**Will Millennials Change the Face of Relationship Management
in the Public Relations Profession?**

by

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A thesis submitted to the Graduate Faculty of
Auburn University
in partial fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

Auburn, Alabama
August 9, 2010

Keywords: public relations, relationship management, Millennials, Baby Boomers,
Generation X, social media, social networking, organizations, publics

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Abstract

This study was conducted using a Web-based survey instrument, which was administered to public relations students and practitioners. It examines the perceptions and attitudes of the Millennial generation concerning various forms of communication as relationship-building tools to determine how this generation will adapt to other generations already in the workforce. Results indicate that the Millennial generation may have a preference for social networking to build relationships instead of joining outside organizations. Although the results are significant, it is also found that years of service within the PR industry can change a practitioner's attitude concerning a preference for social networking. Additional findings also indicate the Millennial generation employee is much more likely to text at the workplace than are other generations. This study also discusses implications for those findings as well as limitations and suggestions for future research.

Acknowledgments

The author wishes to thank those whose support helped contribute to the completion of this study. First, to my committee chair, Dr. Jennifer Adams, a special thanks for the tremendous guidance and direction throughout the entire research process to help see the project to its completion even through her busy spring, which included the birth of her second daughter. Furthermore, her incredible statistical knowledge was invaluable to the author by offering suggestions for how to illustrate her results through data analysis. To Dr. Brunner: thank you for your constructive criticism on ways to improve the survey and literature review and simply for being willing to serve on the committee even with your additional research projects. To Dr. Fitch-Hauser: thank you for being available whenever I had a question even with your busy schedule as head of the department. Also, a special thanks to Dr. Fitch-Hauser for encouraging me throughout my time in the graduate program; your advice has been invaluable these last two years.

In addition, a thank you to a previous colleague, Abigail Holloway, who willingly offered her proofing expertise by offering stylistic improvement suggestions that were necessary to adequately express what the author was wanting to state.

To my children Corey and Morgan Knight, thank you for being so understanding these last two years while watching your mother spend countless hours reading, writing and studying. Your humor throughout the process is often what kept me going. To my

wonderful husband, Shey Knight, your love and support has allowed me the opportunity to pursue a dream I have always envisioned. You served as both mom and dad at many events, dinners and other gatherings. Words cannot adequately express my gratitude to you. You have always been there for me and are my true inspiration.

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List of Abbreviations

ANOVA    Analysis of Variable

GEN Y    Generation Y/Millennial Generation

IABC     International Association of Business Communicators

IRB      Institutional Review Board

PR       Public Relations

PRCA     Public Relations Council of Alabama

PRSA     Public Relations Society of America

SPRF     Southern Public Relations Federation

I.  INTRODUCTION

Public relations is the process of managing communication between an

organization and its publics (Grunig & Hunt, 1984).  For the practitioner, key publics

include a host of various constituents including, but not limited to, employees, media,

stakeholders and consumers. PR practitioners act as an organization's eyes and ears and

voice in a two-way communication process (Dozier & Broom, 2006). Maintaining

positive relationships with publics is imperative for an organization's success.  It is

critical for public relation professionals to help their organizations understand how key

publics might behave (Doorley & Garcia, 2007).   Because key publics most often come

from various economic backgrounds, generations and cultures, it can be overwhelming to

a professional to determine the best way to build that relationship.  One of the most

effective ways to build a relationship is to recognize that it has to be beneficial to both

parties (Berkowitz, 2007).  Practitioners have to identify the organization's publics,

research their needs, and recognize that these relationships have to be somewhat unselfish

so that both entities can accept each other.

PR as a profession began in the early 20th century with noted practitioners such as

Edward Bernays and Ivy Lee.  J.E. Grunig noted that Bernays was one of the first

professionals to link PR to theory (2001a).  Bernays was liberal-minded and showed

concern for society, but also believed he could use partial truths to instill in people a way

to behave that helped them even when society didn't know it was being helped.  Bernays'

theoretical principles were centered on asymmetrical communication.  Asymmetrical

communication in organizations is one-way and is usually based on a top-down approach (Grunig et. al., 2002). The asymmetrical style of public relations is thought to have been executed for much of the twentieth century by practitioners who were more concerned with getting their companies' messages out to key publics than with what the publics actually wanted from an organization.

Nonetheless, it wasn't until the mid 1970s when James Grunig developed the theory of symmetrical communication, which focused on two-way communication between an organization and its key publics (1976). However, in 1982 the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) formed a Research Foundation and by 1985 had committed to one of the largest research projects in public relations, which became known as the Excellence Study (Grunig, 1992). The Excellence Study resulted in several findings which focused on relationships. Those results also linked relationships to symmetrical communication by noting that practitioners developed more effective relationships when they practiced two-way as opposed to one-way communication. One outcome of the study also found that excellent PR departments were more effective when senior PR professionals maintained direct relationships with senior level managers within the company.

After the Excellence Study public relations researchers focused more on the relationship itself that developed through symmetrical communication. Center and Jackson (1995) noted that "The proper term for the desired outcome of public relations practice is public relationships" (p. 2). From this idea they termed the theory of relationship management in which organizations have effective public relations because they maintain effective public relationships. Relationship management has become one

of the major theories to be studied in PR curricula throughout the country (Ledingham, 2006). A recent public relations textbook noted one of the most critical steps in reputation management is building and cultivating relationships with noted constituents (Berkowitz, 2007). Berkowitz stated, "Show me a successful PR practitioner or lobbyist, and I will show you someone who has developed strong individual relationships and cultivates them in a planned, concerted way on an ongoing basis." (p.14)

In the last 20 years the workforce has been apprised of mainly three generations, which include the Veterans, Baby Boomers and Generation X (Reynolds, Bush & Geist, 2008). Though researchers sometimes disagree as to exactly who falls in which category, rough estimates note that Veterans are those persons born before 1946. The Veterans were also known as the silent generation due in part to having had to conform to so many things such as the Depression, two World Wars and the anti-communist McCarthy era (Thornton, 2009). Veterans are known for remaining with one employer their entire career, and are extremely loyal. Baby Boomers include those born 1946 to 1964. The large Baby Boomer generation grew up during the chaotic 1960s and 1970s, which included both Watergate and the Vietnam War (Roof, 1999). During their youth Baby Boomers were responsible for anti-war protests and became disillusioned with government. Generation X includes those born 1965 to 1984. This generation was the first to be called latch-key kids because they saw the rise of women entering the workforce and included large percentages of divorced parents (Tulgan, 2000). Generation X members are used to having to solve their own problems.

Any given corporation consists of employees from several different generations (Holtz, 2007). Nonetheless, organizations in the twenty-first century are now witnessing

a first with the entry of a fourth generation to the job market; this group is known as Generation Y or the Millennials.  The Millennials were born circa 1984 to approximately 2000.  This generation has grown up during an era of tremendous technological advancements like no other generation has experienced.  They have always had the Internet, cellular phones and cable television, and they give multi-tasking an entirely new meaning (Goman, 2006). Millennials stay connected 24-hours-a-day through a host of various mediums (Alsop, 2008).  This continuously on-the-go generation shows no signs of slowing down either.  A study of 2- to 18-year-olds found nearly one-third of them talk on the phone, surf the Internet, watch TV and send instant messages all while finishing their homework each night (Kaiser Foundation, 2001).  The Millennials have become so technological that the survey noted most preferred to send someone a text message over talking to them even though they might be in the same room with the other person.

The characteristics concerning Millennials are inconsequential if they are only dealing with other Millennials as they enter the PR workforce.  Unfortunately, as previously noted, this is rarely the case.  According to the Pew Research Center almost half of the 18- to 25-year-old students polled had sent or received a text message within the last 24 hours compared to just 10 percent of those respondents classified as Baby Boomers (Alsop, 2008).  Many organizations are finding Millennial hires a double-edged sword. On the one hand they are extremely technologically knowledgeable, especially in areas such as social media, which is where companies find new hires with more technological knowledge than the 20-year seasoned PR professional.  On the other hand, they are so accustomed to working with technology that they don't like to work with less

technologically savvy modes of communication that other generations still primarily use (Holtz, 2007).

Because public relations is centered around building, maintaining and strengthening relationships, it seems that as Millennials continue to enter the PR workforce, relationships may need to be managed in an entirely new way. The Millennial generation is noted for only wanting information when they need it and not wasting time on information that is not relevant to them (Reynolds, Bush et. al., 2008). Will the Millennial generation cycle through employers at a rapid pace because their communication style is so different from other generations already in the PR industry? Could true relationships in PR become a thing of the past or be managed only through cyberspace? Or will the public relations profession be able to reap the technological benefits that the Millennial generation has to offer while training them how to properly build, strengthen, and grow relationships into the future?

There has been a tremendous amount of PR research since the Excellence Study devoted to the symmetrical process of relationship management. However, there has been little research on relationship-building between generations in the workforce. Because relationship management has become such a crucial part of excellent PR practitioners, it is imperative to see how the future is progressing. The nature of this particular study is to determine how the Millennial generation will adjust to other generations already in the workforce and to discuss how Generation Y might reshape relationship management for the public relations industry as a whole.

Chapter 1 includes an introduction to the study and discusses the overall significance of the research. Chapter 2 explains the theoretical foundations of the study,

including symmetrical processes and relationship management. Chapter 2 also reviews

previous research, which examines symmetrical communication, relationship

management, social media, and generations. Chapter 2 ends with the statement of

research questions, which were proposed as a result of the literature. Chapter 3 contains

the methodology for the research and leads into discussion of the survey questions for

both instruments along with statistical analysis, reliability, validity, and procedures used.

Chapter 4 will include results of both surveys. Chapter 5 will discuss the results as to

applicability to previous research and the implications to PR theory. Chapter 5 will also

include limitations of study, suggestions for further research, and end with conclusions to

the research project.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Grunig and Hunt's (1984) definition of public relations as "management of communication between an organization and its publics" (p. 6) links the practice directly to communication management (Grunig, 1992). Public relations and communication management describe the entire process including planning, execution, and evaluation of a company's internal and external communication with key publics.

According to the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2008 there were approximately 64,000 practitioners employed as public relations managers and 135,000 employed as public relations specialists (PRSA, 2010; Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010). Projections indicate that public relations will be one of the 10 fastest growing professions within the next 10 years.

Not only has the profession of public relations advanced, but the theoretical base has also expanded immensely since the profession began with noted practitioners including Edward Bernays and Ivy Lee (Doorley & Garcia, 2007). This chapter describes the progression of the PR theoretical foundation including the development from symmetrical communication to relationship management. This chapter also reviews prior research on generational communication and social media, both of which are relevant to this particular study.

<center>Asymmetrical vs. Symmetrical Processes</center>

Two engineers, Claude Shannon and Warren Weaver, who worked at Bell

Telephone Laboratories in 1949, developed The Mathematical Theory of Communication

(Baldwin & Roberts, 2006). This particular theory, which came to be known as the

Shannon and Weaver Model, is a very simple process. The information source transmits

a message through a channel. The transmitter converts the message to a signal that is

once again converted by a receiver before it reaches its final destination. However, noise

is also a factor that affected the outcome of how the message was received. Baldwin and

Roberts claimed that this model could be used in all applications of human

communication. This particular communication model is an asymmetrical process in

which information passes from sender to receiver. The model also indicates a mainly

one-way communication process.
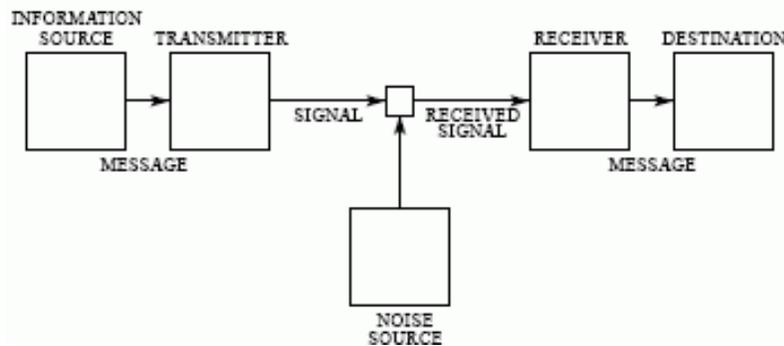


<center>Figure 2.1 – Shannon and Weaver Communication Model (Shannon, 1948)</center>

Public relations is sensitive to subjectivity because practitioners' jobs are to try to

determine or explain how a person may act or think (Grunig, 1992). Many people have

general ideas about why others behave as they do. Therefore, it is often easy for a PR

professional to infer the behaviors of others from predisposed beliefs or ideas that he or

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she has.   When PR research began in the 1950s and 1960s most practitioners of that era

saw public relations primarily as a tool to influence attitudes and behaviors of the public

(Grunig, Grunig & Dozier, 2006). Most practitioners during this time modeled their

communication method after models similar to the asymmetrical Shannon and Weaver

Communication Model patterned as one-way communication.  These professionals were

focused on getting the message out to the consumer with little thought given to feedback

from the publics.

  However, beginning in the 1950s, scholars Cutlip and Center (1952) began to

assert that public relations is a two-way communication process that includes a

management task. Even so, it was actually James Grunig (1976) who developed the idea

of symmetrical communication focusing on two-way communication between an

organization and its publics through the organizational theory.  Eventually, scholars

began to associate public relations as both a management and communication function

(Grunig & Hunt, 1984).   One of the first two-way communication models was the

Transactional Model, which showed the bi-directional flow and provided a feedback

mechanism.
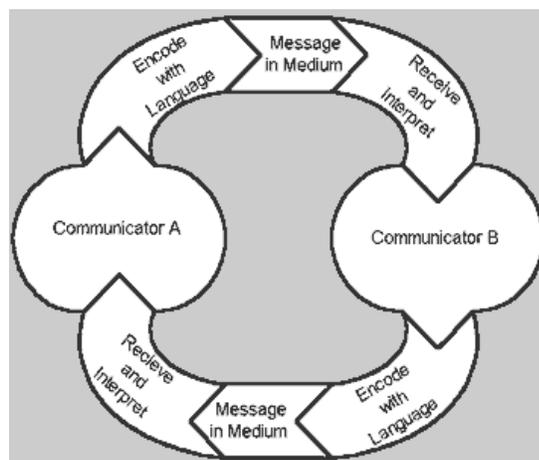


Figure 2.2 Two-way Transactional Model (Chandler, 1995)

By the early 1980s, symmetrical processes were the communication models being taught in PR textbooks throughout the discipline. Nevertheless, it was the 15-year study created by the IABC beginning in 1985 which linked the process to other theoretical tools to conceptualize excellent PR departments (Grunig, Grunig et al., 2006). Through this study, Grunig and other researchers developed the Excellence theory. One of the observations revealed from the Excellent theory was that excellent PR departments interact with their publics through both symmetrical and two-way communication (Grunig & Grunig, 2002). Excellent PR departments release pertinent material to publics, but they also actively search for feedback from their publics through qualitative and quantitative research. These excellent departments also balance the organizations' interests with the publics' interests, which helps to achieve communication symmetry. Through both two-way and symmetrical communication, practitioners are able to encourage organizations to advocate social responsibility. The result is that two-way symmetrical communication develops enhanced long-term relationships for an organization more consistently than do one-way models. The Excellence theory developed three ideas built directly from the symmetrical process (Grunig, Grunig et al, 2006):

1) The PR department and dominant alliance share the view that the communication department should support two-way symmetry.

2) Communication programs developed for key publics should be centered on the two-way symmetrical process of public relations.

3)        The senior PR executive must have the knowledge to direct the two-way symmetrical process or the communication function will not have the ability to practice the excellent process.

Results from the Excellence study also helped Grunig and Hunt (1984) develop the four models of public relations which are still widely used today. These models focus on the evolution of PR from one-way to two-way communication. The four models include:

| Model Name | Type of Communication | Model Characteristics |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Press agentry/publicity model | One-way communication | Uses persuasion and manipulation to influence audience to behave as the organization desires. |
| Public Information model | One-way communication | Uses press releases and other one-way communication techniques to distribute organizational information. Public relations practitioner is often referred to as the "journalist in residence." |
| One-way asymmetrical model | One-way communication | Uses persuasion and manipulation to influence audience to behave as the organization desires. Does not use research to find out how its publics feel about the organization. |
| Two-way symmetrical model | Two-way communication | Uses communication to negotiate with publics, resolve conflict and promote mutual understanding and respect between the organization and its public(s). |

Table 2.1 - Four Models of Communication (Interactive Media Lab, 2010)

As noted in the table, the first three models of communication use strictly one-way communication to reach out to key publics. These PR models put no emphasis on feedback from the consumer. The key difference in two-way symmetrical communication is the feedback mechanism.

Relationship Management Theory

The theoretical base of public relations is still relatively new compared to other disciplines.  J.E. Grunig (1989) said in reference to PR theory that, "one can think of many theories that apply….but it is more difficult to think of a public relations theory…that has not been borrowed from another" (p. 18).

Organizational relationships were one of the first PR concepts studied by researchers, which began in 1975 with a nine-year content analysis developed by scholar Mary Ann Ferguson (1984).   Ferguson analyzed more than 171 articles published in the *Public Relation Review* and found that public relationships between an organization and its publics should be of paramount importance in PR research.   Results from the content analysis helped Ferguson define several types of relationships, including dynamic or static, open or closed, joint satisfaction or unsatisfied, distribution of power and mutual understanding.

Additional findings from the 15-year IABC Excellence Study also found that PR adds value to an organization by fostering key relationships with strategic publics and that the overall effectiveness of those relationships can be determined by measuring their quality (Grunig & Grunig, 2002). The most excellent PR programs studied showed higher than average effectiveness ratings in changing relationships with each of the key publics. Cutlip, Center and Broom (1994) went further to define public relations as "the management function that establishes and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and the publics on whom its success or failure depends" (p. 2). By the mid 1990s relationship management theory had shifted the focus of PR from

communication as the outcome to communication as a tool for enhancing organizational

relationships (Ledingham & Bruning, 1998).

Hon and Grunig (1999) suggested relationships were situational and behavioral.

They noted that as situations change relationships do as well, and that those relationships

depend on how participants behave with each other.   An organization's identity and

reputation is directly linked to the publics' perception of its behavior.  Broom, Casey and

Ritchey (1997) developed a three-stage model of relationship management involving

antecedents of relationships, various conceptions of relationships and results of

relationships.  Grunig and Huang (2000) went on to use the three-stage model to develop

another three-step process, which integrated strategic management of public relations,

models of public relations, and relationship results into one theory.

Dozier (1995) examined how the purpose and focus of an organization is directly

affected by the organization's key public relationships.  Furthermore, Dozier stated that

communication develops into a tool for managing those relationships to help long-term

goals.   Organizational-public relationships are the key elements of relationship

management theory.  Ledingham and Bruning (1998) define organizational public

relationships as "the state which exists between an organization and its key publics, in

which the actions of either can impact the economic, social, cultural or political well-

being of the other" (p. 62).   The Excellence study emphasized the importance for an

organization's PR department to be responsible for establishing relationships with key

publics (Grunig et. al, 2002).  Research conclusions note that PR departments could

establish key publics that developed because of consequences from organizations and

public interaction.  In addition, when symmetrical communication programs are used to

maintain relationships with key publics the outcome is a more effective, long-term

relationship.  Ledingham and Brunig (2000a) noted that

> The emergence of relationship management calls into question the essence
> of public relations – what it is and what it does or should do, its function
> and value within the organizational structure and the greater society, and
> the benefits generated not only for sponsoring organizations but also for
> the publics those organizations serve and the societies in which they exist.
> (p. xiii)

According to Ledingham (2001a), there were four crucial developments which

provoked the relationship viewpoint as a framework for PR.  These four developments

were:

1.) Recognizing the key role of relationships in PR.

2.) Introducing PR as a management role rather than a technical function.

3.) Identifying types of organization-public relationships and linking public

attitudes, behavior and perception to measuring relationships.

4.) Developing organization-public relationship models that include relationship

antecedents, process and consequences.

Ledingham (2003) provided a more concrete definition of relationship management

theory grounded in previous scholarly research which is

> Effectively managing organizational-public relationships around common
> interests and shared goals, over time, results in mutual understanding and
> benefit for interacting organizations and publics. (p. 190)

According to Ledingham (2003), today's PR graduates are entering a profession

in which understanding management skill sets is a vital part of success as a practitioner.

In accordance with this notion is the need for reviewing PR curricula to guarantee that

students are familiar with management practices as well as being experienced in

traditional communication methods.  Ledingham notes that relationship management

theory meets the necessary criteria for a general theory. It is grounded in the field of public relations by relationships. It also serves as a construct for PR research, teaching and practice and provides the industry with a structure to interact with the vital functions of organizations, publics and society as a whole.

## Measuring Relationships

Scholars have recognized many attributes that identify characteristics of relationships (Grunig et. al, 2002). Identifying what characteristics are needed is essential to building and maintaining mutually beneficial organizational-publics relationships. Ledingham & Bruning (1998) recognize five relational components necessary for relationship building which included trust, openness, involvement, investment, and commitment. Research notes that these five components of relationship are in direct correlation with attitudes toward an organization and affect customer satisfaction.

Several studies have attempted to measure relationships including Grunig (2002) who established the four top indicators that measure relationships. Most importantly, is control mutuality, which is the degree to which participants acknowledge who has the power to influence another. Trust is also noted as a highly necessary indicator because it determines a participant's willingness to interact. Grunig also believes that commitment is a necessary component because it determines the confidence level that the relationship is worth sustaining. Finally, satisfaction is the last indicator because it reinforces the level of expectations that are met by the relationship.

Bruning (2000) researched the effects that professional, personal and community relationships have on public attitudes. Sampling in his study included surveying bank customers and determining the likelihood of customers remaining with the bank because of relationship indicators held with employees. Findings indicated that customers were more apt to stay with a bank if they identified with key characteristics of employees within that organization.

Worley & Little (2002) reviewed the fundraising efforts of a previous American Cancer Society's Coaches vs. Cancer campaign. Researchers note that relationships developed by American Cancer Society personnel were key in security the sponsorships received. However, further assessment of the campaign stated that the American Cancer Society practitioners failed to understand the relationship link between basketball coaches and the targeted audience. Overall evaluation of this campaign reinforced the notion that relationships must be properly measured within PR disciplines in order to become an effective communication tool.

Similar studies such as Ledingham & Bruning (2007) researched additional tools with which to measure media relationships. Researchers asked media members and practitioners to evaluate each other's performance. Results indicated that practitioners scored higher performance ratings when the media perceived that they had a business relationship with the PR practitioner. Furthermore, media members who could not recall a practitioner tended to allocate a lower score to their performance.

Researchers continued to focus on how practitioners are embracing communication as a relationship tool. A 2008 study in Australia and South Wales focused on what aspects of relationships were evident in the PR practice (Chia, 2008).

The study, which included both clients and public relations practitioners individually

questioned, set out to identify what comprised satisfying relationships.  This study of

practitioners and clients identified four distinct groups of PR practitioner styles including

the expert PR promoter who identifies himself and his clients according to his own

expertise with little focus on client consultation.  The second category is the promotional

relationship PR manager who focuses somewhat on client collaboration varying it

according to the client relationship.  The third category is the dynamic PR relationship

manager who adapts to and collaborates according to the client's needs and is creative

and skilled both online as well as offline.  Finally, the fourth category is the unproductive

PR manager whose relationships break down because he cannot effectively manage his

client's needs, especially in the area of new media.  They focus more on getting the

business than on maintaining it.  The findings also indicate that clients want relationships

managed and want the PR practitioners to be more aware of the clients' needs and views.

Conclusions of the research indicate that relationship management could advance the

industry by allowing clients and practitioners to gain perspective from the others'

viewpoint.

In 2007 a quantitative study polling the Florida Farm Bureau Federation customer

base was implemented to study Grunig's four indicators (2002) for reliable and valid

measures of quality relationships (Ki & Hon, 2007).  Grunig initially noted that the

indicators are ranked in order of importance from control mutuality to trust to satisfaction

and finally to commitment. However, results from Ki & Hon's research asserted that

satisfaction is needed before trust can be developed.   Additionally, researchers asserted

that the most effective way to ensure publics' perception of an organization is to provide

them with a positive and satisfying experience. If customers are ensured that their needs are met then they are more likely to gain trust in the organization-public relationships. Ki & Hon stress that practitioners recognize the importance satisfaction plays in the initial stage so that communication tactics can be established early to meet those satisfaction needs.

Lee (2007) measured the effect that relationship management had on crisis management by creating several crisis scenarios for participants to rate publics' perceptions toward the organizations. Results found that positive organization relationships with publics can have an effect on the publics' attitude toward the crisis situation.  Publics which had a positive awareness of an organization before the crisis did have an overall more favorable opinion of the organization after the crisis.  However, practitioners should be mindful of how organizations respond during the actual crisis because this can play a major role in future relationship maintenance.

Brunner (2008) implemented a qualitative study to clarify how PR practitioners defined the word relationship.  Results from the participant interviews indicate that most practitioners are more apt to suggest elements that are necessary for relationships rather than attempting to define relationship, which indicates that the term itself is still in need of a more consistent description.  Most of the participants also suggest the need for communication processes such as feedback and listening.  Additional findings from the study also indicate that future research is needed to determine if building and maintenance strategies are related to effective relationships.

A 2008 report on measuring relationships stated that although PR scholars such as Ledingham, Bruning, Grunig and Hon have made relationship management a research

focus for the last 20 years, the notion of measuring relationships still hasn't become a focus for the organizations and practitioners themselves (Bronn, 2008). Bronn believes that the challenge is to convince organizations and firms to shift focus from reputation to relationships. A few organizations have begun to study measurement of relationship management. On such company is Conecto, a small debt collection firm in Norway. Conecto measured its relationship with employees, clients and delinquent payors utilizing two years' worth of data. Conclusions found that trust was the strongest indicator of relationship quality among Conecto's publics. Even delinquent payors rated Conecto above average on all relationship indicators with satisfaction scoring the strongest relationship. Nonetheless, Bronn states that relationship measurement must make the leap from scholarly research to practical relevance.

<center>Social Media Research</center>

Social media is the buzz word for public relations in the twenty-first century. An important aspect of communication involving the Millennial generation has been the advent of social media where communication has moved from passive to active (Goman, 2006). According to Goman, technology has made the Millennials a driving force for collaboration in the workplace of the future.

Research is constantly evolving to determine how to measure relationships when online mediums are the communication tools used. In 1995 an assistant professor of journalism at the University of South Carolina recognized that the future media industry would be incredibly fast paced and digital (Thompson, 1995). He questioned whether college journalism and mass communications programs would still be able to attract high

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school students of the future?  The article Thompson presented was one of the first to

deal with digital communication.  However, his innovative approach focused on the fact

that day-to-day media professionals would be involved in totally different tactics such as

e-mail interviews, digital press releases, and online newspapers and magazines.  He

believed that for journalism students to adapt their professors must think in multiple

layers.

Holtz notes in the book (1999) *Public Relations on the Net* that the advent of the

information age would not have been possible without technologies developed to

facilitate the flow of information.  Holtz asserts that four models of communication for

PR practitioners have been introduced since that time.  The first model is the many-to-

many model.  The second form of communication is receiver-driven communication.

The third model is influencing audiences through pull mechanisms.  The fourth model is

access-driven communication.  All four models of communication have one important

element which is an active consumer role.  Prior to the information age, the consumer had

little control over what information they received. However, in today's era, the consumer

can actively initiate, search, or refuse information which invokes a sense of power in the

publics.

When looking at relationship measurement online there are relational precursors

which must be established before online relationships can take place (Kelleher, 2007).

The first precursor that must be in place is the technology itself.  Second are the

participants who use those technologies.  Finally, there must be social cultures that are

frameworks for PR-type relationships.  Hallahan (2003) proposes that online

relationships are built in a manner that begins with awareness then develops as individuals embrace relational attitudes and behaviors.

Bickart and Schindler (2001) conducted a 12-week experiment in which customers were asked to gather online information about one of five particular product topics, while utilizing either online discussions or marketer-generated online information. Findings noted that customers who collected information from online discussions conveyed greater interest in the topic than the customers who gathered information from the marketer-generated resources. Theoretical implications did support the notion that word-of-mouth communication is more influential in garnering credence for an organization in reference to online media.

In 2007 a content analysis study was conducted to determine if corporate blogging could be used as a successful tool for relationship maintenance (Cho & Huh, 2007). Corporate blogs were analyzed from companies listed on Fortune 500 companies and Interbrand Top 100 Global Brands. The majority of the companies analyzed did not have corporate blogs on their sites. Conclusions found that while some of the existing blog sites did support a few of the characteristics of relational maintenance strategies with its customers, such as easy navigation and availability of open communication, those features were rarely used. Also, studies revealed that utilizing a blog for corporate communication is still limited to a small portion of major corporations. Furthermore, many of the blogs did not have strategies for feedback, which characterized only one-way communication.

Vorvoreanu (2008) researched how websites built and maintained relationships focusing on two major areas of time and space. Researchers note that elements of content,

graphic and dialogue were principle indicators in how the participants determine

organization-public relationships. Graphic and content elements are key aspects of the

public relations website experience. According to Vorvoreanu, participants inferred

website elements as assertions about the organization's principles and interests in

constructing and sustaining relationships with website visitors.

Kerkhof (2009) developed an experiment to study negative online consumer

reviews concerning various companies' products and services. Research results indicated

that participants who read negative reviews where the organization had refuted the claim

or apologized made the participant rate the review as more severe than if no response was

made by the company. Findings indicate that companies should be wary of participation

in online forums. Kerkhof noted that further testing concerning different responses in an

online forum might assist organizations in better managing online relationships and

reputation.

Generational Communication Research

PR research has also shown that a person's worldview helps to shape general

interpretations and behaviors (Bruning & Lamb, 2008). As the Millennial generation

enters the PR workforce, they will be interacting with professionals from other

generations and the Millennials worldviews will help them shape how they communicate

with other professionals.

Bruning and Lamb, (2008) studied the effects of when an organization member

had different views than the organization itself when they conducted a longitudinal

survey of undergraduate communication students at a Midwestern university. Of the

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respondents who were polled, all of the students who felt his or her views were completely different from those of the university did end up transferring to another institution. Nevertheless, at some time during the study, several respondents changed viewpoints about the university, which researchers called turning points. These turning points helped move students closer to the university's worldview. Bruning stated that "turning points in organization-public relationships are critical to the development of good, long-term organization-public relationships because the organization can indicate to key public members that the relationship is changing ..." (p. 147). These changes cause members to look at an organization in a completely different way.

Of course, Millennial generation PR professionals are not the only ones who need to adapt to the workforce. A recent global survey of IABC members showed that in the future organizations will need to adapt communication tactics if they want to retain the best and brightest that this generation has to offer (Reynolds, Bush, et. al 2008). The industry has already made great strides in shifting techniques in the advertising and marketing world to reach the Millennial consumer. Organizations may need to take these same techniques and apply them to reaching out to its employees. More than 75 percent of IABC members polled noted that the current communication methods were obsolete and minimally effective in connecting with the Millennial professional. As previously noted, PR theory has found that symmetrical-communication is most effective when dealing with publics. While many organizations do practice two-way communication with the publics outside the organization, they don't always do so within their own company. According to the IABC study, Millennials want to be given the opportunity to offer feedback and lend ideas, which help foster relationship management.

Additional research has been done by scholars to better understand intergenerational communication. Of particular interest is the qualitative study by Van Dyke, Haynes and Ferguson-Mitchell (2007) which looked at ways members of different generations view their culture and assess overall intergenerational communication. Results support previous conclusions (Harwood, 2007) that members of the same generation tend to relate to similar problems and feel extremely engaged with others through shared involvement. Those from different generations achieved shared involvement when they discussed topics of shared interest.

A recent study by Brunner, Yates, and Adams (2009) focuses on college students' email protocol when dealing with peers. Findings noted a significant difference in etiquette by the students based on gender. Additional results also suggest that this particular generation needs further training in proper email protocol to be able to communicate more effectively when they enter the workforce.

Generation Y is the largest generation to enter the workforce since the baby boomers did more than forty years ago (Holtz, 2007). Much has changed in the way people communicate in the workforce since the 1960s. Good communication is essential within an organization for it to thrive in its industry. It could be argued that no industry has been more tied to relationship-building through personal interaction than the field of public relations. However, PR professionals who were educated prior to the so-called technological revolution of the twenty-first century were schooled in a very different way of communicating. These professionals have focused on tools such as press releases and public service announcements to get their messages out to the publics. Over the years, these practitioners developed relationships with journalists, photographers. and other PR

professionals through face-to-face interaction in a variety of manners such as clubs, civic organizations and other relationship-building techniques.

Colleges are now teaching courses in social media and blogging as a way to reach consumers. Therefore, Generation Y has been taught by professors to manage relationships in an entirely new way, often viewing existing techniques within a company as antiquated, outdated, or unnecessary because they do not involve a technological aspect (Holtz, 2007).

## Research Questions

Based upon previous literature and reviewed findings, the following six research questions were developed for the study:

RQ1: Is there a positive relationship between a Generation Y employee's attitude about the company that he or she works for or school he or she attends and the use of technology at work or school?

RQ2: If there is a positive relationship between Generation Y employee's attitude about the company that he or she works for or school he or she attends and the use of technology at work or school, does that positive relationship change once he or she has entered the workforce?

RQ3: Is there a positive relationship between participation in outside organizations with the tools Generation Y uses to build and maintain relationships, and if there is a relationship, which communication tools are used?

RQ4: Is there a positive relationship change between Generation Y's attitudes concerning membership in outside organizations as they progress through their public relations curriculum?

RQ5: Is there a positive relationship between participation in outside organizations with the tools other Generations use to build and maintain relationships, and if there is a relationship, which communication tools are used?

RQ6: Is there a positive relationship between number of years a practitioner is employed in the PR profession and his or her attitude about the role technology plays in relationship-building?

Studying the effects on Generation Y as they enter the PR workforce offers insight to how multi-generations will work together in a profession so focused on the building and maintaining of relationships with its publics. This thesis will analyze attitudes and perceptions about relationship management techniques employed through intergenerational communication in the PR workforce. The methodology used will be two online survey instruments, which will be discussed in the subsequent section.

III.  METHODOLOGY

This study examines how Generation Y's entry into the public relations workforce affects relationship management techniques for the profession as a whole. A number of scholars have designed organization-public relationship scale measurements, including Bruning and Galloway (2003), who developed a five dimension scale to measure attitudes and perceptions.  This study created a similar scale to Bruning and Galloway, which measures Generation Y's attitudes and expectations concerning technology, community involvement, professional commitment, and social interaction.

This chapter addresses the methodology used to guide the study including the survey instrument, participants, research approval process and data collection procedures, reliability, validity, and data analysis.

Survey Instrument

A survey is a quantitative instrument for collecting information (Keyton, 2006).  Many PR scholars use survey instruments to measure attitudes and perceptions about relationships (Hon & Grunig, 1999; Bruning, 2000; Bruning & Galloway, 2003; Bruning, Dials & Shirka, 2007). Likewise, several noted researchers have used other instruments to measure relationships including interviews (Grunig, 1976; Grunig, 1992; Brunner, 2008), experiments (Bickhart & Schindler, 2001) and content analysis (Worley & Little, 2001; Cho & Huy, 2007).  A content analysis was

not considered an appropriate measuring tool because it could not adequately measure

personal perceptions.  Both interviews and experiments were deemed inappropriate

for this design because of a lack of the necessary personnel needed to interview

multiple groups of practitioners.  Therefore, a survey was deemed the most

appropriate instrument to use for this project because of its ability to reach large

amounts of professionals and students over a broad region.

For a survey to be considered effective it should include several elements

(Fink, 1995b).  The survey instrument should be part of a reliable research plan.  The

questions in the survey should be straightforward and easy to understand.  In addition,

survey participants should adequately represent the population in accordance with the

research questions or hypotheses.  Moreover, a survey should be considered both

reliable and valid.  Participant responses should be evaluated within the framework of

the questions asked in the survey.  Finally, survey results must be reported ethically

and accurately, and avoid using data out of context.

Two survey instruments were developed for the study.  The first survey was

designed to measure Generation Y's attitudes and perceptions about the PR industry

before they enter the workforce.  The second survey was designed to measure the

attitudes and perceptions of practitioners already practicing in the field.  Both surveys

utilized a five-point Likert scale measurement for respondents to rate their level of

affirmation from strongly disagree to strongly agree with 27 questions.  The survey

also included a non-applicable response for each question.  In addition, four

demographic questions were included that asked for age, race and highest level of

education.  The survey administered to the PR professionals also included number of years in the industry.

Thesis committee members pre-tested the survey and critiqued questions accordingly.  The demographic question regarding race was adjusted according to the 2010 U.S. Census Bureau data (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010).  Questions 4 and 12 were also adjusted to avoid double-barreled questioning.  Questions referring to outside organizations were explained in greater detail.

Several questions were asked to determine communication techniques used regularly to communicate with others including social media, email, texting, personal calls, and face-to-face interaction.  Several questions were also asked concerning the respondents' membership in outside professional, non-profit and civic organizations. Additional questions asked included respondents' perceptions about the organization they worked for or school attended in reference to technology.

<u>Participants</u>

Because this study was designed to measure PR student attitudes before entering the workforce and the attitudes of practitioners who are already in the workforce, two different samples had to be obtained.  Network sampling was done to obtain the sample needed for the study as participants were solicited who fit the profile needed.

The first survey was administered to freshmen, sophomore, junior, senior, and graduate-level public relations students at a large Southeastern University to determine attitudes about technology and communication prior to entering the workforce.  The second survey was administered to Generation Y public relations professionals already in

the workforce, along with existing PR professionals from other generations, and was administered through members within Public Relations Council of Alabama and the Southern Public Relations Federation. The PRCA is the state's longest running and largest organization of public relations practitioners.  The state-wide organization, which has more than 500 members, joins with members of sister organizations in Louisiana, Mississippi and northwest Florida to form a 900-plus membership in the SPRF (Public Relations Council of Alabama, 2010).  Participants in the professional chapter included members from Generation Y as well as members from other generations.

The sample for student survey included 106 participants. Seventeen of the participants did not complete the majority of the survey and had to be deleted from the sampling.  Therefore, the final student sample included 89 total participants of which 78 (87.6%) are females and 11 (12.4%) males. The race/ethnicity breakdown included two Asian students, two African-American students, 81 (91%) Caucasian students, three (3.5%) Hispanic students, and one (1%) student who categorized himself/herself as other. Four (4.5%) did not answer the question. The participation according to class in school was 11 (12%) freshman students, 14 (16%) sophomore students, 17 (19%) junior students, 38 (43%) senior students and 9 (10%) graduate students. All students who participated in the survey were from the Millennial generation.  The public relation curriculum where the survey was administered requires students to complete an internship prior to graduation.  Eight (9%) of the students had completed the PR internship, 15 (17%) were currently interning and 64 (72%) had not yet begun their internship.  Two (2%) of the participants did not answer the question.

The PR professional survey sample included 155 participants. However, 28 of the survey participants did not complete the survey in its entirety and had to be deleted from the sampling. Therefore, 127 professional surveys were included in the sample of which 106 (83%) are females and 21 (17%) males. The race/ethnic breakdown included one (.5%) Asian participant, seven (7%) African-American participants, one (.5%) Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, 117 (91.5%) Caucasians and one (.5%) Hispanic. In addition, the breakdown by generation included 24 (19%) Millennials, 61 (48%) Generation X participants, 40 (31.5%) Baby Boomers, and 2 (1.5%) Veterans. Regarding level of education, one participant had a high school education, 10 (1%) were attending college, 80 (70.2%) held Bachelor's degrees, 33 (26.5%) held Master's degrees and three (2.3%) held Doctorate degrees.

Generalizability "is the extent to which conclusions developed from data collected can be extended to the population" (Keyton, 2006; p. Glossary). According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2010) there are approximately 56,700 PR professional practicing within the United States. Thirty-one percent of that workforce consists of Generation Y. Therefore, for results to be generalizable to the entire PR population would require a sample of 375 respondents. Because respondents were acquired during summer semester when fewer students are enrolled and when professionals usually take vacations, participation was lower than anticipated. Nonetheless, this study can provide insight into how various generations' attitudes and perceptions affect his or her overall relationship management within the workforce.

Research Approval and Data Collection

The protocol for this study was approved Exempt by the Auburn University Institutional Review Board on April 10, 2010, under 45 CFR 46.101 (b) (2): "Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement, survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior" (Office of Human Subjects, 2010). Professional and student participation in the survey was strictly voluntary and completely anonymous. Both surveys were administered through the online survey website, Survey Monkey.

Public relations major students at the Southeastern university were sent an email from a public relations professor asking for their participation in the survey. The email also included a link to the Web-based survey instrument. Follow-up emails were sent two weeks after the initial email as a reminder to participate in the survey. Members of PRCA and SPRF were also sent emails from the organization's Vice President of Communication, requesting participation in the survey, which was part of a relationship management study concerning the PR industry. A link was also included in the email directly to the survey. Follow-up emails were also sent two weeks after the initial email to obtain as large a sampling as possible.

Reliability

According to Salkind (2007) reliability is when a measurement tool measures something consistently. Reliability of measurement is its extent of stability, trustworthiness and dependability (Keyton, 2006). If a particular measuring instrument, such as a survey, varies considerably then there will be greater error and reliability will

be much lower.  Results from a survey must be reliable in order for the data to be useful to the research.

There are several types of reliability (Salkind, 2007).  The Cronbach's alpha was used for this study.  Cronbach's alpha calculates internal consistency reliability, which was used to determine if the survey adequately measured perceptions of relationship management as they apply to changing technologies and only measured that area of interest. Cronbach's alpha was run to measure the consistency of how each question answered measured attitudes and perceptions about managing relationships.  Results from the student survey noted that there were seven of the 27 questions, which were either consistently left blank or noted wide variances due to misconstrued meaning and/or improper wording.  Therefore, questions 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 30 were not utilized to determine measurement within the results.  Consistency results noted overall .741 reliability among the remaining 20 questions regarding the measurement of relationship management, which exceeds the generally accepted standard of .70 of internal reliability. Being able to administer the survey to a larger audience could result in achieving an even higher internal reliability statistic.

Results from the professional survey noted that there were 10 of the 27 questions that were either consistently left blank or noted wide variances due to misconstrued meaning.  Questions 2, 5, 6, 7, 9, 13, 14, 17, 27 and 28 were not utilized to determine any measurements within the results.  The Cronbach's alpha results run on the remaining 17 questions noted an overall .707 internal reliability regarding relationship management. As noted earlier, being able to administer the survey to a larger audience could achieve a higher reliability statistic.

## Validity

A test can be reliable without being valid (Salkind, 2007). However, a test cannot be valid without first being reliable. A valid test measures what it is suppose to measure. A survey is considered valid when it measures what it is designed to measure as part of the research. Content validity is used to determine the degree which the survey items adequately represent the measurement of attitudes and perceptions based on all possible concepts available. Content validity was determined through a committee member survey pretest and questions were revised to increase overall strength of survey.

## Data Analysis

Once all of the participants completed the surveys then reports were run in Survey Monkey to obtain answers to questions for both surveys. Answers from participants not completing the entire survey were deleted to avoid confusion. Remaining data was input into SPSS. Initial testing was run to determine internal reliability of the data, and unreliable questions were deleted. To make a determination concerning the relationship of attitudes and perceptions within various generations concerning technology and public relations Pearson product correlation coefficients *(r)* were run (Keyton, 2006). The correlation coefficient tests the relationship between two variables. The acceptable statistical significance level of the data was 0.05.

To determine the possible differences between attitudes among the generations concerning relationship management two-way chi-squares ($x^2$) were run for both students and professionals. The two-way chi-square tests a nominal variable against a dependent variable (Keyton, 2006). The chi-square tests are cross-tabulated to determine if the

variances within the variables are statistically significant. The acceptable statistical level of the data was also set at 0.05. Statistical analysis for all tests run in SPSS are noted and explained in the results section.

IV.  RESULTS

This study examined how the Millennial generation is adjusting to other generations already in the workforce, and sought to address how Generation Y might reshape relationship management for the public relations industry as a whole.  Two survey instruments were used to examine attitudes and perceptions of Millennial generation PR students and professionals along with attitudes and perceptions of PR professionals from Generation X, Baby Boomers and the Veteran Generation.

This chapter presents the results of the surveys through the use of Correlation Coefficient tests and two-way Chi-Squares to determine if there are statistically significant results, which show that the Millennial generation has perceptions that could change the process of relationship management for the public relations industry.  The results are categorized in order of each research question.

Prior to running the Correlation Coefficent tests and two-way Chi-Squares statistically significant level was set at 0.05, which is the amount of error the researcher is prepared to accept (Keyton, 2006).  Findings statistically significant at the 0.05 level mean that five out of 100 results that seem to be valid will instead be due to chance.  When interpreting the correlation coefficient both the direction and the strength of relationship must be addressed.  The direction of the relationship looks at whether it is positive or negative.  Determining the strength of the relationship refers to the coefficient value.  The greater the value means the stronger the relationship.  Coefficient values that are less than .20 are considered slight, almost negligible relationship.  Values that fall

between .20 - .40 have a low correlation, which is a distinct but small relationship.

Coefficients that are within .40 - .70 are typically a moderate correlation, which is considered a substantial relationship. Furthermore, values falling between .70 - .90 have a high correlation and a marked relationship. Finally, the coefficient values that are greater than .90 show a very high correlation and very dependable relationships.

<center>Research Question Results</center>

RQ1: Is there a positive relationship between a Generation Y employee's attitude about the company that he or she works for or school he or she attends and the use of technology at work or school?

Question 18 of the student survey asked respondents to rate how much the school they attended had values that mirrored the respondent. Fifty-two (58%) of the students agreed with the question and 29 (33%) students strongly agreed. A correlation coefficient test was run to determine if the question would correlate to other questions in the survey concerning technology using 0.05 as the critical value (Keyton, 2006).

Question 6 which asked students if they used some type of social media to communicate with others on a daily basis was tested against question 18. The results noted that the correlation between the two variables is .307, which is significant at the 0.05 level. Therefore, there is a correlation between the two questions, which can be shown statistically as ($r_{(89-2)} = .307, p=.003$). Nonetheless, when interpreting the strength of the correlation statistic of .307 only a low correlation can be noted, which is a definite but small relationship (Keyton, 2006). The correlation coefficient was run to test question 7 which asked whether students were more likely to use social networking sites

<center>37</center>

to communicate with students rather than email them.  The results note that the

correlation between the two variables is .129, which is not significant at the 0.05 level.

There was no correlation between question 7 and question 18, which is noted as ($r_{(89-2)} =$

*.129, p=.229)* because .229 statistical findings means that 22 out of 100 results that seem

to be valid are due to chance. Question 8 of the survey which asked students if they were

more likely to text other students rather than communication face to face was tested

against question 18 to determine if there was a correlation. Results note that the variable

correlation is .071, which is not significant at the 0.05 level, ($r_{(89-2)}= .071, p=.507$).

Probability levels would mean 50 out of 100 results would seem valid, but would instead

be due to chance.  The correlation on question 13 as to whether students were more likely

to email other students over face to face interaction was tested against question 18.  The

correlation results note .084, which is not significant at the 0.05 level, and is indicated by

($r_{(89-2)}= .084, p=.433$). Probability statistics show that eight out of 100 tests that appear

valid would be due to chance.  Question 24 which asked students if they preferred face to

face communication over social media when communicating with the media in their

internship or job was tested with the question 18 variable.  The correlation was negative

at -.033, and was not significant at the 0.05 level.  Therefore, no correlation could be

determined between the two questions, ($r_{(89-2)}= -.033, p=.762$) because statistics show

that 76 out of 100 results that seem to be valid would instead be caused by chance. The

final question tested in the student survey to determine a possible correlation was

question 25, which asked students to rate whether they believed that social media sites

would be used daily by professionals within five years.   Correlation coefficient results

indicate .179, which is not significant at the 0.05 level ($r_{(89-2)}= .179, p=.093$).

| | I use some type of social media each day to communicate with others | I am more likely to use social media to communicate with students over email | I am more likely to text students rather than communicate face to face even if in the same room | I am more likely to email students rather than communicate face to face even if in the same room | I prefer face to face communication with the media in my internship or job over social media | I believe that social media will be used daily by professionals within the next five years |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The school I attend has values that mirror mine | | | | | | |
| Pearson Correlation | .307** | .129 | .071 | .084 | -.033 | .179 |
| Sig. (2-tailed) | .003 | .229 | .507 | .433 | .762 | .093 |
| N | 89 | 89 | 89 | 89 | 89 | 89 |

Table 4.1 Student Correlation Results – Technology/School Values

** Indicates Statistical Significance at the 0.05 Level

The professional survey included two questions regarding each professional's perception of the company for which he or she works. Question 11 asks the professionals if the organization they work for stays on top of the latest technology and uses it to communicate regularly to its employees. Of the professionals polled, 59 (46%) agreed and 21(17%) strongly agreed with the question. Thirty-seven (29%) disagreed and six (.05%) strongly disagreed with his or her organization being technologically advanced. The remaining were undecided or marked not applicable. Question 12 asked if the organization that the practitioners worked for has values that mirror their values. Of those polled 79 (62%) agreed with the statement and 32 (25%) strongly agreed with the statement. Fourteen (.1%) of the professionals disagreed with the statement, and only 2 (.02%) strongly disagreed. The remaining were undecided or marked not applicable. Question 1, which asks for participant's age, was also tested against questions 11 and 12.

|  | Company I work for has values that mirror mine | I prefer social media over email to communicate with co-workers | I am more likely to text co-workers over face to face communication even if they are in same room | I am more likely to text co-workers over other types because of convenience | I am more likely to use social media over other types because of convenience |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The company I work for has values that mirror mine<br><br>Pearson Correlation<br><br>Sig. (2-tailed)<br>N |  | -.233**<br><br>.008<br>89 | -.310**<br><br>.000<br>127 | -.118<br><br>.187<br>127 | -.289**<br><br>.001<br>127 |
| Company is technologically savvy & uses to communicate with employees<br><br>Pearson Correlation<br><br>Sig. (2-tailed)<br>N | .429**<br><br>.000<br>127 | -.141<br><br>.113<br>127 | -.093<br><br>.297<br>127 | .080<br><br>.370<br>127 | .059<br><br>.513<br>127 |

Table 4.2 – Professional Correlation Coefficient Results – Technology/Values

** Indicates Significance at 0.05 Statistical Level

The correlation results of the participant's age to whether he or she believed the company worked for is technologically advanced is .034, and not found significant at the 0.05 level, $(r_{(127-2)}= .034, p=.702)$ since statistical findings would show that 70 out of 100 results that seem to be valid would occur by chance. Correlation results between variables 1 and 12 were .124, and not indicated as statistically significant at the 0.05 level $(r_{(127-2)}= .124, p=.164)$ as conclusions show 16 out of 100 results that appear valid would be due to chance. Therefore, there was no correlation between a participant's age and whether the respondent noted that the organization had values which mirrored theirs. Nevertheless, a correlation run between questions 11 and 12 note results of .429, which is considered significant at the 0.05 level $(r_{(127-2)}= .429, p=.000).$ Probability levels show that zero out of 100 results that appear valid are due to chance, which would be extremely

significant.  Interpretations for the correlation strength of .429 show a moderate

correlation, which is a substantial relationship.

Question 2 of the survey, which asks participants if they prefer to use social

media over email to communicate with co-workers was tested with questions 11 and 12.

Correlation coefficient results between question 2 and question 11 was -.141, and was not

statistically significant at the 0.05 level, stated as ( $r_{(127-2)}= -.141, p=.113)$.  These

findings note that 11 out of 100 test results that appear valid are due to change.  Results

between question 2 and 12 was -.233, and is considered significant at the 0.05 level.

These results show a negative correlation between the two questions and is represented as

$(r_{(127-2)}= -.233, p=.008)$. While these findings do show that less than 1 out of 100 results

that seem valid are due to chance, the correlation strength of -.233 is a low correlation

noting only a small relationship. Nonetheless, findings indicate that there could be a

relationship with employees who prefer social media over email to communicate with co-

workers being less likely to perceive their organizations as technologically savvy.

Participants were asked in question 4 if they were more likely to text co-workers

rather than interact with them face to face.  Correlation tests were run to test question

with question 12 and results were noted negatively at -.093 and found not significant at

the 0.05 level $(r_{(127-2)}= -.093, p=.297)$. Statistical level of .297 means that 29 out of 100

results that appear valid are instead due to chance.   However, correlation tests run

between variable 4 and 12 did note a negative correlation at -.310, which was considered

significant at the 0.05 level, $(r_{(127-2)}= -.310, p=.000)$.  Probability findings show that zero

out of 100 results would be due to chance. Despite these findings interpretations of the

.310 correlation would show a low correlation, which notes a small relationship.  Still

results indicate those professionals who prefer to text employees versus face-to-face

communication might be less likely to perceive their company's values as mirroring

theirs.   Question 8, which asked if respondents were more likely to text coworkers for

information because of convenience was tested with questions 11 and 12.  Correlation

coefficient results indicate .080 statistical analyses, which is not considered significant at

the 0.05 level.  Statistics are represented as ( $r_{(127-2)}$= *.080, p=.370).*  Correlation between

question 8 and 12 show the value negatively at -.118, but not significant at the 0.05 level

($r_{(127-2)}$= *-.118, p=.187).*  Finally, question 10 asks participants if they are more likely to

use social networking to contact co-workers over other forms of communication because

of convenience.  Results from testing between questions 10 and 11 note the correlation at

.059, which is not considered significant at the 0.05 level ($r_{(127-2)}$= *.059, p>.513).*

Significance levels show that 51 out of 100 results noted as valid would be due to chance.

Conversely, results from variable testing between 10 and 12 note a negative correlation of

-.289, noting that there is significance at the 0.05 level ( $r_{(127-2)}$= *-.289, p=.001).*  While

probability statistics show that less than one out of 100 results that seem valid are due to

chance, the correlation strength of -.289 is only a low correlation or small but definite

relationship.  Nonetheless, findings indicate a possible negative relationship of employees

who prefer using social media over other forms of communication because of

convenience being less likely to indicate that the company they work for has values

which mirror theirs.

RQ2: If there is a positive relationship between Generation Y employees' attitude

about the company that he or she works for or school he or she attends and the use of

technology at work or school, does that positive relationship change once they have entered the workforce?

As noted previously, results in the student survey noted a positive correlation between students who used some type of social media to communicate each day and those that considered his or her values mirroring the school's values. No other correlations were considered significant at the 0.05 level regarding technology and student's perception of the college attended. A two-way chi-square statistical analysis was also run to determine technological attitudes and perceptions between student class levels and examined against similar items in the professional survey. Once again a statistical significance level of 0.05 was set.

Question 7 of the student survey asks students if they are more likely to use social networking sites to communicate with other students rather than emailing them. Chi-square analysis findings show there is no significant difference ($x^2 = 9.180$, df = 16, p = .906). Probability levels mean that 90 out of 100 results that appear valid are due to chance.

Question 4 of the professional survey asked the same question to practitioners regarding fellow employees. This is a statistically significant difference ($x^2 = 20.490$, df = 12, p = .058). As a result it appears that age does play a role in the workplace when preferring social networking as a communication tool over email.

**Prefer Social Networking as a Communication Tool over Email**

($x^2 = 20.490$, df = 12, p = .058)          Total Respondents (n=127)

| | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Undecided | Agree | Strongly Agree | Total | Percentage Of Total Respondents |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Millennials | 5 | 13 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 24 | 19% |
| Generation X | 26 | 33 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 61 | 48% |
| Baby Boomers | 22 | 15 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 40 | 32% |
| Veterans | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | .02% |
| Total | 53 | 63 | 5 | 5 | 1 | 127 | |
| % of Total Respondents based on Answer Chosen | 42% | 50% | 3.5% | 3.5% | 1% | 1% | |

Table 4.3 Chi-Square Cross Tab – Practitioner's Age/Social Media Preference

Students and practitioners were both asked if they were more likely to text fellow students or employees for information rather than ask them face to face. There is no significant difference ($x^2 = 9.180$, df = 16, p = .906) because probability levels show that 90 out of 100 results that appear valid would be due to chance. Likewise, the practitioner results showed no significance ($x^2 = 10.861$, df = 12, p = .541) since 54 out of 100 findings that seem valid would be as a result of chance. Consequently, there appears no change in Millennial generation attitudes on a preference for face-to-face communication over texting after entering the workforce.

Professionals and students were asked to rate how strongly they preferred contacting media face-to-face rather than emailing them.   Examination of student survey results indicated no significance ($X^2 = 24.511$, df = 20, p = .221). Professional testing statistics also indicated no significance at 0.05 level ($x^2 = 22.725$, df = 15, p = .090) as probability levels note 9 out of 100 results that seem valid are actually due to chance.

Hence, the results indicate no change in the Millennial employees' attitude about a

preference for face-to-face communication with the media once they enter the workforce.

Students were asked if they were more likely to text fellow students for

information rather than ask face to face even if in the same room. Professionals were

asked a similar question which noted if they were more likely to text fellow employees

for information because of convenience. There is no statistical significance in results ($x^2$

$= 20.861$, df $= 16$, p $=.184$). On the other hand, the professional survey indicated there

was significance at the 0.05 level ($x^2 = 25.417$, df $=15$, p $=.045$). Significance findings

mean that 5 out of 100 results that appear valid are because of chance. Results indicate

that Millennial generation employees could have a change in attitude concerning a

preference for texting for convenience once they enter the workforce.

**Prefer Texting over Other Forms for Convenience**

($x^2 = 25.417$, df $= 15$, p $= .045$)  (n=127)

| Prefer texting over other forms for convenience | No Answer | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Undecided | Agree | Strongly Agree | Total | Percentage Of Total Respondents |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Millennials | 0 | 6 | 7 | 1 | 10 | 0 | 24 | 19% |
| Generation X | 0 | 24 | 27 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 61 | 48% |
| Baby Boomers | 1 | 17 | 19 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 40 | 32% |
| Veterans | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1% |
| Total | 1 | 53 | 63 | 5 | 5 | 1 | 127 | |
| % of Total Respondents based on Answer Chosen | 1% | 41% | 50% | 3% | 3% | 2% | | |

Table 4.4 Chi-Square Cross Tab – Practitioner's Age/Text Preference

Finally, in regards to technology professionals were asked if the company they work for is technology savvy as well as if the company has values that mirror those of the professionals. Conclusions from the question as to companies being technologically savvy noted no statistical significance ($x^2$ = 22.623, df =15, p = .092). In addition, analysis of the company having values that mirrored the practitioners indicated no statistical significance either ($x^2$ = 20.145, df =15, p = .166) since probability statistics indicate that 16 out of 100 results that show valid are due to chance. The student survey results were unable to use the technology savvy question because of unreliability analysis, but did request information regarding students' perception of school's values. Because probability levels show that 58 out of 100 results that seem valid are as a result of chance there is no statistical significance ($x^2$ = 18.039, df =20, p = .585). Findings indicate that there might be little change in attitude by the Millennial generation in reference to identifying with their organization because of technology once they enter the workforce.

RQ3: Is there a positive relationship between participation in outside organizations with the tools Generation Y uses to build and maintain relationships, and if there is a relationship, which communication tools are used?

Both surveys asked several specific questions in reference to outside organizations and relationship building. These questions include:

- My membership in a professional organization has helped or will help me build relationships in the PR industry.

- My membership in a civic organization has helped or will help me build relationships in the PR industry.

- I believe that social networking sites such as Facebook and Linkedin are more effective ways to network than joining an outside organization.

- I will/have friend(ed) co-workers and colleagues on Facebook.

To determine student perception about outside organizations as they relate to relationship building the Pearson product coefficient (*r*) was run to see if there was a correlation between question variables above.

The question regarding membership in a professional organization was tested against question regarding social networking sites being more effective networking opportunities. There is no significant correlation between the two ($r_{(89-2)}= -.081, p=.451$) since probability levels show 45 out of 100 results that appear valid are due to chance. Findings from testing between membership in a civic organization against the question regarding social networking sites being more effective networking also showed no correlation at all ($r_{(89-2)}= -.001, p=.991$) since interpretations of probability statistics mean that 99 out of 100 results that seem valid are due to chance. Testing was then run against membership in a professional organization with friending co-workers and colleagues on Facebook and also showed no correlation ($r_{(89-2)}= .134, p=.210$). Additionally, analysis of membership in a civic organization against friending co-workers showed no correlation ($r_{(89-2)}= .098, p=.363, p=.210$).

| | My membership in a professional organization has helped/will help build relationships | My membership in a civic organization has helped/will help build relationships | I believe that social networking sites such as Facebook are better tools for building relationships than outside organizations | I will "friend" coworkers on Facebook once I am employed in the PR industry. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| My membership in a civic organization has helped build relationships<br><br>Pearson Product<br>Sig. (2-tailed)<br>N | *.283\*\**<br>*.007*<br>*89* | | *-.001*<br>*.991*<br>*89* | *.098*<br>*.363*<br>*89* |
| My membership in a professional organization has helped build relationships<br><br>Pearson Product<br>Sig. (2-tailed)<br>N | | *.283\*\**<br>*.007*<br>*89* | *-.081*<br>*.451*<br>*89* | *.134*<br>*.210*<br>*89* |
| I believe that social networking sites are better tools for building relationships than outside organizations<br><br>Pearson Product<br>Sig. (2-tailed)<br>N | *-.081*<br>*.451*<br>*89* | *-.001*<br>*.991*<br>*89* | | *.280\*\**<br>*.008*<br>*89* |

Table 4.5 – Student Correlation Results – Social Networking/Organization Membership

However, there was a correlation when membership in a professional organization was tested with membership in a civic organization ($r_{(89-2)}= .283, p=.007$)since statistics show that only 7 out of 100 results are due to chance. Further analysis of the .283 coefficient value shows a small but distinct relationship with a low correlation.

There was also statistical significance when looking at social networking sites being more effective networking when tested with friending co-workers on Facebook and/or Linkedin ($r_{(89-2)}= .280, p=.008$). While probability levels do show that less than

one out of 100 outcomes that appear valid are due to chance, the strength of .280 is

considered only a low correlation and small relationship.  Therefore, results of the

correlation-coefficient might indicate that students who believed that membership in a

professional organization was a strong tool for relationship building also had the same

beliefs concerning membership in a civic organization.  Furthermore those who believe

social networking sites as more effective to build relationships are also more likely to

"friend" co-workers once they begin working.

RQ4: Is there a positive relationship change between Generation Y's attitudes

with membership in outside organizations as they progress through their PR curriculum?

The two-way chi-square was run to analyze the relationship-building

questions with student's class in school to see if perceptions change as they complete

more of their curriculum and understand the process better.  There is no statistically

significant difference for membership in a professional organization ($x^2$ = 24.158, df =16,

p = .086) nor for membership in a civic organization ($x^2$ =12.298, df =20, p = .905) since

significance levels show that 90 out of 100 results that appear valid are due to chance.

**Membership in a Professional Organization Builds Relationships**

($x^2$ = 24.158, df = 16, p = .086)           Total Respondents (n=89)

| | No Answer | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Undecided | Agree | Strongly Agree | Total | Percentage Of Total Respondents |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Freshmen | 7 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 11 | 12.5% |
| Sophomores | 9 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 13 | 15% |
| Juniors | 6 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 17 | 19% |
| Seniors | 11 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 16 | 5 | 38 | 43% |
| Graduate Students | 3 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 9 | 10.5% |
| Total | 36 | 0 | 7 | 12 | 26 | 8 | 89 | |

| | 40% | 0% | 8% | 14% | 29% | 9% | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| % of Total Respondents based on Answer Chosen | | | | | | | | |

Table 4.6 Chi-Square Cross Tab – School Ranking/Professional Membership

In addition, there is not a statistically significant difference for social networking sites being better at relationship-building ($x^2$ = 15.777, df =20, p = .730).  Furthermore, there was no significance at the 0.05 level when asked about friending co-workers on Facebook ($x^2$ = 27.895, df =20, p = .112).   As a result, no correlation could be found to exist between a student's progression in the public relation curriculum and a change in attitude about membership in outside organizations as a relationship-building tool.

**<u>Social Networking Better Relationship Building than Organization Membership</u>**

($x^2$ = 15.777, df = 20, p = .730)                Total Respondents (n=89)

| | No Answer | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Undecided | Agree | Strongly Agree | Total | Percentage Of Total Respondents |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Freshmen | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 11 | 12.5% |
| Sophomores | 1 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 14 | 15% |
| Juniors | 2 | 0 | 6 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 17 | 19% |
| Seniors | 0 | 3 | 11 | 9 | 9 | 6 | 38 | 43% |
| Graduate Students | 0 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 9 | 10.5% |
| Total | 3 | 5 | 24 | 24 | 22 | 11 | 89 | |
| % of Total Respondents based on Answer Chosen | 3% | 6% | 27% | 27% | 25% | 12% | | |

Table 4.7 Chi-Square Cross Tab – School Ranking/Social Networking Membership

RQ5: Is there a positive relationship between participation in outside organizations with the tools other Generation uses to build and maintain relationships, and if there is a relationship, which communication tools are used?

The professional survey was more specific about outside organizations and used three questions instead of just one when ranking against social networking sites. These questions were:

- I believe that social networking sites such as Facebook and Linkedin are more effective ways to network than joining an outside social organization.

- I believe that social networking sites such as Facebook and Linkedin are more effective ways to network than joining an outside non-profit organization.

- I believe that social networking sites such as Facebook and Linkedin are more effective ways to network than joining an outside professional organization.

First, the Pearson product coefficient (*r*) was run among the three questions above and the questions noted in RQ3 regarding membership in social and civic organizations helping build relationships as to whether there was either a correlation between variables using the 0.05 level. Results did note a significant negative correlation between membership in a professional organization helping build relationships and the question concerning social networking sites being better at building relationships than professional organizations as noted by ($r_{(127-2)}= -.250, p=.005$). Probability findings mean that less

than 1 out of 100 results that seem valid are due to chance. Nonetheless, the .250 strength level shows a low correlation, which means a definite but small relationship.

However, no significant correlation was found between membership in a professional organization and social networking sites being better than civic organization membership ($r_{(127-2)}$= -.085, p=.340) or correlation between membership in  a professional organization and social networking sites being better than membership in social organizations ($r_{(127-2)}$= -.123, p=.169) since probability statics mean that 16 out of 100 results are due to chance.   Findings indicate that membership in a professional organization might affect a practitioners' perception about social networking as a preferred relationship-building tool to joining other professional organizations.

When using membership in a civic organization variable in reference to social networking sites being better than social or civic organizational membership there was found no significant correlation between  questions ($r_{(127-2)}$= -.054, p=.546), ($r_{(127-2)}$= -.121, p=.175).  Nevertheless, a statistically significant level was found between membership in civic organization helping relationship building and the question variable that social networking sites were better at relationship building than professional organizations ($r_{(127-2)}$= -.188, p=.034). While interpretations of the probability statistic do show that only three out of 100 result findings are due to chance, the .188 strength demonstrate only a slight, almost neglible relationship.   Additionally, no correlation was found between "friending" co-workers once in the PR industry and any of the other question variables concerning membership as a relationship-building tool.

| | My membership in a professional organization has helped/will help build relationships | My membership in a civic organization has helped/will help build relationships | I will "friend" coworkers on Facebook once I am employed in the PR industry. |
|---|---|---|---|
| My membership in a civic organization has helped build relationships<br><br>Pearson Product<br>Sig. (2-tailed)<br>N | *.266\*\**<br>*.003*<br>*127* | | *.072*<br>*.422*<br>*127* |
| My membership in a professional organization has helped build relationships<br><br>Pearson Product<br>Sig. (2-tailed)<br>N | | *.266\*\**<br>*.003*<br>*127* | *.158*<br>*.076*<br>*127* |
| I believe social networking sites better for building relationships than professional organizations<br><br>Pearson Product<br>Sig. (2-tailed)<br>N | *-.250\*\**<br>*.005*<br>*127* | *-.188\*\**<br>*.034*<br>*127* | *.052*<br>*.565*<br>*127* |
| I believe that social networking sites are better tools for building relationships than civic organizations<br><br>Pearson Product<br>Sig. (2-tailed)<br>N | *-.085*<br>*.340*<br>*127* | *-.121*<br>*.175*<br>*127* | *.011*<br>*.904*<br>*127* |
| I believe that social networking sites are better tools for building relationships than social groups<br><br>Pearson Product<br>Sig. (2-tailed)<br>N | *-.123*<br>*.169*<br>*127* | *-.054*<br>*.546*<br>*127* | *.015*<br>*.868*<br>*127* |

Table 4.8 – Professional Correlation Results – Social Network/Organization Membership

Two-way chi square tests were run to cross-tabulate age and relationship-building variables. Results noted no significance at the 0.05 level between age and membership in a professional organization helping relationship-building ($x^2$ =7.494, df =9, p = .586) or between age and membership in a social organization helping relationship-building ($x^2$ =6.099, df =12, p = .911). In addition, there was no significance between the age variable and social networking being better than joining either professional or civic organizations ($x^2$ =19.490, df =15, p = .192), ($x^2$ =24.024, df =15, p = .065).

Conversely, there was statistical significance between the age variable and social networking being better than joining social organizations ($x^2$ =26.973, df =15, p =.029) because only 2 out of 100 results that appear valid are due to chance. Findings indicate that the Millennial generation may prefer the use of social networking sites such as Facebook more than joining social organizations when trying to maintain relationships.

**Social Networking better than Social Organization Membership**

($x^2$ = 26.973, df = 15, p = .029)          Total Respondents (n=127)

| Social networking better than social organization | No Answer | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Undecided | Agree | Strongly Agree | Total | Percentage Of Total Respondents |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Millennials | 0 | 4 | 8 | 5 | 2 | 5 | 24 | 19% |
| Generation X | 0 | 9 | 33 | 12 | 7 | 0 | 61 | 48% |
| Baby Boomers | 1 | 7 | 19 | 8 | 5 | 0 | 40 | 32% |
| Veterans | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1% |
| Total | 1 | 20 | 61 | 26 | 14 | 5 | 127 | |
| % of Total Respondents by Answer | 1% | 16% | 49% | 20% | 11% | 3% | | |

Table 4.9 $X^2$ Cross Tab – Practitioner Age/Social Networking over Social Membership

However, age could not be considered a factor as to attitudes changes concerning actual membership in a social, civic or professional organization as a relationship-building tool.  Nevertheless, age seems to be an important factor when determining whether or not social networking is a better relationship-building tool than joining a social organization, which could be due in part to a time management issue.

<div align="center">Additional Test Result Findings</div>

RQ6: Is there a positive relationship between number of years a practitioner is employed in the PR profession and his or her attitude about the role technology plays in relationship building?

Additional categorical variables were also tested against both technological and relationship building questions.  Neither race/ethnicity nor gender was used because of too little variation between groups.  However, findings regarding number of years did provide several statistically significant results.

In reference to technological aspects, number of years in the profession was tested with preference of social media over email when corresponding with co-workers and colleagues.  Results noted statistically significant correlation between the two variables ($x^2$ =46.960, df =20, p =.001) since probability levels show that less than one out of 100 test results are due to chance.

**Social Media Preferred over Email**

$(x^2 = 46.960, df = 20, p = .001)$          Total Respondents (n=127)

|  | No Answer | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Undecided | Agree | Strongly Agree | Total | Percentage Of Total Respondents Based on Years in Profession |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Less than 1 Year | 0 | 0 | 7 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 11 | 8% |
| 1 – 5 Years | 0 | 8 | 13 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 24 | 18% |
| 6 – 10 Years | 0 | 18 | 18 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 37 | 32% |
| 11-20 Years | 0 | 13 | 15 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 28 | 22% |
| 21 -3 0 Years | 0 | 10 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 16 | 12% |
| 30+ Years | 0 | 4 | 6 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 11 | 8% |
| % of Total Respondents based on Answer Chosen | 0% | 42% | 49% | 4% | 4% | 1% |  |  |

Table 4.10 Chi-Square Results – Years in PR/Social Media Preference over Email

Additionally, the years of service variable was tested against the question of the company that the practitioner works for being technologically savvy, and noted statistically significant results ($x^2$ =40.336, df =25, p =.027). Therefore, only two out of 100 findings would be as a result of chance.

**Company I work for Tech. Savvy and Uses it to Communicate with Employees**

$(x^2 = 40.336, df = 25, p = .027)$          Total Respondents (n=127)

|  | No Answer | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Undecided | Agree | Strongly Agree | Total | Percentage Of Total Respondents Based on Years in Profession |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Less than 1 Year | 3 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 11 | 8% |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 – 5 Years | 0 | 1 | 7 | 4 | 7 | 5 | 24 | 18% |
| 6 – 10 Years | 0 | 2 | 12 | 5 | 15 | 3 | 37 | 32% |
| 11-20 Years | 0 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 14 | 5 | 28 | 22% |
| 21 -3 0 Years | 0 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 8 | 2 | 16 | 12% |
| 30+ Years | 0 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 11 | 8% |
| % of Total Respondents based on Answer Chosen | 2% | 5% | 24% | 13% | 41% | 15% | | |

Table 4.11 Chi-Square – Years in PR/Technologically Savvy Company


Regarding relationship-building aspects when years in the profession was run with membership in a social organization helps relationship building statistical significance was noted ($x^2$ =35.208, df =20, p =.019) because only two out of 100 results are because of chance.


**Membership in Social Organization Has Helped Build Relationships**

($x^2$ = 35.208, df = 20, p = .018)                    Total Respondents (n=127)

| | No Answer | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Undecided | Agree | Strongly Agree | Total | Percentage Of Total Respondents Based on Years in Profession |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Less than 1 Year | 8 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 11 | 8% |
| 1 – 5 Years | 5 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 8 | 7 | 24 | 18% |
| 6 – 10 Years | 8 | 0 | 6 | 6 | 9 | 8 | 37 | 32% |
| 11-20 Years | 5 | 0 | 4 | 3 | 9 | 7 | 28 | 22% |
| 21 -3 0 Years | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 6 | 6 | 16 | 12% |
| 30+ Years | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 8 | 1 | 11 | 8% |

| | No Answer | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Undecided | Agree | Strongly Agree | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| % of Total Respondents based on Answer Chosen | 23% | 0% | 14% | 8% | 32% | 23% | | |

Table 4.12 Chi-Square Cross Tab – Years in PR/Social Organization Membership

Moreover, when years in public relation categorical variable was run with social networking sites being better at relationship building than civic and professional organizations statistical significance was noted for both ($x^2$ =46.207, df =25, p =.006), ($x^2$ =37.867, df =25, p =.048) since less than one out of 100 and five out of 100 results are due to chance rather than being valid.

**<u>Social Networking Sites Better Relationship Building than Civic Membership</u>**

($x^2$ = 46.207, df = 25, p = .006)          Total Respondents (n=127)

| | No Answer | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Undecided | Agree | Strongly Agree | Total | Percentage Of Total Respondents Based on Years in Profession |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Less than 1 Year | 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 11 | 8% |
| 1 – 5 Years | 0 | 4 | 13 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 24 | 18% |
| 6 – 10 Years | 0 | 11 | 21 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 37 | 32% |
| 11-20 Years | 0 | 2 | 15 | 8 | 3 | 0 | 28 | 22% |
| 21 -3 0 Years | 0 | 6 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 16 | 12% |
| 30+ Years | 0 | 0 | 10 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 11 | 8% |
| % of Total Respondents based on Answer Chosen | 1% | 19% | 53% | 15% | 10% | 2% | | |

Table 4.13 Chi-Square – Years in PR/Social Networking over Civic Membership

Findings seem to note that number of years in the public relation profession does play an important role in technological attitudes about a company as well as perceptions about the role social networking sites play in relationship-building over outside organizational membership.

# V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The practice of public relations is directly influenced by the process of fostering relationships between an organization and its publics. The profession itself has evolved tremendously from the early days of PR when practitioners were interested in the use of asymmetrical communication only (Grunig, 2001a). As discussed in Chapter 2, several studies have advanced the profession by researching communication as a tool rather than process only. Grunig was one of the first PR theorists to develop the theory of symmetrical communication, which applied two-way communication (1976). Ferguson's nine –year content analysis study was one of the first to relate symmetrical communication to organizational relationships by defining several aspects of a successful relationship (1984). Nonetheless, Cutlip, Center and Broom (1994) actually defined public relations as a management function "that establishes and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and the publics on whom its success or failure depends" (p. 2).

The communication process has changed drastically since the advent of the Internet and social media. Several studies have focused on social media as a way to establish and further the relationship management process (Bickart & Schindler, 2001; Cho & Huh, 2007; Vorvoreanu, 2008). Additionally, as communication has changed over the last ten years so have the practitioners themselves. The twenty-first century was the first to see four generations in the PR workforce as Generation Y began graduating

from college (Reynolds, Bush & Geist, 2008). However, only a few studies have endeavored to apply the communication changes to Generation Y (Bruning and Lamb, 2008; Reynolds, Bush et. al, 2008; Brunner, Yates et. al., 2009). This study sought to quantify those results by applying it specifically to the public relations profession. This particular research attempts to relate the Millennial generation's communication style to other generations as they enter the PR workforce. The following section focuses on possible implications that have been derived from the data analysis findings and its relevance as well as recommended suggestions that the results propose.

Implications

Research question one was developed from the Bruning and Lamb (2008) study, which noted that a person's worldview helps shape general perceptions. Results from this study did corroborate those findings as they relate to the Millennial generation in particular, and went further to relate the research to social media forms of communication. Millennial worldviews are definitely influenced by their excessive use of technologies such as social media. As a result, students' daily use of social media was directly correlated to their satisfaction level with the school in which they were enrolled. Ninety percent of the students polled either agreed or strongly agreed that the school attended did have values that mirrored their own. In addition, more than 90% of the students polled strongly agreed that they used some form of social media communication each day to communicate. There was also a connection between the Millennial PR professionals' preference for social media over email to communicate and practitioners' values not being mirrored by the organization worked for. These results indicate that the

Millennial generation more than other generations considers a company's social media usage as a value when determining similarities with world views. Because this generation has never experienced a time without Internet, it has become as much of who they are as what they do. Furthermore, because they stay connected 24 hours a day they are continuously looking at the world through the eyes of the World-Wide-Web. Additionally, employers may need to recognize that Millennials are more apt to use social networking to communicate in the workforce and adapt accordingly by looking for new communication tools that are more immediate that can be used in addition to email.

A link was also found between the practitioner's perception that the organization worked for was technologically savvy and that the values of the company mirrored his or her values. Sixty percent of the practitioners polled either agreed or strongly agreed that their company was technologically savvy, and 75% were in agreement that the organization values mirrored theirs. Surprisingly, the generation more likely to be dissatisfied with the statement regarding organization technology was Generation X, where almost half polled were undecided or disagreed. These findings seem to imply that while different generations do relate technologically to worldviews about the school attended or company worked for, not all generations equate technology to the Internet or social media. Because Baby Boomers and Veterans witnessed the birth of early technology such as the birth of radio and television, they may not see continued technological growth as a necessary aspect for a company. Other generations may see smaller technological advances in the workplace such as the use of email and cellular phones in the workplace as tremendous growth for their organizations. Since Generation Y has always witnessed the Internet and the use of cellular phones they may require the

company use tools such as instant messaging and blogging to consider them

technologically advanced. The conclusions also support Harwood's (2007) findings,

which indicated that members of the same generation relate to similar problems and are

engaged through shared interests.

The second research question focused on changing attitudes by Generation Y as

they entered the PR workforce and was designed to build upon Brunner, Yates and

Adams (2009) findings concerning Generation Y's communication as they enter the

workforce. This element focused on various forms of communication including email.

Findings from the question regarding the use of social media as a preferred form of

communication over email to communicate with fellow students or employees noted

significant difference between student responses and professional results. More than

56% of students agreed with that statement compared to less than 5% of total

professionals surveyed. Therefore, Brunner et. al. (2009) conclusions that the Millennial

generation needs further email etiquette prior to entering the workforce may also be

transferrable to proper social media protocol prior to workforce entry. When looking at

the statement from a generational standpoint only 12% of the Millennials preferred the

use of social media to email, which seems to indicate that as the Millennial generation

enters the workforce they may curb their use of social media at least from a professional

standpoint. On the other hand, there are differences between generations in reference to

use of other communication tools. Most notably was the distinction between generations

as to preference of texting over face-to-face because of convenience. Forty-two percent

of Millennial generation respondents agreed with the statement compared to less than

12% of Generation X. Less than 1% of Baby Boomers agreed with the statement and no

Veteran respondents agreed. What is even more surprising is that when students were asked the same question only 15% agreed with the statement, which may imply that as the Millennial generation enters the workforce and has less free time that texting may be more about time management and less about the process of communication.

Participation in outside organizations was the focus of research question three, which stemmed from the Bruning's (2000) research concerning the part played by professional, personal and community relationships concerning attitude. The question posed was the part that being a member of a particular generation played in participation in outside organizations. When students were asked to rate if their membership in a professional organization has helped or will help build relationships in the PR industry only 38% agreed with the statement. Furthermore, 54% were either undecided or did not answer the question, which could imply that Millennials do not have an adequate understanding of professional organizations as they relate to public relations. Many campuses including the one in which the students polled were enrolled have student organizations affiliated with professional chapters such as PRCA. Likewise, when students were polled about their membership in a non-profit or civic organization helping to build relationships only 38% agreed with the statement and over 52% were either undecided or did not answer the question. These findings indicate that faculty may need to better educate students on professional affiliations for relationship-building within the industry as well as stressing the importance for giving back to the community in a less self-serving manner of relationship-building. Moreover, a link was found to exist between student respondents who indicated that social networking sites were more effective networking tools that joining organizations and they would "friend" co-workers

when joining the workforce. Over 35% of the students believed that social networking was more effective. Nonetheless, 27% were undecided about the statement, which further supports the notion that the Millennial generation may not have a clear understanding of the use of organizational memberships to build relationships within public relations. The Millennial generation does appear to use social networking as a main relationship maintenance tool, especially prior to entry into the workforce. While results are somewhat consistent with Bruning's point that people who identified with key characteristics of an employee within an organization were more apt to remain loyal to the organization. Nonetheless, it is important to stress that the Millennial generation seems to be as focused on utilizing social networking tools as they are to joining outside organizations to maintain relationships. While Baby Boomers and Generation X members grew up in an era when communicating with their friends meant talking at home on telephones to one friend at a time. Conversely, Millennial youths are plugged into cyberspace for hours chatting with as many friends as they choose all at one time. Millennials seem to use the word "friends" in a much different way than Baby Boomers and Generation X did when they were first entering the workforce. A Millennial youth might have 300 or more people that they call "friends" because they chat with them from time to time. As a result, Millennials may have built relationships online, but the question remains how strong those relationships really are when built through the Internet.

Research question for asked there was a positive relationship change between Generation Y's attitudes concerning membership in outside organizations as they progress through their public relations curriculum? Unfortunately, little change was

noted between student respondent attitudes concerning joining outside organizations to build relationships. Seniors were still as likely to prefer social networking as a relationship building tool rather than membership in organizations. These findings seem to imply that there is a clear lack of understanding the benefits of joining organizations. While public relations curriculum does focus on relationship building as a management approach in PR, little attention is often given to specific relationship building tools such as organizational membership.

Research question five focused on other generations in the workforce and their perception of membership in outside organizations as a relationship-building tool. As indicated in research question one technology is a word that seems to be defined differently between generations. The Millennials are more apt to tie social media to a company's technological advances than are other generations. Conversely, Generation X appears to show the most dissatisfaction with organizational values. These findings support previous literature regarding Generation X feeling disillusioned because of being sandwiched in between much larger Baby Boomer and Millennial generations (Stephey, 2008). Additional findings did recognize that membership in professional and civic organizations were important aspects for relationship-building for PR. Almost 90% of all professionals recognized the importance of professional organizational membership and almost 83% recognized membership in civic organizations as important. More than 90% of Millennials polled agreed with both statements and over 95% of Baby Boomers agreed with the same statement. Sixty-five percent of Generation X agreed with the important of membership in professional organization, but 83% acknowledged the importance of membership in civic organizations.

When Millennial practitioners were asked to rate social networking as more effective at relationship building than professional organization membership 38% of those polled were either undecided or agreed with the statement compared to only 18% of Generation X and less than 1% of Baby Boomers. These conclusions support earlier findings that the Millennial generation is more tied to social networking as a relational tool than are other generations. Generations already in the workforce seem to be more tied to utilizing outside organizational membership to create and enhance relationships. Millennials seem to be more interested in the quantity of building relationships than the quality of those relationships. Social networking sites such as Facebook, put so much focus on the number of friends someone has. As a result, additional curriculum may be necessary in the PR field to emphasize what comprises quality relationships.

Unexpected data analysis noted in research question three also showed years of service in public relations play a role in use of technology as well as the communication tools used for relationship-building. Twenty-percent of professionals who have been in the profession five years or less noted a preference of social media over email while less than 1% of professionals with six years or more of experience preferred the use of social media to communicate with employees or colleagues. Results indicate that professionals might learn through fellow employees the proper protocols of communication in the workplace. While social media tools may be useful in personal communication, email is still the preference in the PR workplace.

In addition, only 51% of practitioners with fewer than five years of experience were asked if the company that they worked for was technologically savvy and used those tools to communicate with employees agreeing or strongly agreeing with the

statement.  Less than 50% of practitioners with 6 to 10 years of PR experience agreed

with that statement.  Yet, 67% of professionals with 11 to 20 years of experience

affirmed their organization as being technologically savvy, and 65% of those with more

than 20 years agreed.  Findings may also affirm the notion that as professionals are more

acclimated to the industry definitions of technological aspects may change.  These

implications seem to support Kelleher's (2007) study which proposed that online

relationships are built with awareness and develop as individuals adapt to and embrace

relational attitudes.

Years of service also played a part when practitioners were asked to rate

membership in a social organization being important as a relationship-building tool.

Only 1% of those who were in the business less than a year affirmed the statement. Yet,

62% of those who had been in the profession 1 to 5 years agreed, 46% of those

practicing 6 to 10 years agreed, 61% of those in PR for 11-20 years agreed and almost

78% of those with more than 20 years experience in PR were in agreement.  These

findings further assert the idea that practitioners learn the importance of relationship-

building tools within the profession itself as much as from their personal communication

styles.

Additionally, results from this study note the importance years of service play in

perceiving social networking sites being better relationship-building tools than joining

civic organizations.  Thirty-six percent of those in the profession less than a year either

agreed or strongly agreed with the statement whereas less than 21% of those practicing 1

to 5 years agreed and only 14% of PR practitioners in the profession 6 to 10 years agreed.

Furthermore, fewer than 11% practicing 11-20 agreed with social networking sites

building relationships better and less than 1% of those who had been PR practitioners for more than 20 years were in agreement.  Data analyses findings reassert the idea that PR professionals may learn the importance of giving back to the community through civic organizations from fellow employees already in the industry.  As a result, it may be important for Millennials to "friend" older employees in the workplace as part of their social networking.  Because other generations are now using social networking more, Millennials may be able to note how Generation X and Baby Boomers can successfully use social networking as one piece of relationship building while still using other tools such as organizational memberships.

Conclusions from the data analysis concerning years of service indicate the possible importance of mentoring within the industry so that novice practitioners can learn many important aspects of relationship-building from more experienced practitioners instead of through trial and error.   Furthermore, professors who are part of the public relations curriculum at universities could serve as mentors to PR students on important issues such as the importance of participating in outside organizations to foster relationship-building.  Universities need further research on how social networking is affecting the Millennial generation views on what it means to be a "friend".  Millennials seem to use the word "friend" more loosely than other generations.  For them it seems to be more about how many friends they have as opposed to how well they are maintaining those friendships.  Helping the Millennial generation understand how to effectively build and maintain relationships will be key in retaining this generation long-term in the workforce.

<center>Limitations of Study</center>

Prior to drawing conclusions concerning the results discussed in Chapter 4, it is important to note certain limitations of this study.  The limitation is the sample size of the student and professional surveys.   The number of students enrolled in the public relations program at the university from which the sample was obtained is only 150.    The professional survey was drawn from a larger sample pool of just over 500 professionals If the survey was administered during the fall or winter months, a higher response rate would be expected.  Also, the SPRF organization was unable to administer the survey to its professional organization due to a lack of response by the Communication Vice Presidents within the three sub-chapters.  Therefore, the total number of participants was also less than required to generalize conclusions to the entire population.

 Even though student respondents chosen could be considered representative of the population because each consisted of participants from the Millennial generation, the sample size would not allow for the generalizability of the results (Keyton, 2006).   The professional survey consisted of respondents from Generation Y, Generation X, Baby Boomers and Veterans.  However, Generation X and Baby Boomers were the two largest generations represented in the survey.  This could be considered consistent with the population-at-large because Millennials have only been in the workforce for about five years, and Veterans have been exiting the workforce due to retirement.  Nevertheless, all findings discussed are applicable to this sample only.

In addition, because the professional survey was chosen from members of a professional organization the questions regarding participation in an outside organization might be considered higher because of respondents' membership in PRCA.  Nonetheless,

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in order to be able to poll a large number of public relations practitioners at one time it is necessary to utilize a PR organization of some type. Future research might consider finding large for-profit organizations that employ PR professionals throughout the country at various locations in order to avoid this possible bias.

In reference to the survey instruments, there were several questions that were not able to be used because of a lack of understanding by students and practitioners. The researcher recommends pre-survey interviews with a couple of members from each generation to determine common meanings concerning technological and relationship questions. However, because both surveys included 32 questions, there were still at least 20 questions within each instrument which were used to compile the data.

Moreover, not being able to poll the same Millennial generation respondents before and after entering the workforce can be seen as a limitation to the study. Due to the timing of the survey a longitudinal design was not possible. Even so, data from current study can provide insight as to sample respondents' perceptions and attitudes concerning technology and relationship-building techniques.

Finally, researchers have rules for interpreting correlation strength levels (Keyton, 2006). Correlation coefficients that fall in the .40 - .70 are considerate moderate correlations and substantial relationships, coefficients that fall between .20 - .40 are noted as low correlation and having small relationships. Most of the correlation coefficients did fall between .20 and .70, which is considered moderate to low relationships. Nonetheless, even moderate correlations as noted could warrant further research is needed to see if a relationship does exist between Millennial perceptions on technology

and how they manage relationship building.  Levels could be increased with higher survey participation.


<center>Suggestions for Future Research</center>

This study examined the Millennial generation's perception of technology as it relates to relationship building within the public relations industry to offer insight as to how this generation might adjust to other generations already in the workforce.  Results indicate that future research is needed to see the long-term implications of social networking as it applies to the PR industry.  Organizations are now focusing on social networking as a tool for reaching out to its external publics.  However, organizations may not be successfully utilizing the social networking to reach its internal publics.  Results from this study imply that the Millennial generation often uses social networking in place of external organizational memberships to build relationships.  Future research could concentrate on studying organizational communication techniques with its internal publics through the use of qualitative techniques such as interviews.  Additional survey instruments would also be useful if researchers are able to poll key communication managers within organizations.

As mentioned in the previous section, generalizability could be enhanced through the ability to poll the same respondents prior to entering the workforce as well as after entry into the public relations profession.  Additional directions of research would be the implementation of longitudinal studies.  Students could participate in a three to four year focus group study, which begins his or her junior year of college so that findings would include data from a similar time period before joining the workforce as well as afterwards

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to determine possible perception changes. A longitudinal study could also be done similarly on Generation X in particular to determine what effects of being part of the so-called sandwiched generation might have on perceptions of relationship building.

Additional research in three to four years could follow-up the topic of social networking and email to see if preferences have changed. The exploratory study might focus on how possible changes have affected an organization's communication process with its employees. This investigation might extend to other fields in addition to public relations to see if social networking communication techniques could be generalizeable to the entire workforce population.

Conclusion

Public relations as a profession and as a theoretical base focus primarily on symmetrical communication process in order to foster long-term relationships (Grunig, 1976; Grunig; Grunig et. al, 2006) Because key publics for organizations include various backgrounds, customs, and generations it can often be overwhelming for a practitioner to determine the most effective communication style to use to develop those relationships (Berkowitz, 2007).

This research has provided evidence that the Millennial generation respondents surveyed are more interested in developing and maintaining relationships in the industry through the use of social networking than they are in joining professional, social, and civic organizations. While time management is an issue for today's practitioner, many organizations allow employees to participate in outside organizations during company-time because they recognize the importance these memberships play in developing and

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maintaining relationships with the public.  Furthermore, Millennials need to recognize

that to be accepted as part of the management team that they must understand that

relationship-building is a vital skill-set for a practitioner (Ledingham, 2003). Therefore,

as noted by Ledingham in previous studies, PR curricula from the management approach

is needed.  Professors should also serve in a mentoring capacity to help students gain an

understanding of the importance of serving in civic capacities within the community to

foster the mutually-beneficial long-term relationship.

Additionally, organizations that have public relations departments could also

benefit by providing mentors from different generations from within the company to help

Millennial generation employees adapt to the workforce easier and help retain associates

longer.  When Baby Boomers and Generation X entered the workforce the primary forms

of communication was face to face and telephone. While both generations have seen the

advent of email and social networking they still use face to face and phone

communication to build relationships.  Continuing those relationships could also help

ease the frustrations that may be felt by other generations such as Generation X as

indicated by the professionals polled.

Fortunately, this research indicates PR professionals' attitudes and perceptions

about technology and relationship building do adapt the longer they are in the workforce.

Nonetheless, as more Generation Y employees graduate from college and enter the

workforce and more Veterans and Baby Boomers leave the PR workforce, it is possible

that adaptation levels may change.  Because Millennials are often more technologically

savvy than the preceding generations, they are now finding themselves employed in the

industry as social media experts whose primary goal is to interact with key internal and

external publics.  Because the Millennial generation has been defined as one that only

wants necessary information and doesn't waste time on what they deem irrelevant

material (Reynolds et. al, 2008), organizations may witness some lapse in

communication.  This study indicates that continued education and mentoring is needed

between generations within the industry in order to develop a better understanding of

how to communicate with each other.  Also, employers must work to improve internal

communication tools that encompass the latest technology such as real-time internal

chatting tools in addition to email.  Not only can this engage the Millennial employee but

it can also increase efficiency in the workplace.  Furthermore, organizations should

periodically survey employees on overall organizational effectiveness.  Employers could

also reach out to Millennials by asking them to serve on committees to advocate

technological improvements in the workplace.

Additionally, more research needs to be devoted to the effects that "friending"

hundreds of people in a social network medium is having on their ability to build

relationships effectively.  Will this generation attempt to manage their professional

relationships in the same manner that they do their online social networking

relationships?  If so, there may be a considerable amount of disillusionment both by the

Millennial employees as well as by their employers and colleagues.  Because many

Millennials lack the ability to understand effective relationship building it is important for

organizations to incorporate long-term approaches such as mentoring to be able to retain

them.

If Millennials participate in PR curricula, which covers the management aspect by

recognizing the importance of relationship-building, and continues to be educated

afterwards they can adapt to other generations already practicing PR.  Additionally, as many universities already have social media classes as part of the PR major they could explain the process of social media relationships and what the expected outcome should be. What is going to be even more interesting to watch in the years to come is the part that this generation will play in actually enhancing two-way communication as other generations learn to adapt to the ever-changing social media communication.

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**RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE - STUDENTS**

**How the Millennial Generation Manages Relationship in the PR Industry**

You are invited to participate in a research study of the Millennial generation's management of relationships in the Public Relation's Industry. This study is being conducted by Terri Knight as a thesis project for the Master's Degree program in Communication at Auburn University. She is directed by her thesis committee, which consist of Dr. Jennifer Wood Adams, assistant professor of journalism at Auburn, committee chair; Dr. Margaret Fitch-Hauser, chair of the department of communication and journalism and associate professor of public relations, committee member; Dr. Brigitta Brunner, associate professor of public relations, committee member.

The study seeks to gain a better understanding of how the Millennial Generation is managing relationships with other generations as they begin working in the Public Relation's Industry. You were selected as a possible participant because you are a student in the Communication department. If you decide to participate, you will fill out a Web-based questionnaire that will take less than 15 minutes to complete.

Your participation is solicited, although strictly voluntary. Your name will not be associated in any way with the research findings, thus any information obtained in connection with this study will remain anonymous. You may withdraw from this study at any time by simply not hitting the submit button at the end of the online survey. However, once you have provided the anonymous information (i.e., hit submit on the Web-based questionnaire), you will be unable to withdraw your data after participation since there will be no way to identify individual information. Finally, information collected through your participation may be published in a professional journal, and/or presented at a professional meeting, etc. No individual responses will be presented or published. Any information obtained in connection with this study will remain anonymous.

The Auburn University Institutional Review Board has approved this document for use from April 10, 2010 to April 9, 2011. Protocol #10-102 EX 1004. Your decision whether or not to participate will not jeopardize your future relations with Auburn University or the Department of Communication and Journalism.

If you have any questions, you are invited to contact Terri Knight at trk0001@auburn.edu. She will be happy to answer any questions you may have. You may print this screen to keep a copy of this form for your records. For more information regarding your rights as a research participant you may contact the Auburn University Office of Human Subjects Research or the Institutional Review Board by phone (334) 844-5966 or e-mail at hsubjec@auburn.edu or IRBChair@auburn.edu.

HAVING READ THE INFORMATION PROVIDED, YOU MUST DECIDE WHETHER TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT. IF YOU DECIDE TO PARTICIPATE, THE DATA YOU PROVIDE WILL SERVE AS YOUR AGREEMENT TO DO SO.

Please click the "NEXT" button below if you wish to participate in the study. If you wish to end your participation in the study, please close your Internet window at this time. Thank you for your time.

The first three questions are requesting demographic information.   Please mark as they apply to you.

1)      Age (please provide actual age in box below)

<br>

2)      Gender

      Male        Female

3)      Race/Ethnicity (select one or more)

American Indian or Alaska Native    Asian          Black or African-American

Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander          Caucasian      Hispanic or Latino

      Other Race(s) please provide:_____

The next two questions are concerning your level of college courses.

4) Class in College

Freshman            Sophomore          Junior                  Senior

5) Regarding my internship for PR

Have completed my internship            Currently interning

Have not interned yet

For the next few questions, please think about the various ways you communicate with others each day while at school.

**Using a Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree, please read each statement and choose the ONE value that most closely matches your attitude.  Please mark N/A if the statement is not applicable to you.**

6) I use some type of social media such as e-mail, instant messaging, podcasting,

blogging, social networking to communicate with others on a daily basis.

strongly disagree     disagree    undecided    agree    strongly agree    N/A

7) I prefer to use social networking sites, such as Facebook, to communicate with fellow students rather than emailing them.

strongly disagree     disagree    undecided    agree    strongly agree    N/A

8) I am more likely to text my fellow students for information than ask them face-to-face even if they are in the same room with me.

strongly disagree     disagree    undecided    agree    strongly agree    N/A

9)  I am more likely to email my fellow students for information than ask them face-to-face even if they are in the same room with me.

strongly disagree     disagree    undecided    agree    strongly agree    N/A

10)  I am more likely to have face-to-face interaction with fellow students over other forms of communication because of convenience.

strongly disagree     disagree    undecided    agree    strongly agree    N/A

11)  I am more likely to personally call fellow students over other forms of communication because of convenience.

strongly disagree     disagree    undecided    agree    strongly agree    N/A

12)  I am more likely to text my fellow students for information over other forms of communication because of convenience.

strongly disagree     disagree    undecided    agree    strongly agree    N/A

13)  I am more likely to e-mail my fellow students for information over other forms of communication because of convenience.

strongly disagree     disagree    undecided    agree    strongly agree    N/A

14) I am more likely to use social networking sites such as  to contact my fellow students

for information over other forms of communication because of convenience.

strongly disagree      disagree      undecided      agree      strongly agree      N/A

For the next few questions, please think about the attitudes you have about the school that you attend for as well as the PR industry in general.

**Using a Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree, please read each statement and choose the ONE value that most closely matches your attitude.  Please mark N/A if the statement is not applicable to you.**

15) The school I attend for stays on top of the latest technology and uses it to

communicate regularly to its students.

strongly disagree      disagree      undecided      agree      strongly agree      N/A

16) I can see myself still in the PR industry five years from now.

strongly disagree      disagree      undecided      agree      strongly agree      N/A

17) I can see myself still working in the PR industry 10 years from now.

strongly disagree      disagree      undecided      agree      strongly agree      N/A

18) The school I attend has values that mirror my values.

strongly disagree      disagree      undecided      agree      strongly agree      N/A

For the next few questions, please think about your participation in outside organizations and their relationship to public relations.

**Using a Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree, please read each statement and choose the ONE value that most closely matches your attitude.  Please mark N/A if the statement is not applicable to you.**

19) My membership in an outside professional organization or group such as PRCA, PRSSA, IABC has helped me and/or will help me to build relationships within the PR industry.

strongly disagree   disagree   undecided   agree   strongly agree   N/A

20) My membership in an outside civic or non-profit organization such as American Red Cross, American Cancer Society, Boys and Girls Club etc. has helped me and/or will help me to build relationships within the PR industry.

strongly disagree   disagree   undecided   agree   strongly agree   N/A

21) My membership in a social organization such as a sorority, fraternity, band member, SGA etc. has helped me and/or will help me to build relationships within the PR industry.

strongly disagree   disagree   undecided   agree   strongly agree   N/A

22) When making contact with the media in my internship, I prefer to use face-to-face to make contact rather than using the telephone.

strongly disagree   disagree   undecided   agree   strongly agree   N/A


For the next two questions, please think about your interaction with the media in your internship or at a job that you currently have now.

**Using a Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree, please read each statement and choose the ONE value that most closely matches your attitude.  Please mark N/A if the statement is not applicable to you.**

23) When making contact with the media in my internship or job, I prefer to use face-to-face to make contact rather than using email.

strongly disagree   disagree   undecided   agree   strongly agree   N/A

24) When making contact with the media in my internship or job, I prefer to use face-to-face to make contact rather than using the telephone.

strongly disagree       disagree     undecided     agree     strongly agree     N/A

For the next few questions, please think about how you use social networking sites now as well as the part you think they will play in your job as you enter the PR workforce. Co-workers are defined as people that will work in the same location and organization as you, while colleagues are defined as others that you will deal with in your future job(s) on a regular basis but are not at the same location as you such as vendors or home office personnel.

**Using a Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree, please read each statement and choose the ONE value that most closely matches your attitude. Please mark N/A if the statement is not applicable to you.**

25) I believe that social networking sites such as Facebook or Linkedin, will become part of the PR workplace regular forms of communication with its publics and its employees within the next five years.

strongly disagree       disagree     undecided     agree     strongly agree     N/A

26) I believe that social networking sites, such as Facebook and Linkedin, are more effective ways to network than joining an outside organization.

strongly disagree       disagree     undecided     agree     strongly agree     N/A

27)  I believe that Facebook is a way for me to express myself and am not concerned with fellow students viewing pictures and posts on my page.

strongly disagree      disagree     undecided     agree     strongly agree     N/A

28) Once I am working in my field, I believe that I will "friend" co-workers and colleagues on Facebook.

strongly disagree      disagree     undecided     agree     strongly agree     N/A

29)  I am not concerned about potential employers and future co-workers seeing current pictures or posts on my Facebook page.

strongly disagree      disagree     undecided     agree     strongly agree     N/A

30) I believe that I will post the name of the company that I work for and my title on my Facebook page once I am employed in the industry.

strongly disagree      disagree     undecided     agree     strongly agree     N/A

31)  I believe that the company that I will work for has the right to give me content guidelines for what I should or shouldn't post on my Facebook page.

strongly disagree      disagree     undecided     agree     strongly agree     N/A

**RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE – PROFESSIONALS**

**How the Millennial Generation Manages Relationship in the PR Industry**


You are invited to participate in a research study of the Millennial generation's management of relationships in the Public Relation's Industry. This study is being conducted by Terri Knight as a thesis project for the Master's Degree program in Communication at Auburn University. She is directed by her thesis committee, which consist of Dr. Jennifer Wood Adams, assistant professor of journalism at Auburn, committee chair; Dr. Margaret Fitch-Hauser, chair of the department of communication and journalism and associate professor of public relations, committee member; Dr. Brigitta Brunner, associate professor of public relations, committee member.

The study seeks to gain a better understanding of how the Millennial Generation is managing relationships with other generations as they begin working in the Public Relation's Industry. You were selected as a possible participant because you are a member of the Public Relations Council of Alabama. If you decide to participate, you will fill out a Web-based questionnaire that will take less than 15 minutes to complete.

Your participation is solicited, although strictly voluntary. Your name will not be associated in any way with the research findings, thus any information obtained in connection with this study will remain anonymous. You may withdraw from this study at any time by simply not hitting the submit button at the end of the online survey. However, once you have provided the anonymous information (i.e., hit submit on the Web-based questionnaire), you will be unable to withdraw your data after participation since there will be no way to identify individual information. Finally, information collected through your participation may be published in a professional journal, and/or presented at a professional meeting, etc. No individual responses will be presented or published. Any information obtained in connection with this study will remain anonymous.

Your decision whether or not to participate will not jeopardize your future relations with Auburn University or the Department of Communication and Journalism. The Auburn University Institutional Review Board has approved this document for use from April 10, 2010 to April 9, 2011. Protocol #10-102 EX 1004.

If you have any questions, you are invited to contact Terri Knight at trk0001@auburn.edu. She will be happy to answer any questions you may have. You may print this screen to keep a copy of this form for your records. For more information regarding your rights as a research participant you may contact the Auburn University Office of Human Subjects Research or the Institutional Review Board by phone (334) 844-5966 or e-mail at hsubjec@auburn.edu or IRBChair@auburn.edu.

HAVING READ THE INFORMATION PROVIDED, YOU MUST DECIDE WHETHER TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT. IF YOU DECIDE TO PARTICIPATE, THE DATA YOU PROVIDE WILL SERVE AS YOUR AGREEMENT TO DO SO.

Please click the "NEXT" button below if you wish to participate in the study. If you wish to end your participation in the study, please close your Internet window at this time. Thank you for your time.

1)        Age (please include actual age in box below)

☐

For the next few questions, please think about the various ways you communicate with others during the course of your job each day.  Co-workers are defined as people within the same location and organization as you, while colleagues are defined as others that you deal with in your job on a regular basis but are not at the same location as you such as vendors or home office personnel.

**Using a Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree, please read each statement and choose the ONE value that most closely matches your attitude.  Please mark N/A if the statement is not applicable to you.**

2)  I use some type of social media such as e-mail, instant messaging, podcasting, blogging, social networking to communicate with others on a daily basis.

strongly disagree      disagree    undecided     agree     strongly agree     N/A

3) I prefer to use social networking sites, such as Facebook, to communicate with my co-workers rather than e-mailing them.

strongly disagree      disagree    undecided     agree     strongly agree     N/A

4) I am more likely to text my co-workers for information than ask them face-to-face even if they are in the same room with me.

strongly disagree      disagree    undecided     agree     strongly agree     N/A

5) I am more likely to e-mail my co-workers for information than speak with them face-to-face even if they are in the same room with me.

strongly disagree      disagree    undecided     agree     strongly agree     N/A

6) I am more likely to have face-to-face interaction with co-workers or colleagues over other forms of communication because of convenience.

strongly disagree        disagree    undecided    agree    strongly agree    N/A

7) I am more likely to personally call co-workers or colleagues over other forms of communication because of convenience.

strongly disagree        disagree    undecided    agree    strongly agree    N/A

8) I am more likely to text my co-workers or colleagues for information over other forms of communication because of convenience.

strongly disagree        disagree    undecided    agree    strongly agree    N/A

9) I am more likely to email my co-workers or colleagues for information over other forms of communication because of convenience.

strongly disagree        disagree    undecided    agree    strongly agree    N/A

10) I am more likely to use social networking sites to contact my co-workers or colleagues for information over other forms of communication because of convenience.

strongly disagree        disagree    undecided    agree    strongly agree    N/A


For the next few questions, please think about the attitudes you have about the organization that you work for as well as the PR industry in general.

**Using a Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree, please read each statement and choose the ONE value that most closely matches your attitude.  Please mark N/A if the statement is not applicable to you.**


11) The organization I work for stays on top of the latest technology and uses it to communicate regularly to its employees.

strongly disagree        disagree    undecided    agree    strongly agree    N/A

12) I can see myself still in the PR industry five years from now.

strongly disagree    disagree    undecided    agree    strongly agree    N/A

13) I can see myself still working in the PR industry 10 years from now.

strongly disagree    disagree    undecided    agree    strongly agree    N/A

14) The organization I work for has values that mirror my values.

strongly disagree    disagree    undecided    agree    strongly agree    N/A

For the next few questions, please think about your participation in outside organizations and their relationship to public relations.

**Using a Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree, please read each statement and choose the ONE value that most closely matches your attitude. Please mark N/A if the statement is not applicable to you.**

15) My membership in an outside professional organization or group has helped me

and/or will help me to build relationships within the PR industry.

strongly disagree    disagree    undecided    agree    strongly agree    N/A

16) My membership in an outside civic or non-profit organization has helped me and/or

will help me to build relationships within the PR industry.

strongly disagree    disagree    undecided    agree    strongly agree    N/A

17) My membership in a social organization such as Junior League, Kiwanis, Rotary and

other similar organizations has helped me to build relationships within the PR industry.

strongly disagree    disagree    undecided    agree    strongly agree    N/A

For the next two questions, please think about your interaction with the media.

**Using a Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree, please read each statement and choose the ONE value that most closely matches your attitude. Please mark N/A if the statement is not applicable to you.**

18) When making contact with the media I prefer to use face-to-face to make contact rather than using the telephone.

    strongly disagree    disagree    undecided    agree    strongly agree    N/A

19) When making contact with the media I prefer to use face-to-face to make contact rather than using email.

    strongly disagree    disagree    undecided    agree    strongly agree    N/A

For the next few questions, please think about how you use social networking sites while you're at work as well as during your free time.

**Using a Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree, please read each statement and choose the ONE value that most closely matches your attitude. Please mark N/A if the statement is not applicable to you.**

20) I believe that social networking sites such as Facebook and Linkedin, will become part of the PR workplace regular forms of communication with its publics and its employees within the next five years.

    strongly disagree    disagree    undecided    agree    strongly agree    N/A

21) I believe that social networking sites, such as Facebook and Linkedin, are more effective ways to network than joining an outside social organization.

    strongly disagree    disagree    undecided    agree    strongly agree    N/A

22) I believe that social networking sites, such as Facebook and Linkedin, are more effective ways to network than joining an outside non-profit organization.

       strongly disagree     disagree    undecided    agree    strongly agree    N/A

23) I believe that social networking sites, such as Facebook and Linkedin, are more effective ways to network than joining an outside professional organization.

       strongly disagree     disagree    undecided    agree    strongly agree    N/A

24) I believe that Facebook is a way for me to express myself and am not concerned with what my co-workers opinions about posts and pictures on my page.

       strongly disagree     disagree    undecided    agree    strongly agree    N/A

25) I believe that allowing co-workers to be "friends" on my Facebook page is a good way to strengthen relationships with them.

       strongly disagree     disagree    undecided    agree    strongly agree    N/A

26) I am not concerned about my employer being able to see all of my pictures or posts on my Facebook page.

       strongly disagree     disagree    undecided    agree    strongly agree    N/A

27) I believe that posting the name of my employer on my Facebook page gives the company that I work for the right to give me content guidelines for what I should or shouldn't post on my Facebook page.

       strongly disagree     disagree    undecided    agree    strongly agree    N/A

The last four questions are requesting demographic information. Please mark as they apply to you.

28)    Gender

        Male       Female

29) Race/Ethnicity (select all that apply)

American Indian or Alaska Native    Asian        Black or African-American

Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander        Caucasian    Hispanic or Latino

Other Race(s) please provide:_____

30) Highest Level of Education

High School/GED        Currently Attending College        Associate

Bachelor's        Master's        Doctorate

31) Number of years in PR industry

Less than a year    1-5    6-10    11-20    21-30    30+    N/A