrity of the courses or degrees they offer while giving the students the convenience they seek. As has been pointed out, online classes present many challenges for instructors wanting to maintain academic honesty. However, many techniques are available for accomplishing this goal while also balancing the needs of the students. Online cheating affects everyone. From the incoming freshman to the student working toward a doctoral degree, cheating negates the integrity of what a college degree means to the students, the college, and society in general. If the online instructor incorporates some or many of the techniques available, online courses should be easier to manage and cheating in online classes may become less prevalent in the future. This will help maintain the honesty and integrity of the degree and what it means to those who actually earn one.

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# **MODERATING EFFECTS OF CULTURAL VALUES ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERSONALITY AND JOB PERFORMANCE**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This paper proposes a new model explaining the effects of cultural values on the relationship between personality and job performance based on the five-factor model of personality and Hofstede's cultural value dimensions. The model focuses on the three personality traits that have been found to be sensitive to situational factors—extraversion, agreeableness, and openness to experience—and the three cultural dimensions that have been shown to influence the personality-performance relationship—collectivism, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance—and explains potential interactions among them. Specifically, the model proposes that the relationship between extraversion and job performance and the relationship between openness to experience and job performance are negatively moderated by the three cultural dimensions, whereas the relationship between agreeableness and job performance are positively moderated by them. The practical implication of this model in terms of employee selection is discussed.

## **INTRODUCTION**

The five-factor model of personality (Digman, 1990) is a comprehensive yet parsimonious theoretical framework that can be used to systematically examine the relationship between specific personality traits and job performance (Barrick, Mount, & Judge, 2001). Moreover, its cross-cultural generalizability has been supported through an empirical study (McCrae & Costa, 1997), even though some argue for the need for expanding the model, for example, to incorporate the sixth factor, namely “dependence on others” (Hofstede, 2007).

However, the fact that the five-factor model is applicable to a variety of cultural environments does not guarantee that the relationship between personality traits and job performance will be identical across different cultural environments. Besides affecting national variance in personality (Hofstede & McCrae, 2004), cultural environment may potentially affect the relationship between personality traits and job performance as well, acting as a moderator. To examine the potential influence of culture, Salgado (1997) explored the relationship between personality and job performance in the European Community through a meta-analysis of previous studies. Even though his study expanded the empirical domain of the personality-job performance research to Europe from North America, the study is still limited in that it only

focused on one region instead of devoting attention to the potential role of cultural difference among many different countries of the world.

In this paper, we propose a model explaining the potential moderating effect of culture on the relationship between personality and performance. To theoretically examine the effect, we use Geert Hofstede's cultural values framework (Hofstede, 2001), which is perhaps the most influential of cultural classifications (Kirkman, Lowe, & Gibson, 2006). Even though criticisms have been raised against it (for a recent example: Ailon, 2008), numerous empirical studies incorporating the framework have been published (Kirkman et al., 2006). However, there seems to be none that examine the moderating effect of culture on the relationship between personality and job performance. Hofstede himself suggested a couple of ways to relate the five-factor model and his cultural values framework (i.e., measuring the cultural dimensions in individuals and measuring personality traits at the cultural level), but he did not mention the possibility of looking at cultural values as potential moderators (Hofstede & McCrae, 2004). Gibson, Maznevski, and Kirkman (2009) suggested the possibility of culture serving as a moderator, and Farh, Hackett, and Liang (2007) examined the moderating effect of power distance and Chinese traditionalism on relationships between perceived organizational support and work outcomes. However, the possibility of culture as a moderator has not been examined regarding the relationship between personality and job performance.

The purpose of this paper is threefold. First, it extends the existing research on the relationships between personality traits and job performance by explicitly considering cultural values as moderators. Second, by proposing that cultural values affect the relationship between personality traits and job performance, it provides a new perspective of appreciating the importance of cultural diversity. Third, in practical terms, it provides insights on the types of people that are most likely to perform well in a given cultural setting. This knowledge has great practical significance in that it can be applied by organizations to improve their selection processes, thereby contributing to a well-managed corporate environment. We believe it is a vital issue in this age of globalization and high mobility.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW AND SCOPE OF INQUIRY**

### **The Five-Factor Model of Personality**

If a consensual structure of personality traits is ever to emerge, the five-factor model is probably it (Judge & Ilies, 2002). The five-factor model of personality is not a result of an individual effort, but a collective outcome of independent endeavors of several researchers. Digman (1990) notes:

Thus more than 20 years ago, the domain of personality attributes had been successfully analyzed, not just once, but by five competent, independent investigators, all of whom came to the same general conclusion: that the domain could be adequately described by five superordinate constructs. (p. 420)

According to Digman (1990), fairly good agreement exists concerning the number of necessary dimensions, even though different terms have been used for each dimension.

The five factors in the model are (1) extraversion, which consists of sociability, dominance, ambition, positive emotionality and excitement seeking; (2) agreeableness, which is defined by cooperation, trustfulness, compliance and affability; (3) emotional stability, which is defined by the lack of anxiety, hostility, depression and personal insecurity; (4) conscientiousness, which is associated with dependability, achievement striving, and planfulness; and (5) openness to experience, which is defined by intellectance, creativity, unconventionality and broad-mindedness (Barrick et al., 2001).

The five-factor model of personality is generally believed to be applicable across different cultures and languages. McCrae and Costa (1997) assessed the cross-cultural generalizability of the five-factor model by comparing data from German, Portuguese, Hebrew, Chinese, Korean, and Japanese samples with the American factor structure and found that the American factor structure was closely reproduced. They argued that because the samples studied represented highly diverse cultures with languages from five distinct language families, these data strongly suggest that personality trait structure is universal (McCrae & Costa, 1997).

### **Hofstede's Cultural Value Framework**

Hofstede's cultural value framework originated from his book, *Culture's Consequences*, originally published in 1980. The book statistically analyzed approximately 117,000 questionnaires collected in 1967 and 1973 from employees working in forty IBM subsidiaries around the world, and came up with four value dimensions for representing differences among national cultures: power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism/collectivism, and masculinity/femininity (Ailon, 2008). Long-term versus short-term orientation was added later (Hofstede, 2001). This new dimension was based on a study among students in 23 countries around the world, using a questionnaire designed by Chinese scholars (Hofstede & McCrae, 2004).

According to Hofstede and McCrae (2004), the definitions of the first four value dimensions are as follows: (1) *Power distance* means the extent to which the less powerful members of organizations and institutions accept and expect that power is distributed unequally; (2) *Uncertainty avoidance* indicates to what extent a culture programs its members to feel uncomfortable or comfortable in unstructured situations; (3) *Individualism* versus its opposite, *collectivism*, refers to the degree to which individuals are integrated into groups; (4) *Masculinity* versus its opposite, *femininity*, refers to the distribution of emotional roles between the sexes. Regarding long-term versus short-term orientation, Hofstede and McCrae (2004) just state that values associated with long-term orientation are thrift and perseverance and values associated with short-term orientation are respect for tradition, fulfilling social obligations, and protecting one's face.

## **Interaction between Personality and Culture**

As House, Shane, and Herold (1996) note, the most persuasive explanations for organizational behavior have been interactional ones that account for dispositional factors as well as situational factors. Culture is probably one of the most pervasive situational factors anyone can think of. Therefore, it is reasonable to think that personality and culture will have interactions that will affect job performance variables. Hofstede and McCrae (2004) suggest the way personality traits are typically expressed can be dramatically different across cultures. If their logic makes sense, it follows that it is not enough for researchers to examine personality traits without considering cultural influences placed on them. Moreover, different cultural dimensions may differently affect each facet of personality, making some facets more salient while making others less relevant. Therefore, there is an important need to examine the culture's impacts on the relationship between personality and job performance.

### **The Scope of Inquiry**

#### ***Predictor variables and moderators.***

Since there are five personality traits in the five-factor model and five cultural values in Hofstede's framework, there is a possibility of 25 interactions. However, we will focus on the interactions among three of the five personality traits (extraversion, agreeableness, and openness to experience) and three of the cultural values (collectivism, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance).

Conscientiousness and emotional stability are not included in the inquiry here because there is some evidence that they may not be affected much by situational factors. Meta-analyses on the relations between the five personality traits and job performance mostly find conscientiousness and emotional stability positively correlated with job performance in most jobs (Barrick et al., 2001). The fact that conscientiousness and emotional stability are positively related to overall performance across different jobs insinuates that the two traits are relatively immune to differences in work environment, and in extension, to cultural differences. In contrast, extraversion, agreeableness, and openness to experience have generally been regarded less influential than conscientiousness and emotional stability on the levels of overall job performance, but they are suggested to have bigger effects in certain occupations and situations (Barrick et al., 2001). Since these three personality traits are found sensitive to situational factors in general, we believe it is reasonable to expect that they will also have differential effects on job performance under different sets of cultural values.

We excluded masculinity-femininity and long-term versus short-term orientation from the study for largely two reasons. First, few, if any, reliable measures at the individual level exist for the dimensions. Masculinity-femininity and long-term versus short-term orientation have not been



widely used in past research. As Kirkman et al. (2006) note, most researchers focused exclusively on individualism-collectivism at the individual levels of analysis. Farh et al. (2007) noted the marginal reliability even for power distance measures, even though individual level power distance orientation had been studied in several previous studies. Since masculinity-femininity and long-term versus short-term have been measured less often than power distance at the individual level, the situation is likely to be worse for these dimensions.

Second, there are conceptual problems. The concept of masculinity-femininity was originally developed for countries (Hofstede, 1980). Measured at the individual level, it would inevitably reflect differences between male and female, which may bias the result. In the case of the more recently devised long-term versus short-term orientation, Hofstede and McCrae (2004) do not even discuss the dimension when they relate dimensions of culture to personality factors. Additionally, it has not been measured as widely as the other four dimensions even at the country level (Hofstede & McCrae, 2004).

### ***Dependent variables.***

We use the term *job performance* in a broad sense in this paper. Three different facets of job performance are considered: performance rating by supervisors, organizational commitment, and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). These are basically identical to the measures that were used by Farh et al. (2007) when they examined individual-level cultural values as moderators of perceived organizational support-employee outcome relationships.

## **THEORY AND PROPOSITIONS**

### **Moderation on the Extraversion-Job Performance Relationship**

Features of extraversion include sociability, dominance, ambition, positive emotionality, and excitement-seeking (Barrick et al., 2001). According to Barrick et al.'s (2001) meta-analysis, the relationship between extraversion and job performance could not be distinguished from zero based on the lower bound 90% credibility value. Barrick et al. (2001) initially expected that higher scores on extraversion would be related to higher training proficiency, teamwork, sales work performance, and managerial job performance, partly based on Barrick and Mount (1991). They found support for their expectations except for the relationship between extraversion and sales work performance (Barrick et al., 2001).

### ***Moderating effect of collectivism.***

Sociability is undoubtedly an important part of extraversion, but Lucas, Diener, Grob, Suh, and Shao (2000) argue that extraverts' sociability may be a by-product of reward sensitivity rather

than the core feature of the trait. In collectivistic cultures, in which feelings and emotions have less influence compared to norms and roles, social contact may not be seen as fun and rewarding (Lucas et al., 2000). This has implications on the relationship between extraversion and job performance. People with high extraversion are expected to excel in certain jobs mainly because of their interpersonal skills. When norms and roles, rather than feelings and emotions, dominate the society, the potency of their skills will be significantly weakened, leading to lower job performance.

Additionally, ambition, another feature of extraversion, may not be regarded favorably in collectivistic cultures. In collectivist societies, people are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, which protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty (Hofstede & McCrae, 2004). Unquestioning loyalty sometimes means that one has to place the interest of in-groups before his or her own. The ambitious nature of people with high extraversion will be likely to clash with the unquestioning loyalty required and adhered to in collectivistic cultures.

Barrick and Mount's (1993) finding that the degree of autonomy on the job moderates the validity of extraversion also suggests that the relationship between extraversion and job performance will be negatively moderated by collectivism, because in cultures of high collectivism, the degree of autonomy is likely to be limited.

*Proposition 1a. Collectivism moderates the relationship between extraversion and job performance such that the relationship is weaker when collectivism is higher, rather than lower.*

### ***Moderating effect of power distance.***

Extraversion is expected to be positively related to performance in jobs with an important interpersonal component (Barrick et al., 2001). However, power distance limits the degree to which people with high extraversion can interact with those higher in rank than them. Since power distance is the extent to which the less powerful members of organizations accept and expect that power is distributed unequally (Hofstede & McCrae, 2004), people with high extraversion, namely people that are dominant and ambitious, will be likely to have difficulty assimilating themselves to cultures with high power distance. They will have to either have troubles with people higher in rank than them or pretend that they are not ambitious or dominant. This will lead to negative emotions, which further conflict with one of the features of extraversion: positive emotionality. All these conflicts that people with high extraversion experience under cultures with high power distance may lead to lowered levels of job performance outcomes.

*Proposition 1b. Power distance moderates the relationship between extraversion and job performance such that the relationship is weaker when power distance is higher, rather than lower.*

### ***Moderating effect of uncertainty avoidance.***

Societies with high uncertainty avoidance have lower tolerance for ambiguity (Hofstede & McCrae, 2004). Excitement-seeking, one facets of extraversion, is likely to be problematic under cultures with high uncertainty avoidance. Excitement-seeking is inherently related to ambiguity. There is no excitement if there is no ambiguity at all. To comply with the norms of cultures with high uncertainty avoidance, people with high extraversion will have to either self-regulate their excitement-seeking nature to a minimum not to create ambiguity that goes over societal tolerance levels or face the consequences. This tension is likely to impair job performance outcomes of people with high extraversion in cultures with high uncertainty avoidance.

*Proposition 1c. Uncertainty avoidance moderates the relationship between extraversion and job performance such that the relationship is weaker when power distance is higher, rather than lower.*

### **Moderation on the Agreeableness-Job Performance Relationship**

Features of agreeableness include cooperation, trustfulness, compliance, and affability (Barrick et al., 2001). According to Barrick et al.'s (2001) meta-analysis, the relationship between agreeableness and job performance could not be distinguished from zero based on the lower bound 90% credibility value. Barrick et al. (2001) initially expected agreeableness to have high predictive validity in jobs that involve considerable interpersonal interaction. In the study, agreeableness was found to predict teamwork (Barrick et al., 2001).

### ***Moderating effect of collectivism.***

Cultural situations with cohesive in-groups and required unquestioning loyalty will likely be relatively favorable for people with high agreeableness, since they are more inclined to cooperate, trust, and comply with existing social structures. In-group cohesiveness will likely promote and reward agreeableness since disagreements will be regarded as factors that threaten the cohesiveness. Furthermore, in contrast to people with high extraversion, placing the interest of in-groups before their own will be natural for these people. Therefore, their affable nature will likely contribute more toward their job, enhancing the performance rating. Barrick and Mount's (1993) finding that the degree of autonomy on the job moderates the validity of agreeableness also supports this conclusion because in cultures of high collectivism, the degree of autonomy is likely to be limited.

*Proposition 2a. Collectivism moderates the relationship between agreeableness and job performance such that the relationship is stronger when collectiveness is higher, rather than lower.*

#### ***Moderating effect of power distance.***

People with high agreeableness will not have much trouble in high power distance situations. It will be easier for them to accept and expect that power is distributed unequally (Hofstede & McCrae, 2004). In addition, in high power distance cultures, leaders are likely to favor those subordinates with high agreeableness. This will lead to positive leader-member relationships. According to Ilies, Nahrgang, and Morgeson (2007), a high-quality leader-member exchange (LMX) relationship not only predicted higher levels of performance, but also organizational citizenship behaviors. Thus, it is likely that high power distance will positively moderate the relationship between agreeableness and job performance.

*Proposition 2b. Power distance moderates the relationship between agreeableness and job performance such that the relationship is stronger when power distance is higher, rather than lower.*

#### ***Moderating effect of uncertainty avoidance.***

Uncertainty-avoiding cultures try to minimize the possibility of unusual situations by strict laws and rules, by safety and security measures, and by a belief in absolute truth (Hofstede & McCrae, 2004). Thus, compliance, one of the facets of agreeableness becomes highly salient in cultures with high uncertainty avoidance. Since the tendency to comply is in their nature, people with high agreeableness score will not go through much tension when they are faced with myriads of rules and regulations to follow. This will enable them to focus on their job without distraction, leading them to achieve relatively more in high uncertainty avoidance cultures.

*Proposition 2c. Uncertainty avoidance moderates the relationship between agreeableness and job performance such that the relationship is stronger when uncertainty avoidance is higher, rather than lower.*

#### **Moderation on the Openness to Experience-Job Performance Relationship**

Features of openness to experience include intellectance, creativity, unconventionality, and broad-mindedness (Barrick et al., 2001). According to Barrick et al.'s (2001) meta-analysis, the relationship between openness to experience and job performance could not be distinguished from zero based on the lower bound 90% credibility value. Barrick et al. (2001) found moderate effects of openness to experience for training proficiency.

### ***Moderating effect of collectivism.***

Unquestioning loyalty that is associated with collectivism does not go well with unconventionality and creativity inherent in people with high openness to experience. People with high openness to experience will not feel comfortable in situations in which they cannot question the status quo and seek for solutions that open new opportunities for them. Therefore, their job performance is likely to be impaired by high collectivism.

*Proposition 3a. Collectivism moderates the relationship between openness to experience and job performance such that the relationship is weaker when collectiveness is higher, rather than lower.*

### ***Moderating effect of power distance.***

Unconventionality and creativity also do not go well with power distance, since power distance requires less powerful members of organizations to accept the unequal distribution of power. Therefore, high openness to experience is a threat rather than a welcome trait in cultures of high power distance. Additionally, according to Burke and Witt (2002), the relationship between openness to experience job performance is moderated by extraversion. As explained earlier, the role of extraversion gets limited in cultures of high power distance. Under a high power distance situation, employees will have fewer opportunities to manifest their high openness to experience. Therefore its influence on job performance will be negatively moderated by power distance.

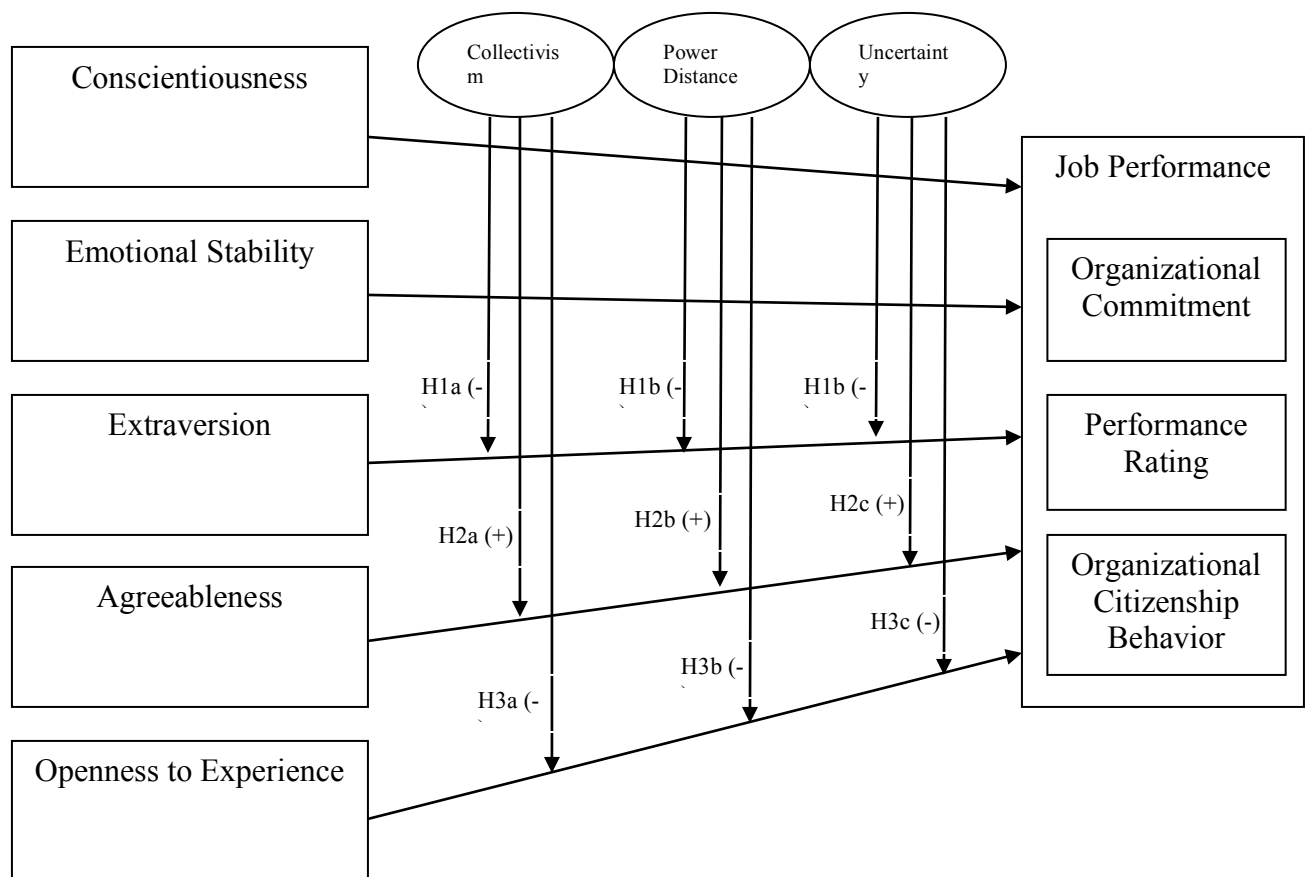
*Proposition 3b. Power distance moderates the relationship between openness to experience and job performance such that the relationship is weaker when power distance is higher, rather than lower.*

### ***Moderating effect of uncertainty avoidance.***

For people with high openness to experience, unstructured situations are exactly where they can thrive. However, in high uncertainty avoidance cultures, unstructured situations are avoided because of their low tolerance for ambiguity. People with high openness to experience will have a hard time utilizing their intellectual, curious, and imaginative side in their work settings under the pressure of uncertainty avoidance.

*Proposition 3c. Uncertainty avoidance moderates the relationship between openness to experience and job performance such that the relationship is weaker when uncertainty avoidance is higher, rather than lower.*

Figure 1 graphically summarizes the theoretical model.



**Figure 1: Theoretical Model**

## DISCUSSION

This paper proposes a new model explaining the potential moderating effects of culture on the relationship between personality and job performance based on the dominant frameworks on personality and cultural value dimensions, namely the five factor model of personality and Hofstede's cultural value dimensions. The model focuses on the three personality traits that have been deemed to be sensitive to situational factors—extraversion, agreeableness, and openness to experience—and the three cultural dimensions that are expected to be influential on the personality-performance relationship—collectivism, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance, and theoretically examined potential interactions among them. The model predicts that the relationship between extraversion and job performance and the relationship between openness to experience and job performance will be negatively moderated by the three cultural dimensions, whereas the relationship between agreeableness and job performance will be positively moderated by them.

This model is unique in that it is the first model that attempts to explain the moderating effects of cultural value dimensions on the relationship between personality and job performance. Culture is an informal but pervasive institution. Therefore, few, if any, variables are immune from its impact. Hofstede and McCrae (2004) have noted that cultural values affect national variance in personality. This national variance, in turn, is likely to reinforce cultural values even further. It is quite surprising then, that the moderating effect of culture on the relationship between personality and job performance has not been under scrutiny, since tension is inevitable when a person's personality and the cultural environment surrounding the person do not match. This tension will be likely to result in lowered levels of job performance. Since personality and culture are both relatively persistent over time, the problem cannot be easily solved.

This research is significant for three reasons. First, this model has great theoretical relevance in that it provides insight into the nuances of the relationship between the five-factor model of personality and job performance. Even though the three personality traits—extraversion, agreeableness, and openness to experience—that this paper focused on have not been found significant in predicting job performance in previous meta-analyses, considering cultural dimensions as moderators may reveal previously concealed relationships between personality and job performance. Future research should determine whether a relationship between these traits and job performance exists once the moderating effects of culture have been taken into consideration.

Second, it provides a new perspective on the importance of cultural diversity for multinational enterprises. Although the five-factor model of personality has been shown to be applicable across cultures, the relationship between specific Big Five traits and job performance is not necessarily the same across cultures. In fact, it would seem more likely that the relationship would depend upon the fit between the employee's personality traits and the broader societal culture where the business operates. This study examines nuances in the relationship between personality and performance, which have not been previously understood.

Third, and most important from a practical standpoint, the results of this study can be used by multinational enterprises to improve their selection processes. Most human resource

professionals would agree that identifying and selecting employees who are a cultural fit is critical for effective employee selection. However, ensuring a cultural fit can be especially challenging for multinational enterprises in situations where the job applicants come from different countries, with different cultural values. If the model presented in this paper is empirically supported, then multinational enterprises will be able to improve their employee selection and placement processes by ensuring that the applicant's personality fits the national culture of the country to where they are applying. The theory offers very specific predictions, which if correct, will result in better selection decisions when properly applied.

Moreover, one of the major assets of this research is its potential to influence the bottom line. As discussed herein, understanding the elemental traits that best fit with the societal culture will allow multinational enterprises to make fewer costly hiring mistakes. Employees who mesh with the broader societal culture, can serve to invigorate a company, perhaps ultimately leading to improved products and services a competitive edge, and an improved financial outlook.

Although this paper dealt with culture on a national level, future research could determine whether this model could be extended to organizations within the same culture. For example, the organizational cultures of companies such as Google and Zappos are different from that of Intel or IBM. It would only make sense that models of the relationship between scores on these Five Factor traits and performance should take the moderating effect of culture into consideration. In conclusion, this model has theoretical, cultural, and human resources relevance and therefore warrants further investigation.

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