PUBLIC RELATIONS IN HEALTH PROMOTION PRACTICE:

AN APPLICATION OF THE SITUATIONAL THEORY OF PUBLICS FOR

LEUKEMIA AND LYMPHOMA SOCIETY'S TEAM IN TRAINING PROGRAM

_____

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the School of Communication

University of Houston

_____

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

_____

By

Vanessa Hernandez

December, 2011

i

PUBLIC RELATIONS IN HEALTH PROMOTION PRACTICE:

AN APPLICATION OF THE SITUATIONAL THEORY OF PUBLICS FOR

LEUKEMIA AND LYMPHOMA SOCIETY'S TEAM IN TRAINING PROGRAM

_____

Vanessa Hernandez

APPROVED:

_____

Zhiwen Xiao, Ph.D.
Committee Chair

_____

Lan Ni, Ph.D.
Jack Valenti School of Communication

_____

Stowe Shoemaker, Ph.D.
Conrad Hilton College of Hotel and Restaurant Mgt.

_____

John W. Roberts, Ph.D.
Dean, College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences
Department of English

PUBLIC RELATIONS IN HEALTH PROMOTION PRACTICE:

AN APPLICATION OF THE SITUATIONAL THEORY OF PUBLICS FOR

LEUKEMIA AND LYMPHOMA SOCIETY'S TEAM IN TRAINING PROGRAM

_____

An Abstract of a Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the

Jack J. Valenti School of Communication

University of Houston

_____

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

_____

By

Vanessa Hernandez

November, 2011

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore a relationship between the public relations practice and the health promotion practice based on the assumption that one compliments the other. Grunig's situational theory of publics was be applied as segmenting strategy to identify publics in order to determine a target audience for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Team in Training program, a non-profit organization dedicated to blood cancer research. Surveys were distributed among a sample of 134 University of Houston's undergrad students. After data analysis, the sample surveyed was divided into four different publics (active, aware, latent, and nonpublic) according to the theory's assumptions. Demographic characteristics (age, gender, ethnicity/race, and education level) and media preferences were identified for each of the four public types. Additionally, no significant differences of age, gender, and ethnicity were found on types of public. Results from this study are expected to be beneficial for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Team in Training program by providing useful information about potential publics with the purpose of increasing participants and ultimately improving fundraising efforts.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF APPENDICES

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

Today, there are millions of people who are in risk of suffering or currently facing

a vast list of deadly deceases, especially different types of cancer. Even when technology

has developed rather quickly and progressively, researchers are still working to find cures

and save lives. Each year more than 40,800 adults and 3,500 children are diagnosed with

leukemia in the United States (National Cancer Institute, 2008). In fact, leukemia is one

of the top 10 most frequently occurring types of cancer in all races or ethnicities

(American Cancer Association, 2010). Statistics show that every 4 minutes one person in

the United States is diagnosed with a blood cancer (Leukemia and Lymphoma Society,

2010). According to the American Cancer Society (2010), approximately 137,260 people

in the United States will be diagnosed with leukemia, lymphoma or myeloma in 2011.

Leukemia and lymphoma are "types of cancer that can affect the bone marrow, the blood

cells, the lymph nodes and other parts of the lymphatic system" (Leukemia and

Lymphoma Society, 2010).

"Leukemia" is the term used to describe the four major types of the disease,

including acute lymphocytic leukemia, chronic lymphocytic leukemia, acute myeloid

leukemia, and chronic myeloid leukemia. "Lymphoma" is a general term for many blood

cancers that originate in the lymphatic system. Its two main types are Hodgkin and Non-

Hodgkin lymphoma (Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, 2010). Estimates of 2010 from

the American Cancer Society indicate that new cases of these diseases will be equivalent

to 9 percent of the 1,529,560 new cancer cases diagnosed in the United States. Leukemia

was estimated to be the sixth most common cause of cancer deaths in men and the

1

seventh in women in the United States in 2010 (Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, 2010).

There are various organizations dedicated to finding the causes and cure to all kinds of cancers. At the same time, there are many studies being done in labs and clinical trials around the world (American Cancer Society, 2011). The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society (LLS) is a nonprofit health organization dedicated to funding blood cancers research, education, and patient services (Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, 2010). Their mission entails finding a cure for leukemia, lymphoma, Hodgkin's disease and myeloma, and improving the quality of life of patients and their families ("Mission and goals," 2011). In 1989, the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society established its Team in Training program, the world's first and largest charity sports training program ("The mission and history," 2011).

According to its official website, Team in Training is a comprehensive plan that offers personalized fitness training by certified coaches – including training clinics, advice on nutrition and injury prevention – for 4 to 5 months at no cost. The program also covers travel, lodging, entry fees and event activities for all participants. The program offers the opportunity to be professionally trained to participate in more than 60 accredited sport events in the United States and abroad, including triathlons, hiking, cycling, marathons and half marathons. In exchange, voluntary participants contribute to raise funds for the organization. More specifically, every participant receives fundraising support and ideas, including a personal Website for online fundraising as part of the Team in Training program (http://www.teamintraining.org).

Team in Training's communication efforts have been directed to men and women, from 18 to 40 years old, with some relationship to blood cancer diseases (patients, survivors, or family and friends). However, the organization faces the challenge to define a more segmented public in order to enhance their reach and increase the number of voluntary participants as well. In this sense, the main goal of the organization is oriented to increasing fundraising efforts. So, the purpose of the public relations program would be to "create a public about the problem that the organizations experience or think as important" (Kim & Ni, 2009, p. 5).

Actually, aiming communication efforts to a "general public" is not effective (Cutlip, Center, & Broom, 1994; Knights, 2001; L. Grunig, Grunig & Dozier, 2002). In fact, even when a group of people share the same characteristics and experience a similar situation, they might not have the same interests or behaviors (Grunig & Hunt, 1984). So, organizations should identify those groups with which they truly need relationships (L. Grunig et al., 2002). These groups are often called stakeholders, which means "people who have an interest in the organization and are affected by decisions made by it" (Fearn-Banks, 2001, p. 482).

Similarly, L. Grunig and colleagues (2002) asserted that "organizations need relationships with publics that can affect the organization" (p. 325). In this sense, attempting to communicate or reach different groups of publics that may collaborate the organization's goals tends to be more accurate than focusing on a general population. Ultimately, segmenting publics is essential to creating effective communication efforts (Slater, 1996; Atkin & Freimuth, 2001; Grunig, 1989). In fact, according to Fearn-Banks

3

(2001), segmenting defines and categorizes stakeholders into "manageable and reachable bodies of people for ongoing communication" (p. 482).

Moreover, both public relations and health promotion practitioners benefit from audience segmentation strategies. More essentially, Slater (1996) found that segmenting publics "is the necessary prerequisite to creating messages that are responsive to the concerns, needs, and perspectives of specific populations" (p. 267). Actually, audience segmentation provides the basis for selecting the most appropriate strategies to reach such populations, given that once identified and defined, channels could be selected and messages tailored according to their characteristics (e.g. Atkin & Freimuth, 2001; Baines, Egan & Jefkins, 2004). Hence, it is essential to engage in segmentation when conducting health promotion or public relations communication campaigns. The purpose of segmentation is to make communication efforts effective and efficient, in terms of the intended outcomes (e.g. increase knowledge or awareness about an issue, change health behaviors, influence attitudes) (Slater, 1996).

Furthermore, Grunig (2006) found that the situational theory of publics "provides a tool to segment stakeholders into publics, to isolate the strategic publics with whom it is most important for organizations to develop relationships to be effective" (p.155), and to plan different strategies for communicating with publics with different communication behaviors, ranging from active to passive. Also, through the application of the theory practitioners should be able to "identify which publics are most likely to have some cognition or attitude, which publics will communicate most about organizational consequences, and which publics will be most likely to develop ideas and evaluate those ideas" (Signitzer & Wamser, 2006, p. 449).

Background and Significance

The purpose of this study is to explore a connection between public relations and health promotion practice. More specifically, the rationale entailed the application of the public relation's situational theory of publics (STP) segmenting principles to influence a target audience for Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Team in Training program, Texas Gulf Chapter. Basically, the application of the theory provided a foundation to identify a new public for the program.

Public relations and health promotion practice have the potential to complement each other, given that they both focus on publics and their wellbeing. In fact, Dozier, Grunig and Grunig (2001) found that each of these fields "manage communication campaigns that are directed at target populations to bring about some change in knowledge, attitudes and behaviors in those populations" (p. 232).

Moreover, the main purpose of public relations practice is to build and maintain relationships between the organization and its strategic publics (Aldoory & Sha, 2007; J. Grunig, Grunig & Dozier, 2006). Similarly, health promotion programming strategies serve as client empowerment (Naidoo & Wills, 2009; Tones & Green, 2004). More specifically, health promotion practice is designed with the objective of enabling others to gain more control over their health and its determinants: "it is clear that the purpose of everything we do as practitioners is to help our clients, the individuals, groups and communities with whom we work, to gain more power" (Laverack, 2007, p. 6). Basically, public relations practitioners often empower their publics by representing them and giving them a voice inside the organization, while health promotion practitioners give their clients and public power by enabling them to gain control over their health.

5

Publics are often defined in the public relations practice as groups that have an influence on an organization or on whom the organization has an influence (i.e. L. Grunig et al. 2002; Hallahan, 2000). In this sense, one of the key components of a public relations strategy entails identifying publics that have a certain interest in the organization and may help to achieve organizational goals (Ruffner, 1997). This is especially important in the case of non-profit organizations, such as the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, given that the members of the public represent a source of funding, volunteers, and support.

Additionally, audience segmentation represents the main contribution from public relations to strategic management and organizational effectiveness, given that the ultimate purpose is to build strong relationships with publics affected by the organization, as well as publics that affect the organization (Verĉiĉ & Grunig, 2000). In few words, organizations plan public relations programs strategically "when they identify the publics that are most likely to limit or enhance their ability to pursue the mission of the organization, and to design communication programs that help the organization manage its interdependence with these strategic publics" (Verĉiĉ & Grunig, 2000, p. 39). This way, strategic public relations is not only effective, but beneficial to both the organization and its publics. Also, when practitioners respond strategically, "they have a much greater likelihood of helping organization meet their challenges, solve or avoid, protracted problems, and adjust to the expectations of key stakeholders in mutually beneficial ways" (Austin & Pinkleton, 2006, p. 4).

As a result, organizations should know who their stakeholders are, which are the most important, and then engage in strategies to build and maintain strong relationships

with them (Fearn-Banks, 2001; Grunig, 1997). Also, when planning public relations efforts it is important to segment publics considering cost-efficiency in terms of communication strategies. Knights (2001) asserted that messages are only relevant to a proportion of the population; therefore, communication efforts should be oriented to "those who you might potentially be able to influence" (p. 10). Furthermore, according to Baines et al. (2004), understanding the nature of publics helps the public relations practitioner to determine the likelihood of reaching them economically.

Generally, health promotion campaigns often apply segmentation methods characterizing target publics in terms of a wide range of variables, including demographics (e.g. race, gender, age), psychographics (e.g. interests, lifestyle) and geographic location (Noar, 2006). However, these variables may not be enough when trying to create a public regarding a specific organizational problem. This can be solved by the situational theory of publics, given that it is based on the assumption that publics arise from issues and its variables describe how people perceive specific situation as well as communication behaviors (Grunig, 1997).

The situational theory of publics (STP) has been recognized as one of the most developed theories in the public relations field, because of its significant contribution to the prediction of communication behaviors and audience segmentation (Grunig, 1968, 1997). The theory provides a framework for understanding publics, in terms of why, when and how they communicate. More precisely, the situational theory of publics (STP) attempts to predict how publics communicate, as well as their attitude and behavior changes (Aldoory & Sha, 2007). According to this theory's principles, there are four different kinds of publics (active, aware, latent, and non-public) and they are segmented

according to three independent variables (level of involvement, problem recognition and constraint recognition) and two dependent variables (information seeking and processing). In few words, problem recognition is the extent to which an individual perceives a situation as a problem, level of involvement refers to the importance the individual assigns to the situation, and constraint recognition entails perceived barriers that limit the individual's ability to attempt to resolve it. Information seeking and information processing refer to looking for information and paying attention to information regarding a certain issue (Grunig, 1989).

There are various combinations that describe the relationship and ultimately determine the four types of publics mentioned above. The levels of activeness of the independent variables have a direct relationship with the level of activeness of the communication behaviors. The most evident would include high problem recognition along with high levels of involvement and low constraint recognition increases information seeking and processing, defining an *active* public. Similarly, *latent* publics fail to recognize the situation as a problem and don't perceive it involves them, which limits their activeness and information behaviors. When individuals begin to recognize the problem and feel involved, but are somewhat limited by constraints, they become *aware*. Finally, those who have low levels of involvement, problem recognition and high constrains represent a *nonpublic*, the most passive (Grunig, 2005).

More importantly, Sriramesh and colleagues (2007) assessed that "active publics are also more likely to engage in communication behavior that raises the awareness levels of latent and aware publics, helping elevate at least some to become activists" (p.310). At the same time, the authors found that communication campaigns may influence and

increase the levels of awareness among publics, moving them latent to active and aware. This represents the focus of identifying latent and nonpublics for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Team in Training fundraising sports program. In this sense, the main purpose would be to gradually influence these publics and move them from passive (latent/non publics) to active and aware.

Therefore, this theory presents a framework for organizations to segment and reach their publics effectively (Grunig, 1997). As presented by J. E. Grunig (1997), this theory has been widely applied and tested in different contexts. For example, even when the theory was originally developed in the United States, its segmenting principles were proven to be effective when applied in Croatia (Tkalac, 2007). Also, the theory's principles or variables have been applied to evaluate health communication campaigns with cultural issues (e.g. Vanderman & Tindall, 2008; Aldoory, 2001), as a foundation to intercultural public relations (e.g. Sha, 2006), and political marketing (e.g. Stromback, Mitrook & Kiousis, 2010).

Contribution of Study

Numerous studies have shown the value of the application of the situational theory of publics, as well the salience of the public relations practice and health promotion practice. However, very few studies have focused on the relationship between public relations and health promotion practice. At the same time, there is limited research that explores the use of the situational theory of publics in nonprofit organizations. Even when public relations roles are related to the nonprofit sector (e.g. Cutlip et al., 1994), most of the research has been oriented to corporations. This is mostly because of the

9

financial power of the industry, which results in practitioners addressing problems of the public relations profession within organizational settings (McKie, 2001).

Non-profits, on the other hand, often struggle to survive and don't have the necessary budget to make this kind of investments (Belden Russonello & Stewart, 2004). For instance, the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society relies on contributions made by individuals or corporations (Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, 2010). However, statistics show that 75% of the total charitable giving in the United States was represented by individuals and 4% by corporations (Giving USA Foundation, 2010).

Therefore, this study is among the first to study the application of a public relations theory on a health promotion program. Additionally, the results of this study are expected to be beneficial for Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Team in Training, a non-profit organization sports program, hopefully improving their public relations plan and helping raise funds for blood cancer research.

Scope of Study

This study intended to demonstrate a beneficial relationship between public relations and health promotion by identifying publics for a nonprofit health organization. More essentially, the situational theory of publics was applied to identify publics in order to later influence their activeness toward Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Team in Training fundraising sports program. Thus, the main focus was oriented toward answering: Who are considered latent and non publics for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Team in Training program? What are the demographic characteristics (age, gender, education, race/ethnicity) and media preference of latent and non publics for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Team in Training program? Is there a relationship

between gender and types of publics for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Team in Training program?

Based on the theoretical rationale of the situational theory of publics, the independent variables are level of involvement, problem recognition, and constraint recognition toward the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Team in Training program. Also, the dependent variables are information seeking and information processing. A questionnaire survey study was conducted among a sample of 134 randomly selected undergraduate students enrolled in the School of Communication of the University of Houston, main campus, between the ages of 18 and 24. The participation on the survey was voluntary. Extra credit was offered as an incentive to those who decide to be a part of the study. Professors contributed by allowing the researcher to inquire students to participate. The questionnaires were distributed by the researcher; however, each participant completed the instrument without assistance.

The next sections will be divided as follows. Chapter II will be dedicated to a literature review on health promotion and public relations practice, audience segmentation and the theoretical rationale. Chapter III will introduce the research methodology. Chapter IV will present the findings of the study. Finally, chapter V will be dedicated to the discussion of the results, conclusions, limitations and further research.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides an in-depth review of relevant literature in order to gain a better understanding of the explored connection between health promotion and public relations practice. Specially, the relationship would be oriented toward describing audience segmentation strategies in both practices. Additionally, the chapter provides theoretical framework and introduces the research questions of this study.

Health Promotion and Public Relations

Just as its name indicates, health promotion refers to the motivation of maintaining or improving health. More specifically, the concept is defined as "the process of enabling people to increase control over their health and its determinants, and thereby improving their health" (Laverack, 2007, p. 3). Health promotion could be considered as a comprehensive notion, given that it's also based on the notion that "health involves physical, mental, and social aspects" (Tones & Green, 2004, p. 1). In this sense, the concept of health goes beyond individual conditions referring to overall social welfare as well.

Moreover, Laverack (2007) referred to health promotion programs as a planned set of activities that the practitioner applies with the objective of helping their clients to increase control over health. Tones and Tilford (2001) asserted that effective health promotion programs are based on systematic planning. In this sense, health promotion programming entails different competencies, such as: a) program design, management, implementation and evaluation; b) planning and delivery of effective communication strategies; and c) research skills (e.g. Naidoo and Wills, 2009; Keleher, Murphy, & MacDougall, 2007; Gorin & Arnold, 2006). Similarly, Wilson (2001) described strategic

public relations programs as contributing to the organizational goals and to solve specific problems. These programs often entail four stages defined as research, planning, communication and evaluation (Wilson & Ogden, 2008; Broom, 2009; Smith, 2009). Also, the process implies defining goals, objectives, strategies, tactics, key publics, and message design, as it commonly happens in public relations programs. In fact, Schloss (2008) recommended that public relations practitioners in health care should engage in strategic communication to have better results in the organizations in which they work. Therefore, there is evidence that both practices have the same foundation toward planning programs and may potentially complement one another.

Cutlip et al. (1994) defined public relations as managing communications between any organization and its publics with the objective of building mutually beneficial relationships. Tomic, Lasic, and Tomic (2010) asserted that public relations entails communicating with publics "to achieve mutual understanding and realization of common interests" (p. 25). Thus, these definitions are evidence of how the public relations practice is rather public-oriented, as the health promotion practice, given that they endorse the public's interests instead of just financial benefits. In this sense, public relations practitioners are able to reconcile the organizational goals with the publics' expectations, developing and maintaining strong relationships between them (Kim & Ni, in press).

Dozier et al. (2001) found that public relations campaigns "focus on the practice as an emerging professional activity and as a management function in organizations" (p. 232), while public communication campaigns, defined as social control strategies, "focus on goal-directed activities aimed at target groups" (p. 232). In this sense, the public

relations function creates value for an organization by maintaining quality relationships with their publics and pushing organizations to consider both the interests of publics and their self-interests (Grunig, 2000).

So, it is reasonable to say that all this competencies are the result of taking public relations practitioner's function and adapting them or focusing in a health promotion sense. For instance, instead of concentrating only on building relationships with an organization and its publics (i.e. Grunig, 2002), the practitioner focuses his efforts and uses his training, knowledge and expertise to assist their clients so they could gain control over their health and its determinants. This way, public relations practitioners should be able to practice health promotion programming in an effective way, given that their main objective still lies on the public and its well-being.

Moreover, for both practices there is evidence of the importance of engaging in research to measure the effectiveness of their programs. For instance, Lindenmann (1999) asserted that there is a growing recognition among public relations practitioners of the need to evaluate communication efforts and their effectiveness in building strong positive relationships with publics. In addition to this, Schloss (2008) maintained that "because they are working in a research-based field, it is particularly important for public relations practitioners in health care to conduct research in order to base their communication programs on evidence" (p.7). At the same time, Noar (2006) found that formative research is extremely important to the design and execution of a successful health promotion campaign, given that it allows practitioners to better understand the target audience and increases the chances of obtaining successful results.

Audience Segmentation in Health Promotion

Audience segmentation is recognized as crucial to creating effective communication efforts (Slater, 1996; Noar, 2006; Atkin & Freimuth, 2001). According to Moss, Kirby and Donodeo (2009), "segmentation studies are based on the premise that audiences differ from one another, have different lifestyles, motivations and attitudes, and follow different patterns of behavior" (p. 1336). These authors also found that information obtained from studies of this kind is very useful for health promotion practitioners. So, it is often more effective to focus on an identified group of individuals sharing certain characteristics and directing communicational efforts to prompt specific behaviors. In other words, "effective campaigns seldom aim at a broad cross section of the public, instead, they focus on specialized segments of the overall audience" (Atkin & Freimuth, 2001, p. 130). Audience segmentation allows health promotion practitioners to do exactly that. More specifically, the idea is to create homogeneous groups with similar message preferences so campaign messages can be designed to be maximally effective with the target audience (Atkin, 2001). Basically, it's a systematic and explicit process of defining who the audiences are (Slater, 1996).

Often, audiences are segmented based on demographic profiles. However, this may not be as effective for health promotion strategies (Slater & Flora, 1991). Slater (1996) summarizes and further specifies the process as follows: "segments should be homogeneous with respect to patterns of variables (and values to those variables) determining the attitudes and behaviors targeted by a communication effort" (p. 269).

Similarly, Atkin (2001) asserted that:

15

A typical health campaign might subdivide the population on a dozen

dimensions (e.g. age, ethnicity, state of change, susceptibility, self-

efficacy, values, personality characteristics, and social context), each with

multiple levels. Combining theses dimensions, there are thousands of

potential subgroups that might be defined for targeting purposes. (p. 52)

Noar (2006) found that numerous campaigns have applied segmentation methods

relying on a wide range of variables, including not only demographics (age, race,

gender), but behavioral and theoretical and other miscellaneous characteristics (e.g.

language, high risk, sensation seeking, and lifestyles), all of them obtaining effective

campaign results. Therefore, there is evidence that a public relations segmentation theory

focused on communication behaviors, such as Grunig's situational theory of publics, is

likely to be effective as well.

Furthermore, each health promotion campaign is different in terms of the

audience, the strategies, the theoretical approach and other factors. Also, a variety of

effective segmentation methods is available for each of them. So, the selection of the

segmentation method is of key importance in any health communicational effort, because

if the target audience is not identified properly the whole campaign would have high

probabilities of failure.

Slater (1996) asserted that "a segment is only truly useful to a campaign designer

insofar as it provides a basis for campaign design" (p.270). In fact, demographic and

geographic location as segmenting strategies may not be enough to represent the

audience. In this case, "a variety of psychosocial and behavioral variables must be tapped

to reasonably differentiate between types of audiences" (Slater, 1996, p. 269).

More importantly, if demographics are not a good basis for segmentation for the topic or issue in question, information gathered from formative research (such as focus groups) won't really describe a segment (Slater & Flora, 1991). So, other variables may be used in addition to further segment the demographic categories. Similarly, the variables of the situational theory of publics may be complemented by demographics in the effort of identifying publics (Grunig, 1989).

The ultimate purpose of audience segmentation is to create groups similar to the target audience, so that campaign messages can have greater chances of effectiveness (Noar, 2006). In this sense, messages have to be designed not only based on theory, but tailored to influence target audiences. Atkin and Freimuth (2001) maintained that "effective campaigns seldom aim at a broad cross section of the public; instead they focus on specialized segments of the overall audience" (p. 130).

There are many strategies used to segment publics in this field. For instance, McGuire (2001) asserted that a health campaign that is "aimed at the general public should be able to influence all types of people, if necessary, by including variant forms of the campaign to reach different high-risk subgroups who differ in susceptibility to various modes of influence" (p. 31). Also, survey measures, preexisting media, demographics, psychographics, behavioral risk profile, behavioral intentions, census and consumer data are usually used for segmenting audiences (Atkin & Freimuth, 2001). Also, Slater (1996) proposed creating audience segmentation categories to complement audience research efforts.

Finally, it is fair to say that these models share characteristics with the situational theory of publics. More specifically, this theory works toward a specific goal and may be

complemented by other strategies. Also, the variables that compose the situational theory of publics are rooted in describing communication behaviors, which allows to segment publics into four different types (active, latent, aware and nonpublic) that are complemented by demographics and psychographic and other audience data (Grunig & Repper, 1992). In fact, Hamilton (1992) found that segmentation procedures may include situational variables along with media demographics. At the same time, the four types of publics presented in the situational theory of publics are determined by their connection to the issue, which allows practitioners to focus on a subsegment of interest according to the main organizational goals (Kim & Ni, 2009). In fact, the situational theory of publics is considered as a strong segmentation strategy given that "it provides a theoretically sound typology for understanding both information-related behavior and for processes–such as opinion formation–in which behavior is central" (Slater, 1996, p. 272).

Therefore, it is fair to say that the situational theory of publics has the potential to endorse audience segmentation principles from both public relations and health promotion practices. The following section would further describe the theory's rationale, which also led the researcher to apply the situational theory of publics as a way to explore the connection between public relations and health promotion practice.

Situational Theory of Publics

Public relations is defined as "the management of communication between an organization and its publics" (Grunig & Hunt, 1984, p. 6). According to J. Grunig and Grunig (1998), the goal of the public relations function is to "increase the effectiveness of the organization by managing the interdependence of the organization with publics that restrict its autonomy" (p.36). Also, the authors asserted that this is possible by "building

18

long-term stable relationships with those publics" (p. 36). In other words, this means that managing relationships with strategic organizational publics represents the core of public relations practice.

Furthermore, J. Grunig, Grunig, Sriramesh and Huang (1995) found that practicing public relations effectively means identifying the stakeholders that are affected by the organization and those who affect the organization, and then develop programs of communication with these publics. In fact, J. Grunig and Grunig (1998) maintained that "the quality of these relationships is an important indicator of the long-term contribution that public relations makes to organizational effectiveness" (p.144). Also, Ströh (2007) asserted that strategic communication planning should be oriented to reaching out to the publics and building relationships with them rather than formulating fixed plans. Therefore, there is evidence of how important it is for practitioners to get to know who their publics are. Also, Kim, Ni & Sha (2008) indicated that the process implies explicitly defining an audience and how their members communicate.

Publics are often defined as a group of people who share certain interests and concerns, mostly toward an organization (e.g. Johnston & Zawawi, 2000). More specifically, members of these groups are referred to as stakeholders, given that they have a stake or interest in the organization or its actions. In fact, publics have been consistently defined as "groups of people that have consequences on organizations or on whom the organizations have consequences" (L. Grunig, Grunig & Dozier, 2002, p. 324). Freeman (1984) referred to publics or stakeholders as "any group or individual who affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization's objective" (p. 46). In this sense,

19

excellent public relations practice involves identifying stakeholders who are affected by the organization's decisions (J. Grunig & Grunig, 2001).

Verĉiĉ and Grunig (2000) asserted that "public relations contributes to strategic management by building relationships with publics that it affects–or is affected by– publics that support the mission of the organization or that can divert from its mission" (p. 39). Additionally, these authors maintained that planning strategic public relations programs implies identifying the publics that are most likely to limit or enhance the practitioners' ability to pursue the mission of the organization, and managing its interdependence with these strategic publics.

Similarly, public relations notions entail that publics are considered to have an influence on an organization because they can threaten its image or reputation, which may affect its financials negatively (e.g. Kim & Ni, 2009; Grunig, 1982; Grunig & Repper, 1992; Coombs, 2010). However, publics are also considered of importance because of their positive influence on the organization's objectives. For instance, donors and volunteers are often a major target public for nonprofit organizations because of their valuable support, functionally and financially. Also, publics may "collaborate with organizations to secure consequences of benefit to both" (L. Grunig et al., 2002, p. 146).

Furthermore, public relations practice as a management function entails managing publics, which means that "public relations practitioners work either to increase a public's level of activity or to reduce it" (Johnston & Zawawi, 2000, p. 6). In this sense, the situational theory of publics (STP) attempts to predict how publics communicate, as well as their attitude and behavior changes (Aldoory & Sha, 2007). More essentially, Grunig (2006) asserted that the situational theory of publics:

20

provides a tool to segment stakeholders into publics, to isolate the strategic

publics with whom it is most important for organizations to develop

relationships to be effective, and to plan strategies for communicating with

publics whose communication behavior ranged from active to passive. (p.

155)

Therefore, the theory provides a framework for organizations to segment and

reach their publics effectively (Sriramesh, Moghan, & Wei, 2007). The theoretical tenets

of STP are used to classify audiences in four different kinds of publics according to two

dependent (information seeking and processing) and three independent (level of

involvement, problem recognition and constraint recognition) variables based on the

publics' connection to an issue and their communicational behaviors. Earlier versions of

the theory included a fourth independent variable, called the referent criterion. The

variable was defined as "a solution carried from previous situations to a new situation"

(Grunig, 1997, p. 11). However, according to Grunig (1997), several studies found that

the referent criterion didn't affect information seeking and information attending.

Similarly, other studies "examining the impact of this variable on communication

behavior were inconclusive" (Aldoory & Sha, 2007, p 341). As a result, the variable was

dropped from the situational theory of publics (Grunig, 1997).

Problem Recognition

According to Grunig and Hunt (1984), "people do not stop and think about a

situation unless they perceive something has to be done to improve the situation" (p.

149). Basically, problem recognition refers to the extent to which an individual or group

recognizes a situation as problem. As Kim and Grunig (in press) maintained, "a problem

21

does not exist until we recognize it" (p. 10). It is the first step toward any given situation. More specifically, problem recognition refers to an individual's perception of a situation as problematic (Grunig, 1997).

Also, Grunig (1997) defined the variable as detecting something should be done about the situation and thinking what to do about it. In this sense, those who recognize or perceive a problem are more likely to seek and attend to information than those who don't (Grunig & Hunt, 1984). In other words, problem recognition increases the likelihood of communication, which means people that recognize a situation as problematic are more likely to engage in information seeking and processing even when perceiving low involvement (Major, 1993).

Constraint Recognition

Grunig and Hunt (1984) defined constraint recognition as the extent to which individuals perceive an obstacle between them and the issue. More specifically, when constrained, they perceive their ability to do something about a situation is limited. So, this variable refers to "whether or not the individual believes he or she could do something to solve the problem" (Major, 1998, p. 492). Grunig (1982) further explained constraint recognition as the extent to which one "thinks he can exert any personal control that might help to resolve the issue" (p. 167).

Additionally, constraint recognition means that individuals perceive factors that inhibit them from moving to action or changing behaviors (Aldoory & Sha, 2007). In fact, Grunig and Ipes (1982) found that to move people to develop organized cognitions and change their behavior they must be shown how to remove their constraints so they could feel able to personally do something about the problem. Therefore, high levels of

constraint tend to reduce communication (Aldoory & Sha, 2007). Also, high constraint

recognition reduces the likelihood of people seeking information about an organizational

consequence or paying attention about the consequence that comes to them randomly

(Grunig, 2003).

Level of Involvement

The most important independent variable is level of involvement. As its title

indicates, this variable refers to how involved one feels toward a situation or how

personally relevant it is (Grunig, & Hunt, 1984). More specifically, level of involvement

is defined as "the extent to which people connect themselves with a situation" (Grunig,

1997, p. 10). Pavlik (1988) found that involvement is perceived as an emotional

connection, and "it acts as a trigger or motivation to act" (p. 14). Levels of involvement

increase when problem recognition is high and constraint recognition is low (Heath &

Douglas, 1990).

Furthermore, when publics perceive a close connection to the problem, they are

likely to be active in communication behaviors (Grunig & Hunt, 1984). This means that

when emotionally connected to an issue one is more likely to "look for information and

try to understand it" (p. 167) once they have obtained it (Grunig, 1982). Research has

showed that when an issue is perceived as personally relevant–levels of involvement are

high–messages regarding that issue will be more prominent, and will be processed at

higher rates (Grunig, 2003; Grunig, 1997; Aldoory, 2001; Grunig & Hunt, 1984).

Information Seeking and Information Processing

The situational theory of publics entails two dependent variables, information

seeking and information processing, also referred to as active and passive communication

behaviors, respectively (Grunig & Hunt, 1984). In few words, these two variables can be defined as the likelihood to search for information, pay attention, and try to understand it. Information seeking or active communication behavior implies looking for information and trying to understand it once obtained, while information processing or passive communication behavior refers to not looking for information or attempting to understand it (Grunig & Hunt, 1984; Grunig, 1997; Grunig, 1982). This means that "members of a public exert less effort to understand information they process than information they seek. Thus, processed information has fewer communication effects than information that is thought" (Grunig & Hunt, 1984, p. 151).

High levels of involvement, high problem recognition, and low constraint recognition are likely to lead to active communication behaviors (Grunig & Hunt, 1984; Grunig, 1997; Aldoory, & Sha, 2007). This is mainly because "people seldom seek information about situations that don't involve them" (p. 10) and recognizing a problem increases the need for information in order to solve the problem (Grunig, 1982). However, even in low-involvement situations, individuals may randomly engage in active communication behaviors if they perceive the situation as problematic (Grunig, 1997). Generally, level of involvement has less effect on information processing than the other variables and less effect on information processing than on information seeking (Grunig, 1982; Grunig & Hunt, 1984).

Identifying Publics

There is a relationship among the levels of involvement, constraint and problem recognition, and each of these variables influences information behaviors according to the different types of publics. For instance, high problem recognition and low constraint

recognition increase both active information seeking and passive information processing, while high level of constraint recognition reduces the likelihood of active information seeking or attending (Grunig, 2003). Also, those who communicate actively develop more organized cognitions, are more likely to have certain attitudes toward an issue, and engage in active behaviors to do something about the situation (Grunig, 1997).

The situational theory of publics implies that the relationship among these variables result in four different kinds of publics, defined by Grunig and Hunt (1984) as follows:

> People who are not involved with the problem are a nonpublic. Those who experience a consequence of organizational behavior, but have not yet recognized it as a problem, are a latent public. Those who recognize the problem are an aware public. Those who discuss solutions are an active public. (p. 45)

Therefore, the application of the STP's variables provides characteristics that can help organizations to predict publics' behaviors and how to handle different kinds of issues. So, public relations strategies and tactics should be designed according to the type of issue and the type of public as well.

Additionally, Kim and Ni (2009) asserted that even though practitioners often desire attitudinal, behavior or knowledge changes in publics, a more realistic alternative is to focus on increasing perceptual variables (such as problem recognition). This would be relatively easier than to directly motivate people or change (communicative) behaviors about a certain issue. Furthermore, if organizations select more likely subsegments of publics and set more realistic communicative objectives (regarding problem recognition,

involvement, constraint and other variables) their communication effectiveness should be enhanced. Hence, the probabilities of effectively handling the issue and connecting with publics go higher.

The situation presented in this study can be identified as an Organization-initiated Public Relations Problem (OPR). More specifically, Kim and Ni (2009) maintained that "Organization-initiated PR Problems (OPR) often start because an organization has sensed potential problems or issues affecting publics' or the organization's own interests" (p.2). This kind of problems are usually related with non-conflicting situations. OPR problems "include the more routine public relations activities that involve public information campaigns to create problem perceptions and knowledge among some target segments in a general population about these problems or issues" (Kim & Ni, 2009, p.2). In situations like this, organizations find the need for public relations programs "to increase problem perception, to introduce new cognitive frames, and to foster (information) behaviors among stakeholders or subsegments of a general population" (Kim & Ni, 2009, p.5).

In this sense, the organization attempts to influence a public according to a certain problem or issue that the organization finds important and wants to resolve. As a result, the goal is to gradually change non/latent publics into active/aware publics. More specifically, "communication campaigns also contribute to increasing the levels of awareness among different types of publics, thereby moving them from latent to active" (Sriramesh et al., 2007, p. 310). In this sense, Kim and Ni (2009) described this progression as follows:

26

a latent public will become aware, if given enough exposure to the information campaign from the organizations. Then, gradually, if that public perceives problem recognition and involvement recognition at a high level enough, and perceives low enough constraint recognition, the public might become more aware and even active. (p.13)

Generally, active publics are considered to be more important for organizations because of the influence they may have on organizations (Dozier et al., 2001). For instance, active publics can pressure organizations when they perceive irresponsible behaviors, and that pressure often results in government regulations of private organizations or budget cuts to public organizations (Grunig, 1982). At the same time, organizations often "try to activate publics in the political arena, in a community, or in the marketplace" (Grunig, 1982, p. 165).

Furthermore, active publics are more likely to engage in information transmission, information selection and information acquisition behaviors. Basically, "the more one wants problem resolution, the more one's communicative actions will increase" (Kim, Grunig & Ni, 2010, p. 130). Therefore, active publics are most likely to seek out or use information when it is relevant to them (Grunig, 2003). In this sense, the purpose of a communication campaign is to "increase the extent to which members of an audience perceive an issue as problematic and involving in the hope that they will then seek more information, develop an organized idea, and do something about the issue" (Grunig & Ipes, 1983, p. 36).

Therefore, the relationship among the variables varies according to the type of public. This means that each type of public has to be treated differently when designing

strategies to handle the issue in order to be effective. Grunig (2003) found that public

relations managers identify strategic constituencies by identifying stakeholder categories

and segmenting members of those categories into active and passive publics. Once this is

accomplished, usually the next step is to focus on active publics and incorporate their

values into organizational goals and strategies in order to be able to maintain strong

relationships and be effective.

In other words, organizations plan public relations programs strategically, when

practitioners "identify the publics that are most likely to limit or enhance their ability to

pursue the mission of the organization and design communication programs that help the

organization manage its interdependence with these strategic publics" (Grunig, 2003, p.

103).

Research Questions

The literature reviewed above demonstrates the value of the application of J.

Grunig's situational theory of publics for audience segmentation in regards of a certain

issue and organizational goal. The relationship between the theory's independent and

dependent variables help understand when and why publics communicate (Aldoory,

2001). At the same time, evidence of the potential value of the involvement of public

relations in the health promotion practice has been presented. In fact, the situational

theory of publics has been applied in health promotion studies, mostly for the evaluation

of campaigns and understanding of attitudes and behaviors toward health issues (Aldoory

& Sha, 2007). However, very few studies have explored the relationship between public

relations and health promotion practice.

Based on this rationale, the present study attempts to apply J. Grunig's situational theory of publics, a renowned public relations theory, to create a public for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Team in Training, a non-profit organization sports program dedicated to funding blood cancers research, education, and patient services. Therefore, the following research questions are posed:

RQ1: Who are considered latent and non publics for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Team in Training fundraising sports program?

RQ2: What are the demographic characteristics (age, gender, education, race/ethnicity) and media preference of latent and non publics for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Team in Training fundraising sports program?

RQ3: Is there a difference of gender, age, ethnicity/race on types of publics for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Team in Training fundraising sports program?

CHAPTER III: METHODS

This chapter describes the research methods employed in this study. The chapter includes explanation of the process in terms of procedure, measures, participants, and data analysis. The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Team in Training fundraising sports program served as the main issue of the study.

Respondents

A cross-sectional survey was conducted among undergraduate students of the Jack Valenti School of Communication of the University of Houston, main campus. According to Frey, Botan and Kreps (2000), there is no generally accepted minimum response rate for survey research. However, the researcher collected survey data from 134 students, between the ages of 18 and 24 years old. The Jack Valenti School of Communication is part of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CLASS), which is the most diverse college of the University of Houston. Also, statistics show that the populations with the highest volunteer rates in the United States included individuals with high school diploma or college degree (Corporation for National and Community Service, 2010).

Procedures

Given that this study involved the participation of human subjects, the researcher requested and received approval from the University of Houston's Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects (CPHS) before collecting data, as required. Professors of the School of Communication were initially contacted by the researcher via email to inform them of the study in August 2011. Also, the researcher contacted the professors to schedule the distribution of the instrument in October 2011. Questionnaires were

distributed in October 2011 during the start of the courses according to the discretion of the professors.

Before distributing the instrument, the researcher briefly stated to the students the purpose of the survey and the importance of their collaboration with this project. They were required to read consent forms before responding the survey. Participants completed the survey on a voluntary basis. They were asked to answer questions related to communication behaviors toward the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Team in Training fundraising sports program. Also, participants filled out standard demographic questions about gender, age, ethnicity, education level, and media preferences. As an incentive, participants were offered extra credit in exchange for their contribution in the study.

Students had the option to not participate in the study. However, all students chose to participate. The questionnaire of the study was self-administered with answers marked on the survey, and no face-to-face intervention will be involved. The students were advised that their responses will remain anonymous. The questionnaires did not include personal identification items. Therefore, participants feel comfortable when answering the questions in the survey. Participants spent 5-10 minutes completing the survey.

Measures

The survey questions were adapted from J. E. Grunig's (1997) theory of publics. The theory's variables can be applied to measure more than one issue at once (Grunig, 1982). According to the purpose of this study, statements and questions were adapted to measure one issue of interest (participation in fundraising sports programs, such as

31

Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Team in Training). The first section included

demographic data (age, gender, education, ethnicity) and media preferences. The second

section was dedicated to situational variables. Each dependent and independent variable

was measured through three items. Therefore, participants responded to fifteen items

using close-ended 7-point Likert type scales.

Dependent Variables

Information Seeking: Participants were asked to respond to three statements

regarding information seeking behaviors towards Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's

Team in Training fundraising sports program on a 7-point scale raging from 1=Extremely

unlikely to 7=Extremely likely. Statements include: 1) I would regularly check to see if

there's new information about Team in Training's events and/or reports in the Houston

area; 2) I would request free booklets containing relevant information about Team in

Training; 3) I would visit websites to find useful information about Team in Training.

Information Processing: Participants were asked to respond to three statements

regarding information seeking behaviors towards Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's

Team in Training fundraising sports program on a 7-point scale ranging from

1=Extremely unlikely to 7=Extremely likely. Statements include: 1) I would pay

attention to information regarding fundraising sports programs; 2) I would

watch/listen/click on information regarding fundraising sports programs, such as Team in

Training's events and updates; 3) I would listen to others talk about

experiences/comments on fundraising sports programs, such as Team in Training events

and news.

Independent Variables

Problem Recognition: Participants were asked to read a brief paragraph that described Team in Training's purpose and its current need to increase participants. Then, they were asked to answer questions about their perception of the situation as problematic. A 7-point scale from 1=Never to 7=All the time was provided. Questions include: 1) How often do you stop and think about participating in fundraising sport programs?, 2) To what extent do you consider the situation described above a serious problem?, 3) To what extent do you feel something needs to be done about the situation mentioned above?.

Level of Involvement: Participants were asked questions about the perceived connection between them and the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Team in Training fundraising sports program on a 7-point scale ranging from 1=Not at all to 7=Extremely. Questions include: 1) To what extent do you believe participating in a fundraising sports program, such as Team in Training, is important to you personally? 2) To what extent do you believe fundraising sports program, such as Team in Training, involves you or someone close to you? 3) In your mind, to what extent do you see a connection between yourself and a fundraising sports program, such as Team in Training?

Constraint Recognition: Given the characteristics of this variable (e.g. *Low* constraint scores represent *high* levels of perceived barriers toward the issue) the statements were reverse-coded for data analysis. Participants were asked questions about their perceived limitations toward actions regarding the issue. A 7-point scale ranging from 1=Not at all to 7=Extremely was provided. Questions include: 1) To what extent do you believe a fundraising sports program, such as Team in Training, is a cause you could

33

be involved in or do something about? 2) To what extent do you believe your participation in a fundraising sports program, such as Team in Training, would make a difference? 3) To what extent would you say the purpose of Team in Training is more difficult to understand than others?

Age: Participants were asked how old they are at the time of the survey. They were asked to circle one of the following choices: 1=Younger than 18; 2=18; 3=19; 4=20; 5=21; 6=22 7=23; 8=24; 9=25 or older.

Gender: Participants were asked to circle their gender: 1=male, 2=female.

Education: Participants were asked to circle their education status: 1=Freshman, 2=Sophomore, 3=Junior, 4=Senior, 5=Graduate Student

Ethnicity/Racial Group: Participants were asked to circle their ethnicity: 1=African American, 2=American Indian, 3=Arab, 4=Asian American, 5=European, 6=Indian, 7=Latina   8=Caucasian American, 9=Other

Preferred Media Outlets: Participants were asked to circle their media preference (all that apply): 1=Internet, 2=Email, 3=Newspapers, 4=Magazines, 5=Television, 6=Radio, 7=Other.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were applied in order to obtain total scores and the mean for each of the three situational variables. As mentioned earlier, constraint recognition represents perceived obstacles that limit individuals from moving to action or changing behaviors (Aldoory & Sha, 2007). In this sense, often low scores of constraint recognition correspond to high levels of constraint recognition. Therefore, because of the characteristics of the variable, the first two items of constraint recognition were reverse-

coded (1=7 to 7=1). Additionally, Cronbach's alpha was calculated to determine the reliability of the items measuring the situational theory of publics' independent and dependent variables. The results showed the items for problem recognition had an alpha value of 0.68, 0.88 for level of involvement, and 0.66 for constraint recognition. Similarly, the items for information seeking and information processing had an alpha value of 0.90 and 0.89, respectively (Table 2). These values suggest that the internal consistency of the variables were acceptable.

Moreover, each of the theory's independent variables was measured by three items. Therefore, the average of these items was calculated for each of the three independent variables and computed into a new variable. These three independent variables were recoded into high and low values. The mean of the scores were 3.65 (SD = 1.15) for problem recognition, 3.40 (SD=1.37) for level of involvement, and 4.38 (SD=.67) for constraint recognition. These means were used as the midpoint for further calculation. For example, the value of 3.65 thru the lowest score was given a value of 0 and the value of 3.65 thru the highest score was given a value of 1 for problem recognition. In every case, 0 represented low levels of the variable, while 1 represented high levels of the variable. As a result, a new variable was created to represent the four types of publics. Crosstabulation was performed in order to determine the demographic characteristics and media preference of the four types of publics. Furthermore, an independent sample t-test was conducted to determine whether differences existed between gender and types of publics. Additionally, analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to analyze the age and ethnicity/race differences on public types. Statistical software IBM SPSS Statistics 20 was used to analyze data.

35

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

This chapter explores a relationship between public relations and health promotion practice through the application of a cross-sectional survey based on J. E. Grunig's situational theory of publics with the purpose of identifying publics for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Team in Training fundraising sports program. First, descriptive statistics were used to analyze data for segmentation of publics. Then, analysis of variance (ANOVA) was applied to examine data in order to explore the relationship between types of publics and gender, age and ethnicity.

Demographics and Media Preference

The questionnaire was distributed among undergraduate students of the University of Houston's Jack Valenti School of Communications. The sample was mostly female dominated, with 66.4% (N=89) females and 33.6% (N=45) males. The majority of the participants were between the ages of 21 and 24 years old, representing a total of 114 (85.07%). Regarding education, participants were mostly enrolled at the senior class level (54.5%, N=73), and junior class level (32.1%, N=43), while only 18 (14.4%) participants were enrolled as sophomores and freshman. In terms of ethnicity, 30.6% (N=41) participants were identified as Latino, 23.9% (N=32) as Caucasian American, 17.2% (N=23) as African American, 12.7% (N=17) as Asian American, and the remaining 15.6% as European, Indian, or "Other". In regards of preferred media outlets, the majority of participants included Internet (88.8%, N=119), television (62.7%, N=84), email (50.7%, N=68), and radio (35.1%, N=47) among their choices. Printed media options newspapers and magazines were selected 24 and 39 times, respectively. A summary of demographics and media preference can be found in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographics and Media Preference

	Frequency	*Percentage*
Gender		
Female	89	66.4
Male	45	33.6
Age		
18	1	0.7
19	8	6
20	11	8.2
21	20	14.9
22	22	16.4
23	21	15.7
24	51	38.1
25 or older	0	0
Education		
Freshman	2	1.5
Sophomore	16	11.9
Junior	46	32.1
Senior	73	54.5
Graduate	0	0
Ethnicity/Racial Group		
African American	23	17.2
American Indian	1	0.7
Arab	4	3
Asian American	17	12.7
European	1	0.7
Indian	3	2.2
Latino	41	30.6
Caucasian American	32	23.9
Other	12	9.0
Preferred Media Outlets		
Internet	119	88.8
Email	68	50.7
Newspaper	24	17.9
Magazines	39	29.1
Television	84	62.7
Radio	47	35.1
Other	1	0.7

Types of publics

Overall, as evident in Table 2, there were moderate levels of problem recognition (*M*=3.65, *SD*=1.15) and level of involvement (*M*=3.40, *SD*=1.37), while the levels of problem recognition were higher (*M*=4.13, *SD*=0.67). Consequently, levels of information seeking and information processing were moderate, obtaining mean scores of 3.24 (*SD*=1.48) and 3.88 (*SD*=1.41), respectively. These results suggest that while respondents may recognize Team in Training's situation as problematic and feel involved, they are also constraint. At the same time, their communication behaviors toward the fundraising sports program are mostly passive. This is consistent with the distribution of the sample regarding types of publics described below, given that high constraint recognition serves as a barrier, and limits the ability of individuals to move to action (Aldoory & Sha, 2007).

Table 2. Cronbach's Alpha and Mean of STP's Variables

	N	*Cronbach's Alpha*	*M*	*SD*
Problem Recognition	134	0.68	3.65	1.15
Level of Involvement	134	0.88	3.40	1.37
Constraint Recognition	134	0.66	4.13	0.67
Information Seeking	134	0.90	3.24	1.48
Information Processing	134	0.89	3.88	1.41

Table 3 represents the distribution of the sample by public types. Findings show the almost half of the sample was dominated by respondents identified as latent (N=42) and aware publics (N=51). More specifically, the breakdown considering the scores of each public type was: aware (38%), latent (31.3%), nonpublic (16.4%) and active (14.2%). These results suggest that levels of awareness amongst the sample are moderate,

but activeness is still relatively low for the issue at hand. However, even when active

publics were not the majority of the sample, the distribution by public types implies there

is potential to influence the awareness levels of other publics and move them toward

higher levels of activeness regarding Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's fundraising

sports program.

Table 3. Distribution by Public Type

	Frequency	*Percentage*
Nonpublic	22	16.4
Latent	42	31.3
Aware	51	38
Active	19	14.2

Tables 5 thru 8 show the distribution of public types and their characteristics

(gender, age, race/ethnicity, education level, and media preferences). More than half of

participants identified as *nonpublic* were females (N=15, 11.2%), while a lower

percentage was male (N=7, 5.2%). Out of the 22 respondents of this group, 17 were

between 22 and 24 years old, while 5 were between 19 and 21 years old. However, 12

were registered as seniors, 8 juniors and only 2 sophomores. In this case, African

American, Caucasian American and Latino dominated the group. Internet, television,

email and magazines were the most popular selections amongst this group. Radio and

newspapers presented the lowest scores.

Among those identified as *latent* publics (N=42, 31.3%), respondents were mostly

female. The majority of this group was registered as 20 years old and more. However, the

age group with higher frequency was 24 years old (N=18, 13.4%). Accordingly, junior

(N=14, 10.4%) and senior (N=24, 18%) levels were most popular. In this case, the

ethnicity/race groups with higher frequencies were Latino (N=12, 9%), Caucasian

American (N=11, 8.2%) and African American (N=9, 6.7%). A smaller portion was identified as Asian American (N=6, 4.5%) and "Other" (N=4, 3%). Once again, Internet, email and television presented the highest scores, while printed media (newspapers and magazines) and radio had the lowest scores.

The majority of respondents identified as *aware* publics (N=51, 38%) was very closely distributed by females (N=20, 15.7%) and males (N=31, 22.4%). Also, this group was dominated by respondents between 23 and 24 years old. Correspondingly, junior and senior levels were the higher scores (N=15 and N=31, respectively). Respondents amongst this group identified themselves mostly as Latino (N=18, 13.4%) and Caucasian American (N=15, 11.2%). Most frequent preferred media outlets selected by this group were Internet (N=45, 33.6%), television (N=35, 26%), email (N=24, 18%) and radio (N=23, 17.2%).

Finally, respondents identified as *active* publics (N=19, 14.2%) were mostly represented by females (N=13, 9.7%). The majority of this group was 24 years old, registered at least at a sophomore class level. Also, Latino and Asian American respondents represented the higher frequencies amongst this group (N=7 and N=5, respectively). In terms of media preference, Internet (N=18, 13.4%), email (N=11, 8.2%), and radio (N=8, 6%) were the most popular.

Table 4. Public Types by Age

	18 (N, %)		19 (N, %)		20 (N, %)		21 (N, %)		22 (N, %)		23 (N, %)		24 (N, %)		25 and older (N, %)	
Nonpublic	0	*0*	1	*0.8*	2	*1.5*	2	*1.5*	7	*5.2*	3	*2.3*	7	*5.2*	0	*0*
Latent	0	*0*	2	*1.5*	5	*3.7*	8	*6*	5	*3.7*	4	*3*	18	*13.4*	0	*0*
Aware	1	*0.8*	1	*0.8*	4	*3*	8	*6*	7	*5.2*	13	*9.7*	17	*12.7*	0	*0*
Active	0	*0*	4	*3*	0	*0*	2	*1.5*	3	*2.3*	1	*0.8*	9	*6.7*	0	*0*

Table 5. Public Types by Gender

	Male (N, %)		Female (N, %)	
Nonpublic	7	*5.2*	15	*11.2*
Latent	11	*8.2*	31	*23.1*
Aware	21	*15.7*	30	*22.4*
Active	6	*4.5*	13	*9.7*

Table 6. Public Types by Ethnicity/Race

	African American (N, %)		American Indian (N, %)		Arab (N, %)		Asian American (N, %)		European (N, %)		Indian (N, %)		Latino (N, %)		Caucasian American (N, %)		Other (N, %)	
Nonpublic	8	*6*	0	*0*	0	*0*	1	*0.8*	0	*0*	1	*0.8*	4	*3*	6	*4.5*	2	*1.5*
Latent	9	*6.7*	0	*0*	0	*0*	6	*4.5*	0	*0*	0	*0*	12	*9*	11	*8.2*	4	*3*
Aware	4	*3*	1	*0.8*	2	*1.5*	5	*3.7*	1	*0.8*	2	*1.5*	18	*13.4*	15	*11.2*	3	*2.3*
Active	2	*1.5*	0	*0*	2	*1.5*	5	*3.7*	0	*0*	0	*0*	7	*5.2*	0	*0*	3	*2.3*

Table 7. Public Types by Education Level

	Freshman (N, %)		Sophomore (N, %)		Junior (N, %)		Senior (N, %)		Graduate (N, %)	
Nonpublic	0	*0*	2	*1.5*	8	*6*	12	*9*	0	*0*
Latent	1	*0.8*	3	*2.3*	14	*10.4*	24	*18*	0	*0*
Aware	0	*0*	5	*3.7*	15	*11.2*	31	*23.1*	0	*0*
Active	1	*0.8*	6	*4.5*	6	*4.5*	6	*4.5*	0	*0*

Table 8. Public Types by Preferred Media Outlets

	Internet (N, %)		Email (N, %)		Newspaper (N, %)		Magazines (N, %)		Television (N, %)		Radio (N, %)		Other (N, %)	
Nonpublic	20	*14.9*	8	*6*	4	*3*	8	*6*	12	*9*	6	*4.5*	0	*0*
Latent	36	*26.9*	25	*18.7*	5	*3.7*	11	*8.2*	26	*19.4*	10	*7.5*	0	*0*
Aware	45	*33.6*	24	*18*	9	*6.7*	14	*10.4*	35	*26*	23	*17.2*	1	*0.8*
Active	18	*13.4*	11	*8.2*	6	*4.5*	6	*4.5*	11	*8.2*	8	*6*	0	*0*

Differences of Age, Gender, and Ethnicity on Types of Public

The independent variables of the situational theory of publics determine the four

types of publics. Therefore, an independent sample *t*-test was conducted to assess the

gender differences in problem recognition, level of involvement, and constraint

recognition. At a 95% confidence level, results for all three variables were not significant

(Table 9). This means there was no significant difference in the way males and females

consider Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Team in Training fundraising sports

program.

Table 9. Gender Differences on Theoretical Variables

	T	*Df*	*Significance (2-tailed)*
Problem Recognition	.707	132	.481
Level of Involvement	.798	132	.426
Constraint Recognition	.701	132	.484

Similarly, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was employed to determine

whether a significant age or ethnicity difference existed on problem recognition, level of

involvement and constraint recognition. Table 10 and Table 11 display these results.

Once again, findings showed no significant difference for all three variables. This

suggests that there is no significant difference in terms of the sample's age groups and

ethnicity regarding the issue at hand.

Table 10. Ethnicity Differences on Theoretical Variables

	SS	*Df*	*MS*	*F*	*Significance*
Problem Recognition	5.931	8	.741	.546	.820
Level of Involvement	25.247	8	3.156	1.764	.090
Constraint Recognition	1.487	8	.186	.399	.919

Table 11. Age Differences on Theoretical Variables

	SS	*Df*	*MS*	*F*	*Significance*
Problem Recognition	5.059	6	.843	.628	.708
Level of Involvement	3.697	6	.616	.319	.926
Constraint Recognition	4.990	6	.832	1.932	.081

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Cancers have been amongst the leading causes of death in the United States for many years (National Center for Health Statistics, 2011). Leukemia and Lymphoma are types of blood cancers that affect thousands of people, including children, every year in the United Sates (National Cancer Institute, 2008). As a result, a great number of organizations are continuously working to finding a cure. However, many of these organizations are non-profit and often struggle to survive. The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society (LLS) is of them, a non-profit health organization dedicated to blood cancer research. However, their fundraising sports program called Team in Training is currently facing a challenge of increasing the number of voluntary participants. Additionally, Team in Training's efforts have been oriented toward a very broad public (men and women, 18 to 40 years old, with some relationship with blood cancers). Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore a relationship between public relations and health promotion by applying the situational theory of publics' to determine a more segmented target public for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Team in Training program, Texas Gulf Chapter. Consequently, undergraduate students were surveyed and results analyzed to identify the theory's four types of publics. The following sections of this chapter summarize and discuss the results of the study, as well as present limitations and suggestions for further research.

Summary of Findings

Demographics and Media Preference

A sample of 134 participants composed of undergraduate students between 18 and 24 years old enrolled at the University of Houston's School of Communication completed

44

the questionnaire. More than sixty percent were female. The majority of participants were

between the ages of 21 and 24 years old, registered at a junior and senior class level. The

group was significantly diverse in terms of ethnicity. The most popular ethnicity group

was Latino (30.6%), followed by Caucasian American (23.9%), African American

(17.2%) and Asian American (12.7%).

According to Kim, Ni, and Sha (2008) when applying the situational theory of

publics for segmentation purposes, "practitioners should include some cross-situational

questions, such as geodemographics, psychographics, and media use, so that they can

learn where to go or how to communicate with the situationally active publics" (p.780).

In terms of the respondents' preferred media outlets, scores were highly dominated by the

Internet (88%), television (62.7%), and email (50.7%). Printed media (newspaper and

magazines) and radio were the lowest scores. These results correspond with the actual

growth in popularity of the use of the Internet among teenagers and young adults. In fact,

newspapers and other printed media have experienced great growth relying on the

Internet and adapting into online publications (Chung, Eunseong, Trammell & Porter,

2007). In this sense, it is fair to mention that "there are more media outlets now than

when the situational theory was first developed, the Internet has become a common

source of entertainment and information, and media consumers are far more sophisticated

than they were 30 years ago" (Aldoory & Sha, 2007, p. 351).

Also, the Internet has opened the door to a wide array of new technologies and

new ways of delivering messages. Specially, social media has had great impact on web-

users today. For instance, a recent study showed that more than one billion people use

social networks and more than 400 million use Facebook daily (Facebook is considered

the dominating social media network in Europe, United States and Australia) (Van Belleghem, 2010). More importantly, the study showed a high percentage of social media users in the United States that follow the activity of 20.12 brands in average. Also, these followers are mostly women, between 15 and 24 years old. These characteristics concur with results from this study. Therefore, taking advantage of the Internet as a channel for communication efforts may represent a great opportunity for Team in Training to reach their publics.

Types of Publics

Four types of publics were identified through the application of Grunig's situational theory of publics regarding Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Team in Training fundraising sports program. Overall, findings were consistent with previous studies that applied the situational theory of publics. The higher percentage of the study's participants was identified as latent (38%) and aware (31%), while the lowest percentages were identified as active (14%) and nonpublic (16%). According to the theory, this is evidence that while most respondents recognized Team in Training's situation as problematic, a perceived connection with the program is still missing. Also, only a minority showed levels of activeness regarding the issue. This is part of the reason why Team in Training is facing the challenge of increasing their number of participants and how focusing in a broad population hasn't been effective. Additionally, another possible explanation for this would be the organization's lack of research to test and evaluate campaigns. As a result, there is evidence of an opportunity for Team in Training to raise awareness among passive publics and influence their levels of activeness in order to ultimately attain their goal (Sriramesh et al., 2007).

Moreover, characteristics among these four publics were somewhat similar. Those identified as *nonpublic* were mostly female, between 22 and 24 years old, registered as seniors. In terms of ethnicity, the group was mostly African American, Caucasian American and Latino. Their most popular selections were The Internet, television, email and magazines. Respondents in this type of public are mostly unaware or less familiarized with Team in Training. Also, they pay little or no attention to related messages. Nevertheless, even when this group displayed the lowest ratings in terms of problem recognition, involvement and communication behavior, it is very important to consider this group because it has the potential of turning into a more aware, or active public whenever certain cues are triggered by campaigns (Hallahan, 2000). In this sense, campaigns are likely to influence information acquisition and levels of involvement with the issue at hand.

Among those identified as *latent* publics, respondents were mostly female, between 20 and 24 years old, at a junior or senior class level. This group was dominated by Latino, Caucasian American and African American ethnicities. Once again, The Internet, email and television were the most popular media outlets for this group. Members of this group may feel the issue involves them, but doesn't know much about it. Similar to the nonpublic, this group is of importance to Team in Training as well, given that can be influenced to become more active more easily (Grunig, 1997). More essentially, when attempting to influence this type of public, the focus would be to enhance the levels of problem recognition. In this sense, as Grunig and Ipes (1983) found, the campaign planner hopes the information will prompt members of this audience to process it, recognize the issue as a problem and perceive the situation involves them.

Consequently, active communication behaviors are triggered, and suggested behaviors start to occur gradually.

In this case, campaigns would involve tailored messages that enhance the importance of Team in Training's situation and somehow show how a close connection between the situation and the members of the public. This way, members of this public may be prompted to seek and attend to related information, ultimately constructing cognitions that lead to behavioral change (e.g. participate in Team in Training fundraising sports program).

Respondents classified as *aware* publics were males and females, between 23 and 24 years old, registered at junior and senior class levels. Latino and Caucasian American dominated this group. They preferred The Internet, television, email and radio. They perceived Team in Training's situation as problematic, but showed little involvement. Lee and Rodriguez (2006) develop a study in which the situational theory was applied to identify four similar types of publics. They found that members of this group often represent a challenge to communication campaigners because of their low involvement with the issue. Also, these authors asserted that given their characteristics, they will "require information highly tailored to their needs" (p. 19).

Finally, *active* publics were females, 24 years old, registered at least at a sophomore class level, Latino and Asian American. Their media preference was The Internet, email, and radio. This group has the highest awareness and involvement regarding Team in Training fundraising sports program. They can serve as supporters for the organization, and influence members of other publics regarding the issue, ultimately prompting them to gradually change into activeness. Therefore, they may represent a

great tool when the essential objective entails raising awareness and levels of involvement (Grunig, 1997).

As it was mentioned previously, the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Team in Training program currently faces an Organization-initiated PR problem (OPR). As it title implies, this often means the problem arises from the organization (Kim & Ni, 2009). More essentially, in a situation like this the organization would intend to influence passive publics (latent/nonpublics) with the purpose of gradually change them into more active in terms of the issue at hand. According to Grunig and Ipes (1983) "most public communication campaigns are aimed at passive audiences made up of people with little interest in or involvement with the issue" (p. 38) because it's less likely for someone to feel involved with risk situations such as illnesses, accidents, or environmental hazards. As a result, these authors asserted that the purpose of this kind of campaign would be "to increase the extent to which members of an audience perceive an issue as problematic and involving in the hope that they will then seek more information, develop an organized idea, and do something about the issue" (p.38). In other words, an effective campaign has to do more than merely presenting the public with information about a certain situation (e.g. Grunig & Ipes, 1983).

The information resulted from this study provides valuable orientation at the time of designing the corresponding strategies. This is particularly true in terms of choosing media channels to reach different kinds of publics, given that "media play a central role in public relations as channels of communication between an organization and its key publics" (Hallahan, 2001, p. 461). Also, findings display the different types of publics a

specific issue might create, so "planners and implementers can have a strategic edge in the design of public communication programs" (Lee & Rodriguez, 2006, p. 20).

Furthermore, findings from this study represent great potential for determining the foundation for crafting the messages that would be sent for each of the intended public types (e.g. Lee & Rodriguez, 2006). More specifically, as mentioned by Kim, Ni, and Sha (2008), "different problems produce different types of publics. Hence, if practitioners anticipate which types of publics emerge with what types of behavioral characteristics (e.g., active information seeking), they will make a more strategic choice in dealing with that public (e.g., negotiation)" (p. 758). Additionally, these findings provide useful information for campaigners in terms of media preferences of the different publics. As a result, the media channel selection would be more successful, specially taking into consideration nonprofits' limited budget for campaigns. For instance, at this time Team in Training's efforts have been oriented toward special events, printed media, email and radio. However, results showed for passive publics (latent/nonpublic, the focus in this case) the preferred media outlets are the Internet, television and email. Therefore, according to the study's findings, Team in Training's communication efforts may be enhanced significantly in terms of reach and cost effectiveness focusing in these channels instead of investing in other media.

In a few words, public relations practice is oriented toward managing relationships between an organization and its publics. Therefore, if a definition of who represents different kinds of publics in different situations is absent, informational or persuasive campaigns would have less chance of obtaining desired results (Cutlip,

Center, & Broom, 2000). Consequently, identifying and defining the situational theory's

four types of publics is helpful, effective, and should be part of the campaign process.

Differences of Age, Gender, Ethnicity on Types of Public

Findings indicated that there is no significant age, gender, and ethnicity

differences on types of public. Therefore, there is no difference in the way the surveyed

men and women recognize or feel involved toward the issue at hand. At the same time,

the age group and ethnicities do not make a difference either. This may be explained by

the characteristics of the sample and the issue itself. For instance, in a study of

intercultural public relations, Sha (2006) found that cultural identity influenced all three

independent variables of the situational theory of publics. More specifically, she

suggested cultural identity as a determinant factor in the development of organizational

publics on issues related to race and ethnicity. Therefore, it makes sense that in the case

of the present study, findings showed no such relationship between demographics and

types of publics regarding the issue at hand. Perhaps if the study was developed in a more

sportive environment (e.g. among members of a gym, or a sports team) or included levels

of income and education the results would show otherwise.

Limitations

The first major limitation of this study may result from the sample characteristics.

This research study only sampled undergraduate students enrolled in the University of

Houston's School of Communications, which were mostly female. There is risk that this

sample may not be representative of total population.

Also, because the distributed surveys were self-administered, there is the

possibility of measurement errors due to respondents (e.g. deliberate distortion, lack of

understanding) or the surveys (e.g. confusing wording). According to Couper (2000), these errors represent the deviation of the respondents' answers from their true value on the measure. The researcher did not have control over the participant's responses, nor had the chance to explain any possible confusion. In addition, given that the respondents were offered extra-credit in return for their participation, there is the risk of answering the survey deliberately just to receive the reward.

Finally, the results of the study may be affected by human error, given that the data was manually input into the Statistical Software IBM SPSS 20.

Further Research

Public relations and health promotion practice offer a wide path for scholars or students to explore. Based on the rationale that publics arise around issues, this study was able to identify four types of publics towards the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's team in Training fundraising sports program. Also, findings suggested that the organization has the opportunity of influencing levels of awareness among passive publics with the purpose of moving them from passive to more active behaviors. Therefore, suggested further research would entail developing a study to actually test the migration from non/latent to aware/active publics for fundraising sports programs, such as Team in Training. In this sense, another suggestion would be to include qualitative methods to determine the factors that may influence the publics' cognitions toward the issue at hand.

In addition, this study found no age, gender, or ethnicity differences on types of public. However, further research could use a larger sample, including a more extensive spectrum of educational level (e.g. undergraduates, graduates, etc.), majors, and/or

52

income level. And, because of the characteristics of the issue at hand, it would be interesting to develop the study among members of a more sportive/healthy environment (e.g. gym, sports teams). This way, the relationship between types of public and these factors could provide distinctive results.

Additionally, this study suggested a potential beneficial relationship between public relations and health promotion practices based on the fact that they focus on publics and their wellbeing. So, future research could apply other theories from these fields to explore the relationship between them even more. For example, the application of other audience segmentation strategies to a public relations program could have interesting results.

Moreover, as it was shown in the literature review, the situational theory of publics has been widely tested in many areas. In fact, even when Grunig (1997) dropped a fifth variable, called the referent criterion, other studies have brought it back and presented its importance (e.g. Kim & Grunig, in press). Perhaps another suggestion for further research should endorse the influence of the referent criterion in a health promotion issue, such as the one presented here.

Conclusion

In summary, future research should involve testing the migration from passive to active publics, using a larger and wider sample, the application of other theories, include qualitative methods, and explore the influence of the referent criterion in a health promotion issue. The application of the situational theory of publics made possible the identification of four types of publics regarding the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Team in Training sports program. However, levels of activeness were not very present

53

amongst the sample. Also, no significant relationship was found between types of publics and age, gender, and ethnicity.

Findings from this study were evidence of the potential beneficial relationship between public relations and health promotion. Specially, the importance of audience segmentation strategies, the opportunity for the organization to influence levels of awareness among publics to move them toward more active behaviors (Sriramesh et al., 2007), and how publics may affect the organization positively as a result (e.g. helping achieve goals, such as raise funds in benefit of blood cancer research).

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

PROJECT TITLE: Public relations in health promotion practice: an application of the situational theory of publics for Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Team in Training program.

You are being invited to participate in a research project conducted by Vanessa Hernandez from the Jack J. Valenti School of Communication at the University of Houston. This project is a part of her master thesis and is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Zhiwen Xiao.

⬦ **NON-PARTICIPATION STATEMENT**
Your participation is voluntary and you may refuse to participate or withdraw at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may also refuse to answer any question.

⬦ **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**
The purpose of this study is to explore a connection between public relations and health promotion practice. The rationale would entail the application of a public relation's theory segmenting principles to specify a target audience for a health promotion program. The results of this study are expected to be beneficial for Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Team in Training, a non-profit organization sports program, hopefully improving their public relations plan and helping raise funds for blood cancer research.

⬦ **PROCEDURES**
You will be one of approximately 140 subjects to be asked to participate in this project.
If you agree to participate, you will be asked to complete a questionnaire. The questionnaire will ask about your perceptions about fundraising sport programs, such as Team in Training, communication behaviors toward the program, and some general information about yourself (such as your age range, etc.) in order to better understand the problem. You will also obtain extra credit in return for your participation in the study. The survey will take about 5-10 minutes to finish.

⬦ **CONFIDENTIALITY**
Your participation in the study will remain confidential, and you responses will remain anonymous. Please do not write your name on any of the research materials to be returned to the principal investigator.

⬦ **RISKS/DISCOMFORTS**
There are no foreseeable risks associated with your participation in this project.

- ✧ **BENEFITS**

  There are no direct benefits. However, an opportunity to help explore a relationship between public relations and health promotions as well the benefits of identifying a public for nonprofit organization.

- ✧ **ALTERNATIVES**

  Participation in this project is voluntary and the only alternative to this project is non-participation.

- ✧ **INCENTIVES/REMUNERATION**

  Each of the participants will receive 1% of final grade extra credit.

- ✧ **PUBLICATION STATEMENT**

  The results of this study may be published in professional and/or scientific journals. It may also be used for educational purposes or for professional presentations. However, no individual subject will be identified.

  If you have any questions, you may contact Vanessa Hernandez at vihernandez@uh.edu. You may also contact Dr. Zhiwen Xiao, faculty sponsor, at office phone (713)743-2243 or zxiao2@uh.edu.

  ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING YOUR RIGHTS AS A RESEARCH SUBJECT MAY BE ADDRESSED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON COMMITTEE FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS (713-743-9204).

Principal Investigator's Name: <u>Vanessa Hernandez</u>

Signature of Principal Investigator: _____

QUANTITATIVE QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTIONNAIRE: Introduction, Demographics, Problem Recognition, Level of Involvement, Constraint Recognition, Information Seeking, Information Attending.

INTRODUCTION

This research intends to find a public for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Team in Training sports program, a non-profit organization dedicated to blood cancer research. We invite you to answer these questions the best you can. The questionnaire is anonymous. This survey will take you about 5-10 minutes to finish.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Please answer the following questions:

Age (please circle)
1 = younger than 18   2 = 18   3 = 19   4 = 20   5 = 21   6 = 22   7 = 23   8 = 24 or older

Gender (please circle)
1 = male   2 = female

Education (please circle)
1 = Freshman   2 = Sophomore   3 = Junior   4 = Senior   5 = Graduate Student

Ethnicity/Racial Group (please circle)

1 = African American	2 = American Indian	3 = Arab
4 = Asian American	5 = European	6 = Indian
7 = Latina	8 = Caucasian American	9 = Other:

_____

Preferred Media Outlets (please circle all that apply)

1 = Internet	2 = Email	3 = Newspaper	4 = Magazines
5 = Television	6 = Radio	7 = Other: _____	

Please read the following short message before proceeding to next sections.

Team in Training is a comprehensive plan that offers the opportunity to be professionally trained to participate in more than 60 accredited sport events in the U.S. and abroad, including triathlons, hiking, cycling, marathons and half marathons at no cost. In exchange, voluntary participants contribute to raise funds for blood cancer research. Team in Training is currently facing the challenge of increasing the number of voluntary participants.

PROBLEM RECOGNITION

Please read each of the following items carefully and circle the answer according to a response scale range from 1 (never) to 7 (all the time).

Never = 1
Very Rarely = 2
Seldom = 3
Sometimes = 4

Frequently = 5
Very Frequently = 6
All the time = 7

1. How often do you stop and think about participating in fundraising sport programs?

1   2   3   4   5   6
  7

2. To what extent do you consider the situation described above a serious problem?

1   2   3   4   5   6
  7

3. To what extent do you feel something needs to be done about the situation mentioned above?

1   2   3   4   5   6
  7

LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT

Please read each of the following items carefully and circle the answer according to a response scale range from 1(not at all) to 7 (extremely).

Not at all = 1
Very Little = 2
Slightly = 3
Somewhat = 4
Moderately = 5
To a Great Extent = 6
Extremely = 7

4. To what extent do you believe participating in a fundraising sport program, such as Team in Training, is important to you personally?

1   2   3   4   5   6
  7

5. To what extent do you believe fundraising sports program, such as Team in Training, involves you or someone close to you?

1   2   3   4   5   6
  7

6. In your mind, to what extent do you see a connection between yourself and a fundraising sports program, such as Team in Training?

1   2   3   4   5   6
  7

CONSTRAINT RECOGNITION

Please read each of the following items carefully and circle the answer according to a response scale range from 1(not at all) to 7 (extremely).

Not at all = 1
Very Little = 2
Slightly = 3
Somewhat = 4
Moderately = 5
To a Great Extent = 6

7. To what extent do you believe a fundraising sports program, such as Team in Training, is a cause you could be involved in or do something about?

1   2   3   4   5   6
        7

8. To what extent do you believe your participation in a fundraising sports program, such as Team in Training, would make a difference?

1   2   3   4   5   6
        7

9. To what extent would you say the purpose of Team in Training is more difficult to understand than others?

1   2   3   4   5   6
        7

INFORMATION SEEKING

Please choose a response for each of following statements.

Extremely Unlikely = 1
Most Unlikely = 2
Unlikely = 3
Undecided = 4
Likely = 5
Most Likely = 6
Extremely likely = 7

Statements

10. I would regularly check to see if there's new information about Team in Training's events and/or reports in the Houston area.

1   2   3   4   5   6
        7

11. I would request free booklets containing relevant information about Team in Training.

1   2   3   4   5   6
        7

12. I would visit websites to find useful information about Team in Training.

1   2   3   4   5   6
        7

INFORMATION PROCESSING

Please choose a response for each of following statements.

Extremely Unlikely = 1
Most Unlikely = 2
Unlikely = 3
Undecided = 4
Likely = 5
Most Likely = 6
Extremely likely = 7

Statements

13. I would pay attention to information regarding fundraising sports programs.

1   2   3   4   5   6

        7

14. I would watch/listen/click on information regarding sport programs, such as Team in Training's events and updates.

1   2   3   4   5   6

        7

15. I would listen to others talk about experiences/comments regarding fundraising sports programs, such as Team in Training events and news.

1   2   3   4   5   6

        7

----The End---

Thank you for your cooperation!

REFERENCES

Aldoory, L. (2001). Making health communications meaningful for women: Factors that influence involvement and the situational theory of publics. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, *13*, 163-185.

Aldoory, L., & Sha, B.-L. (2007). The situational theory of publics: Practical applications, methodological challenges, and theoretical resolutions. In E. L. Toth (Ed.), *The Future of Excellence in Public Relations and Communication Management* (pp. 339-355). Mahwah, N.J: Lawrence Erlbaum Association.

American Cancer Society. (2010). *Cancer Facts & Figures 2010*. Atlanta, GA: Author.

American Cancer Society. (2011). *Chronic Lymphocytic Leukemia*. Atlanta, GA: Author.

Atkin, C. (2001). Theory and principles of media health campaigns. In R. E. Rice and C. Atkin (Eds.), *Public Communication Campaigns* (3rd ed., pp. 49-68). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Atkin, C. & Freimuth, V. (2001). Formative Evaluation Research in Campaign Design. In R. E. Rice & C. Atkin (Eds.), *Public Communication Campaigns* (3rd ed., pp. 125-145) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Austin, E. W., & Pinkleton, B. E. (2006). *Strategic public relations management: Planning and managing effective communication programs*. Mahwah, N.J: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Baines, P., Egan, J., & Jefkins, F. W. (2004). *Public relations: Contemporary issues and techniques*. Boston: Elsevier/Butterworth-Heineman.

Belden Russonello, & Stewart. (2004). *Using Survey Research to Evaluate Communications Campaigns.* Retrieved from http://www.mediaevaluationproject.org/Working%20Brief%20Russonello.pdf

Blumer, H. (1966). The mass, the public and public opinion. In B. Berelson & M. Janowitz (Eds.), *Reader in Public Opinion and Communication* (2nd ed., pp. 43-50) New York: Free Press.

Broom, G. M., & Cutlip, S. M. (2009). *Cutlip & Center's effective public relations*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Building support through public relations: A guide for nonprofit preservation organizations. (1992). Washington, D.C: National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Chung, D., Eunseong, K., Trammell, K., & Porter, L. (2007). Uses and Perceptions of Blogs: A Report on Professional Journalists and Journalism Educators. *Journalism & Mass Communication Educator*, 62(3), 305-322.

Coombs, W. T. (2010). Crisis communication: A developing field. In R. L. Heath (Ed.), *The SAGE Handbook of Public Relations* (2nd ed., pp. 447-488). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Inc.

Corporation for National Community Service (2010). *Volunteering in the United States*. Retrieved from http://www.volunteeringinamerica.gov/printpdfprofile.cfm?show_images=1&show_results=1&state=TX&years=2010&graph_per_page=6&palette=rgb&graphics=84,104,82,86,89,88&type=2

Couper, M. (2000). Web Surveys. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 64(4), 464-494.

Cutlip, S. M., Center, A. H., & Broom, G. M. (1994). *Effective public relations* (7th ed.).

Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Dozier, D. M., Grunig, L. A., & Grunig, J. E. (2001). Public relations as communication

campaign. In R. E. Rice and C. K. Atkin (Eds.), *Public communication campaigns*

(3rd ed., pp. 231-248). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Inc.

Frey, L. R., Botan, C. H. & Kreps, G. L. (2000). *Investigating communication: An*

introduction to research methods. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Giving USA Foundation. (2010). *Giving USA 2010: The Annual Report on Philanthropy*

for the year 2009. Retrieved from http://www.givingusareports.org/free.php

Gorin, S. S., & Arnold, J. H. (2006). *Health promotion in practice*. San Francisco:

Jossey-Bass.

Grunig, J. E. (1968). *Information, entrepreneurship, and economic development: A study*

of the decision making processes of Colombian Latifundistas. (Unpublished

doctoral dissertation). The University of Wisconsin, United States.

Grunig, J. E. (1989). Publics, audiences and market segments: Models of receivers of

campaign messages. In C. T. Salmon (Ed.), *Information campaigns: Managing*

the process of social change (pp. 197-226). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Grunig, J. E. (1997). A situational theory of publics: Conceptual history, recent

challenges and new research. In D. Moss, T. MacManus, & D. Verĉiĉ (Ed.),

Public relations research: An international perspective (pp. 3-48). London:

International Thomson Business Press.

63

Grunig, J. E. (2000). Collectivism, collaboration, and societal corporatism as core professional values in public relations. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 12, 23-48. doi:10.1207/S1532754XJPRR1201_3

Grunig, J. E. (2003). Constructing public relations theory and practice. In B. Dervin & S. Chaffee, with L. Foreman-Wernet (Eds.), *Communication, another kind of horse race: Essays honoring Richard F. Carter* (pp. 85-115). Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.

Grunig, J. E. (2005). Situational Theory of Publics. *Encyclopedia of Public Relations*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Grunig, J. E. (2006). Furnishing the edifice: Ongoing research on public relations as a strategic management function. *Journal of Public Relations Research, 18*, 151-176*.* doi:10.1207/s1532754xjprr1802_5

Grunig, J. E. (2008). Conceptualizing quantitative research in public relations. In B. van Ruler, A. T. Verĉiĉ & D. Verĉiĉ (Eds.). *Public relations metrics: Research and evaluation* (pp. 88-119). New York: Routledge.

Grunig, J. E., & Grunig, L. A. (1998). The relationship between public relations and marketing in excellent organizations: Evidence from the IABC study. *Journal of Marketing Communications, 4*, 141-162. doi:10.1080/135272698345816

Grunig, J. E., & Grunig, L. A. (2001, March). *Guidelines for formative and evaluative research in public affairs: A report of the Department of Energy Office of Science*. Washington, DC: U. S. Department of Energy.

Grunig, J. E., Grunig, L. A., & Dozier, D. M. (2006). The excellence theory. In C. H.

 Botan & V. Hazleton (Eds.). *Public relations theory II* (pp. 21-55). Mahwah, NJ:

 Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Grunig, J. E., Grunig, L. A., Sriramesh, K., & Huang, Y-H. (1995). Models of public

 relations in an international setting. *Journal of Public Relations Research, 7*(3),

 163-186. doi:10.1207/s1532754xjprr0703_01

Grunig, J. E., & Hunt, T. (1984). *Managing public relations*. New York: Holt, Rinehart

 and Winston.

Grunig, J. E., & Ipes, D. A. (1983). The anatomy of a campaign against drunk driving.

 Public Relations Review, 9(3), 36-53. doi:10.1016/S0363-8111(83)80004-6

Grunig, J. E., & Repper, F. C. (1992). Strategic management, publics, and issues. In J. E.

 Grunig & IABC Research Foundation (Eds.), *Excellence in public relations and*

 communication management (pp. 117-158). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum

 Associates.

Grunig, L. A., Grunig, J. E., & Dozier, D. M. (2002). *Excellent public relations and*

 effective organizations: A study of communication management in three countries.

 Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.

Hallahan, K. (2001). Strategic media planning. In R. L. Heath (Ed.), *Handbook of Public*

 Relations (pp. 461-470). Thousand Oaks, CA, London, New Delhi: Sage.

Hallahan, K. (2000). Inactive publics: The forgotten publics of public relations. *Public*

 Relations Review, 26(4), 499-515. doi:10.1016/S0363-8111(00)00061-8

Hamilton, P. K. (1992). Grunig's situational theory: A replication, application, and

extension. *Journal of Public Relations Research, 4*(3), 123-149.

doi:10.1207/s1532754xjprr0403_01

Johnston, J., & Zawawi, C. (2000). *Public relations: Theory and practice*. St. Leonards,

N.S.W.: Allen & Unwin.

Keleher, H., Murphy, B., & MacDougall, C. (2007). *Understanding health promotion*.

South Melbourne, Victoria: Oxford University Press.

Kim, J-N., Grunig, J. E., & Ni, L. (2010). Reconceptualizing public's communicative

action: Acquisition, selection, and transmission of information in problematic

situations. *International Journal of Strategic Communication, 4,* 126-154.

Kim, J-N., & Ni, L. (in press). Seeing the forest through the trees: The behavioral,

strategic management paradigm in public relations and its future. In R. L. Toth

(ed.), *Handbook of Public Relations* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Kim, J-N., & Ni, L. (2009, March). *Creating a theory-driven strategic public relations

procedure: Linking segmentation and evaluation in two types of public relations

problems*. Paper presented at the Twelfth Annual International Public Relations

Conference, Miami, FL. (Later entitled "Integrating formative and evaluative

research in two types of public relations problems: A Review of research

programs within the strategic management paradigm")

Kim, J.-N., Ni, L., & Sha, B.-L. (2008). Breaking down the stakeholder environment: A

review of approaches to the segmentation of publics. *Journalism & Mass

Communication Quarterly, 85,* 751–768.

Knights, K. (2001). *Strategic planning in public relations: A practical guide*. London: Hawksmere.

Lee, S., & Rodriguez, L. (2006). The Four Publics of Anti-Bioterrorism Information Campaigns: A Test of the Situational Theory. *Conference Papers -- International Communication Association*, 1-27.

Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. (2010). *Facts 2010-2011*. White Plains, NY: Author.

Lindenmann, W. K. (1999). Measuring relationships is key to successful public relations. *Public Relations Quarterly, 43*, 18-24. Retrieved from ABI/INFORM Global. (Document ID: 38518807).

McGuire, W. (2001) Input and Output Variables Currently Promising for Constructing Persuasive Communications. In R. E. Rice & C. Atkin (Eds.) *Public Communication Campaigns* (3rd ed., pp. 22-48) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

McKie, D. (2001). Updating public relations: "New science," research paradigms and uneven developments. In R. L. Heath (Ed.), *Handbook of Public Relations* (pp. 75-91). Thousand Oaks, CA, London, New Delhi: Sage.

Mission and Goals. (April, 2011). *Leukemia and Lymphoma Society*. Retrieved from http://www.lls.org/#/aboutlls/mission/

The Mission and History. (2011). *Team in Training*. Retrieved from http://www.teamintraining.org/firsttimehere/themissionandhistory/

Moss, H. B., Kirby, S. D., & Donodeo, F. (2009). Characterizing and reaching high-risk drinkers using audience segmentation. *Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research, 33*(8), 1336-1345. doi:10.1111/j.1530-0277.2009.00963.x

Naidoo, J., & Wills, J.. (2009). *Foundations for health promotion*. Edinburgh: Baillière Tindall/Elsevier.

National Cancer Institute (2008). *What you need to know about Leukemia*. [Brochure]. Rockville, MD: Author.

National Center of Health Statistics (2011). Deaths: preliminary data for 2009. *National Vital Statistics Reports 59*(4). Retrieved from http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr59/nvsr59_04.pdf

Noar, S. M. (2006). A 10-year Retrospective of Research in Health Mass Media Campaigns: Where do we go from here? *Journal of Communication, 11*(1), 21-42. doi:10.1080/10810730500461059

Ruffner, R. H. (1984). *Handbook of publicity and public relations for the nonprofit organization*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J: Prentice-Hall.

Schloss, R. (2008). *Health care public relations and strategic communication: How public relations practitioners make meaning of communication management in a medical center*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the NCA 94th Annual Convention, TBA, San Diego, CA. Retrieved from http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p257628_index.html

Sha, B.-L. (2006). Cultural identity in the segmentation of publics: An emerging theory of intercultural public relations. *Journal of Public Relations Research, 18*(1), 45-65. doi:10.1207/s1532754xjprr1801_3

Signitzer, B., & Wamser, C. (2006). Public diplomacy: A specific governmental public relations function. In C. H. Botan & V. Hazleton (Eds.) *Public Relations Theory II* (pp. 435-464). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Slater, M. D. (1996). Theory and method in health audience segmentation. *Journal of Health Communication: International Perspectives, 1*(3), 267-284. doi:10.1080/108107396128059

Slater, M. & Flora, J.A. (1991). Health lifestyles: Audience segmentation analysis for public health interventions. *Health Education Quarterly, 18*, 221–233.

Smith, R. D. (2009). *Strategic planning for public relations*. London: Routledge.

Sriramesh, K., Moghan, S., & Wei, D. L. K. (2007). The Situational Theory of Publics in a Different Cultural Setting: Consumer Publics in Singapore. *Journal of Public Relations Research, 19*(4), 307-332. doi: 10.1080/10627260701402424

Ströh, U. (2007). An alternative postmodern approach to corporate communication strategy. In E. L. Toth (Ed.), *The Future of Excellence in Public Relations and Communication Management* (pp. 199-220). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.

Stromback, J., Mitrook, M. A., & Kiousis, S. (2010). Bridging two schools of thought: Applications of public relations theory to political marketing. *Journal of Political Marketing*, *9*(1/2), 73-92. doi:10.1080/15377850903472547

Tomic, Z., Lasic, D., & Tomic, T. (2010). Public Relations in Health Care. *Materia Socio Medica, 22*(1), 25-27. Retrieved from EBSCO*host.*

Tones, K., & Tilford, S. (2001). *Health promotion: Effectiveness, efficiency and equity*. (3rd Ed.). Cheltenham: Nelson Thornes.

Tones, K., & Green, J. (2004). *Health promotion: Planning and strategies*. London: SAGE Publications.

Van Belleghem, S. (2010). *Social media around the world 2011* [Powerpoint Slides].

    Retrieved from http://www.slideshare.net/stevenvanbelleghem/social-media-

    around-the-world-2011

Vardeman, J., & Tindall, N. (2008). Complications in segmenting campaign publics:

    Women of color explain their problems, involvement, and constraints in reading

    heart disease communication. *Conference Papers -- National Communication*

    Association, 1. Retrieved from EBSCO*host*.

Verĉiĉ, D., & Grunig, J. E. (2000). The origins of public relations theory in economics

    and strategic management. In D. Moss, D. Verĉiĉ, & G. Warnaby (Eds.),

    Perspectives on Public Relations Research (pp. 9-58). London: Routledge.