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Communication Behavior Study of Support in the Arts Using the Situational Theory of Publics and the Theory of Reasoned Action

Ashleigh Gallant
University of South Florida, agallant3@gmail.com

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Communication Behavior Study of Support in the Arts Using the
Situational Theory of Publics and the Theory of Reasoned Action

by

Ashleigh Gallant

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirement of the degree of
Master of Arts
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Major Professor: Kelly Page Werder, Ph.D.,
Scott Liu, Ph.D.,
David Williams, Ph.D.

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Abstract

The Arts in the United States has been a thoroughly studied topic, largely trying to substantiate its value to society, resulting in a plethora of research that positively correlates the arts and a more healthy and successful society. Findings from various studies over the years have shown declines in arts support in the form of funding, advocacy, education, and participation (National Endowment for the Arts, 2009). Additional studies have suggested that millennials are redefining what participation means in the arts, and even the definition of the arts. The primary research question of this study is why are support for the arts declining? This study reviews the industry, the current definition of the arts and how two theories could help examine the question. The mass communications theory, the Situational Theory of Publics and the psychology theory, the Theory of Reasoned Action, were chosen to learn more about communication behavior toward arts support. The variables were examined within a proposed model. The data suggested that low problem recognition toward the arts in this sample was an integral factor. A key finding of the study was that respondents who value arts support may be more likely to behave. An experiment to test the model would be the next best step for research.

Chapter 1: Introduction

The Arts in the United States has been a thoroughly studied topic, largely trying to substantiate its value to society, resulting in a plethora of research that positively correlates the arts and a more healthy and successful society. The studies have shown several key findings. Students who have more arts education have higher GPAs and test higher on standardized tests, and typically have a more positive attitude toward community service. 78% of the nations leading healthcare institutions that offer arts programming for patients because of its healing benefits, which result in shorter stays, better pain management, and less medication. Non-profit arts organizations generate \$135 billion in economic activity annually resulting in over 4 million jobs. Finally, a University of Pennsylvania study found that a city with an active artistic community led to “higher civic engagement, more social cohesion, higher child welfare, and lower poverty rates (Americans for the Arts, 2013).”

Findings from various studies over the years have shown declines in arts support in the form of funding, advocacy, education, and participation (National Endowment for the Arts, 2009). Advocacy is defined as peer interaction that helps promote an arts organization or volunteering for an organization. Education is a more complex support function. This encompasses most of the other support functions; however it is precursor to the success of the other support mechanisms, therefore it has been studied and singled out as an arts support behavior. Education is defined as the “passing of knowledge and awareness of arts practice (Americans for the Arts, 2010). Participation is attending or engaging an event for the arts. Funding is the monetary donating funds to arts organization (National Endowment for the Arts, 2009, Americans for the Arts, 2010).

The National Endowment for the Arts (2009) latest study in arts participation of classical benchmark events, reports the lowest levels of event attendance and education in its 30 year history. Additional studies have suggested that millennials are redefining what participation means in the arts, in the fact what arts are included in the definition. Participation defined by Brown & Novak-Leonard (2012) includes attendance, technology, and creating. They also suggest millennials are expanding the definition of the arts based on participation. More information on these studies is discussed below. Lastly, continuing declines in arts education bring cause for more research, as many studies suggest more education begets more participation, more funding, more advocacy.

Situation Analysis of the Arts in America

The arts in the United States enjoyed increased attendance and overflowing financial resources in the better part of the 20th century; however, the 80s began to show decline and it has continued through the 90s and into the new millennium (National Endowment for the Arts, 2009). The reasons that have been argued for why the arts audiences are decreasing are many and varied. Research suggests that the arts audiences have declined due to increase accessibility via the internet and television and lack of need to physically experience the arts in the location that it is being produced or presented (Primarily Packaged Facts, 2010; National Endowment for the Arts, 2009). Dr. Bobbi Lewis (2010) suggested “John Q. Public is no longer the passive consumer of media messages; he can now be the creator, publisher, producer and broadcaster. Internet tools such as blogs, YouTube, Flickr, MySpace and Facebook allow the average person to create content that can be shared with a worldwide audience.”

Market research conducted by Packaged Facts (2010) reported that millennials “define themselves with technology;” 34% spend more than 10 hours per week on the computer, 26% use their cellphone as a primary source to the Internet, 21% say they spend less time sleeping

because of the Internet (compared to 16% 30-44, 8% 45-64, 6% 65+), 36% say the Internet is the way they socialize (compared to 25% 30-44, 9% 45-64, 6% 65+) and 34% say the Internet is their prime source of entertainment (compared to 23% 30-44, 11% 45-64, 7% 65+). As new audiences are more apt to view any art or cultural activity online, the largest group of attendees are also declining.

The National Endowment for the Arts (2009) rationalizes “from 1982 to 2008, audiences for performances in classical music, ballet, non-musical theater, and ... jazz, have aged faster than the general population.” Additionally, “since 1982, the share of 18-24 year olds who report having any music education in their lives has dropped by more than a third... visual arts training, the proportion has nearly halved.”

Also, a lack of education (or reduction in arts education in K-12) and exposure to contemporary art forms (increase in accessibility to “popular” art) have reduced value in “classic” art forms. This growing divide between educated youths and non-educated youths in the arts and the culture that classical artforms are only consumed by college or university educated audiences has been an original attribution to the decline, and still is (Wolff, 1990, Brown & Novak- Leonard, 2012). Adding fuel to the argument, it has been documented that as education level increases, so does the likelihood to attend arts events. Likewise, as education level increases so does the quantity of arts events that are likely to attend (National Endowment for the Arts, 2009).

A follow up study of the National Endowment for the Arts (2009) participation study, WolfBrown and the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) at the University of Chicago (2012) extended the variables to include a larger definition. In addition to attendance, they included creation and media- based participation (Brown & Novak-Leonard, 2012). They defined these participation modes by four greater defining variables: skill level of the artist or participant, form of artist expression, setting the activity occurs and degree to which the individual exercises

creative control over the activity (Brown & Novak-Leonard, 2012, p28). In general, the lines between amateur and professional artist are blurring. Add in the historical controversy of fine art versus popular art (discussed further below), Brown and Novak-Leonard (2012) suggest these lines nearly gone. Citing accessibility to professional equipment, knowledge and resources as some of the most fundamental reasons why amateurs are easily considered professionals.

By expanding the definition of “participation,” they found that 74% of U.S. adults had participated in at least one of the modes (Brown & Novak-Leonard, 2012). Another interesting finding was that the same percentage of adults who participated in the arts, also did not; 26% had participated in all three modes, 26% participated in no arts (Brown & Novak-Leonard, 2012). Additionally, they found that 23% of U.S. adults had participated, but did not attend an arts event. They all also found, again, that “cultural life in a community cannot flourish without all three spheres (attendance, creation, and media- based participation) of activity (p28).” Support by all means is vital to maintain its existence. They suggest, like so many others, technology has changed the definition of the industry by how we, as an audience, receive the artform. In addition to technology they cite diversification of artforms as another shift (p.25). Also, the melding of high and popular art because of increased accessibility (p.25, 29). Lastly, and most interesting for this study, is the introduction of opportunity costs. Brown and Novak-Leonard (2012) suggest that because audiences have so many choices and obligations; choices of entertainment options, work and family obligations among others, they choose to consume artforms by other means or take up art on their own (p.25-31). They introduce defining arts participation to include four factors: “skill level of artist or participant, form of the artistic expression, setting in which the activity occurs, and degree the individual exercises creative control (Brown & Novak-Leonard, 2012, p11)”. By expanding the definition they include new standards of the industry: technology, diversification of artforms, accessibility and flexibility (Brown & Novak-Leonard, 2012, p25).

The original research question for this study was simply, why is support for the arts declining? The purpose of this study is to learn more about communication behavior toward arts support. After reviewing several theories, the most appropriate theories to utilize in this study are the situational theory of publics (STP) and the theory of reasoned action (TRA). STP explains when a public is most likely to communicate (Grunig, 1997). TRA is a theory that explains that behavioral intention is the best predictor of behavior. Together, these two theories could help to explain if a person might behave based on their communication behavior. The next chapter reviews the arts as an industry, arts value, and two theories to study communication and behavior; the situational theory of publics and the theory of reasoned action.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The arts may be something many adults participate in daily, but as Brown and Novak-Leonard (2012) pointed out, the industry may not be defining “participation” the same as they are. By expanding the definition of participation to include attendance, creation and media-participation, Brown and Novak-Leonard (2012) also contend the definition of “the arts” itself. Below is general overview of the arts and the its terminology.

What is “the arts?” Defining the Industry

It is important to define “the arts” for this study. To categorize an entire industry “the arts” is presumptuous, the National Endowment for the Arts (2009) Participation Benchmark study defined individual genres: Jazz, Opera, Ballet, Exhibitions, Fairs, Plays, Poetry, etc. It is not the goal of this study to define the arts in general. Nor is the purpose of this study to define what is “popular” arts and what is “classical.” Defining the arts has been the subject of debate for decades within the visual and performing arts pedagogy. This is a communications study, a look at the whole from a critical, objective point of view. Botti (2000) explains that the arts are inherently a subjective discipline, “moving away from the traditional classification of the works, what is art and what is not can’t be established a priori, but it depends on the subjective emotional reactions elicited in the interaction between a work of arts and an individual.” In the context of this study the arts refers specifically to the creation or study of the collective, which includes music, theatre, dance, visual art, architecture, culinary, literary art, etc. The extension of these categories include but are not limited to instrumental performance, composition, choral, opera, musical theater, ballet, modern dance, creative writing, painting, sculpture, photography, film, ceramics, lithograph, digital media. With many terms used, it is important to understand

each of the definitions correctly: fine, classical, high- art, lowbrow, popular, contemporary. According to research, simplistically defined, fine and contemporary arts can be categorized together and many times is called “high art.” Fine arts and contemporary arts for the purpose of this study is defined as fine arts, referring to pre- postmodernist works; contemporary arts refers to postmodernist works, the time period roughly 1940- present. In each discipline “contemporary” is defined differently; in dance it centers on specific movement, in visual art it centers on the concept rather than the creation, so to generalize is a difficult task. Contemporary arts, like other disciplines are ever evolving. For instance, many contemporary visual artists are incorporating the use of digital media (computers, television, video gaming, etc) and the interaction of that digital media. Contemporary playwrights call on the use of surround sound, video projection, and recording. There is now a classification of electronic music and musicianship. Incorporating the early 20th century in the definition of contemporary arts is important because the practice of, or the execution of, various art forms is heavily based in the adaptation of new techniques during that time. It is also important to note “contemporary” is a word used to define new, of-the-present. Modern or avant-garde is an actual time period in most disciplines therefore is not used interchangeably.

Botti (2000) analyzed common definitions of art consumption and value. While Botti’s analysis focused on the role marketing has in the arts, the assessment of the perception of art consumption and the value of the arts is consistent with the National Endowment for the Arts and Americans for the Arts research findings. Botti (2000) explains the difference between “high” and “popular” arts as: “[high art] is pursued as an end in itself. The artist has no explicit intent to accommodate market needs,” “popular art... is produced by professionals who are looking to achieve commercial success and who thus want a return on their investment.” By artist standards, “high art” typically is legitimate art, “popular art” has been scorned because of the generalization that “commercial success...violates the notion that art should be pursued as

an end in itself.” Popular art typically includes popular music, fashion, film, etc. The unfortunate distinction between high art and popular art suggests that there is high art and then there is low art. Once called lowbrow. This has been a cultural distinction in the art world for many decades, “high art” has always “coincided with educational level and that this in turn correlates with class position” (Wolff, 1990). Popular art has long been seen as “entertainment” or simply a hobby.

Understanding the distinguishing generalizations between contemporary arts and fine arts, and high art and popular art is important in this study. Primarily because the educational value of teaching the difference between what is considered high art and popular art, contemporary and fine arts helps potential audiences distinguish between what it is they enjoy and what they can attribute that to. Regardless of the societal norms that created these labels, which this study will not be attempting to define or comment on, there is in fact a difference between artwork that is created for the pure expression of the piece versus artwork that is produced with commercial intentions; if for no other reason than from a pure marketing perspective. Artworks with the intent to satisfy a need in the marketplace must consider the consumer. While artworks that are created with no commercial motivation do not, they are produced with the intent to push creative boundaries and allow the artist to experiment within their medium. That is not the purpose of this study to define, however preliminary data suggests that the boundaries, historically perceived or actual, are statistically apparent, although blurring considerably (National Endowment for the Arts, 2009).

As previously mentioned, historically it was only the wealthy and highly educated that had access to the arts. Contemporary or even fine arts are now accessible to all, so the titles of “high art” and “popular art” rationally should no longer apply. When audiences think they are going to listen to a fine, high art concert, they will likely go to an orchestra concert featuring the works of Beethoven. If the same audience is going to a contemporary, high art concert they might experience Aaron Copeland’s work or Charles Ives. If the same audience plans to see a

popular art concert, they might go see The Rolling Stones, Kanye West, or Taylor Swift. Some have debated that classical musicians have popularized the artform, like Andrea Bocelli, Sarah Brightman, and Yo-Yo Ma. How these differences are communicated is very important to this study, but the single most important aspect is how our *society perceives these differences*.

Brown and Novak- Leonard (2012) question whether we should be distinguishing between these artistic expressions at all. In the end, they all add value to their fans lives? The concert goer will likely still be better off having participated in that art event than not. Brown and Novak- Leonard (2012) discuss in their findings what is the difference for example “between seeing a great work of art in a museum versus seeing a reproduction of the same artwork on the kitchen wall everyday for 20 years. Both are acts of viewing art, and surely both have meaning to the viewer” (Brown & Novak- Leonard, 2012, p.30). This example represents two important points to this study, value the arts represent to people and value of the arts in general.

Arts Value

“Value” can mean many things. In marketing, value proposition is “the set of benefits or values it promises to deliver to consumers to satisfy their needs” (Armstrong & Kotler, 2007), likening value with benefits. Sometimes value is also shown as an equation; as in $value = \text{benefits} / \text{cost}$. The aggregate dictionary site Dictionary.com lists value in several ways; monetarily as “the equivalent worth or return of money, material or service; the worth of something in terms of the amount of other things for which it can be exchanged or in terms of some medium of exchange;” “relative worth, merit, or importance, estimated or assigned worth; valuation.” These definitions illustrate the undefined amount of *something* that either is beneficial, monetarily worth or important to the subjective purchaser. It satisfies the purchasers needs or wants.

However, intrinsic values are comprised of your core beliefs, attitudes, moral and ethical standards. Values, as defined in psychology, are “ideals, guiding principles in one’s life” (Maio & Olson, 1998), “desirable end states or behaviors that transcend specific situations, guide selection or evaluation of behavior and events, and are ordered by relative importance” (Schwartz & Bilsky, 1987, p.551). These values run deep. We may have thousands of beliefs and attitudes, but typically we only have a dozen or so values (Perloff, 2010).

In the research for “arts value,” Botti (2000) explained “needs satisfied through art consumption as functional (helps solve a problem), symbolic (meaning that the product acquired at the psychological or social level, or both), and/or social (connected with the function of artistic goods as gathering places or talking points for conversation.” Data by the National Endowment for the Arts have shown findings for better communities (better test scores, more profitable and community based cities, social cohesion, and improved healing, etc).

Situational Theory of Publics (STP)

Borrowing from marketing’s segmentation theory, Situational Theory of Publics (STP) is the first discipline- specific public relations theory (Aldoory & Sha, 2007). James Grunig first developed STP in 1968 to “explain why people communicate and when they are most likely to do so (Grunig, 1997).” Grunig assumed that, in all situations, people have some kind of communication behavior before they act. With this assumption in mind, he theorized that communication behavior was one way of identifying or categorizing a public (Grunig, 1997). Early scholars like Bernays (1923), and later Cutlip and Center (1958), correlated public relations with public opinion by stating that public relations is about managing public opinion (Grunig, 1997). However, little was known about publics or opinions, and even less about how to identify public opinion and effectively measure if change had occurred (p. 4) Grunig’s studies (1969, 1971, 1976) sought to identify how people become part of a public based on their

communication behavior. Grunig (1997) stated that utilizing STP, a public relations practitioner can both identify the public she most wanted to communicate with and/or can understand the public most likely to communicate. Therefore, STP's goal, simply put, was to predict the effects of communication to targeted publics.

STP identifies three concepts that determine what type of public a person may fall in to depending on the issue: the person's problem recognition, constraint recognition, and involvement toward the issue. Problem recognition is defined as when or if the person recognizes that there is an issue and if there is something that should be done. Constraint recognition dictates what the perceived barriers and/or obstacles there are, that would inhibit the ability to act on the issue. Finally, involvement is the extent that the person has emotionally attached themselves to the issue (Grunig, 1997). Depending on the issue and the person's level of engagement in the three previous concepts, Grunig identified four prevalent categories of publics; three publics that are considered active, or groups of individuals who actively seek information regarding an issue. The fourth public is considered passive, they do not seek information regarding an issue. The active publics are categorized as: all, single, or hot issue. All- issue publics are defined as being active on all problems. Single- issue publics are defined by only being active on one small subset of problems that affects only a small portion of the population. Hot- issue publics active on only a single problem that involves nearly everyone in the population and received extensive media attention. The passive publics are categorized as apathetic, defined as inattentive to all problems.

Concepts of Situational Theory of Publics

Grunig published the first version of the theory in 1968 when he theorized that individuals actively seek information when they recognize a problem (Grunig, 1997, p. 10). His research on communication behavior dictated that individuals engage in either active or passive

communication behaviors, they either seek information or they simply process information. Information seekers, or active publics, are those that Clarke and Kline (1974) described as “planned scanning of the environment for messages about a specific topic.” Information seeking is a deliberate search for information about an issue. Information processors, or passive publics, Clarke and Kline (1974) called “message discovery, the unplanned discovery of a message followed by continued processing of the message (Grunig, 1997).” Information processing is when an individual recognizes a message and absorbs some of the content without deliberately doing so (Aldoory & Sha, 2007). Active publics are most likely to seek information through a variety of mediums, such as the Internet, personal endorsements, and print; while a passive public may only absorb information through mass media (p. 341).

The three concepts, problem recognition, constraint recognition, and involvement, as previously defined, dictate the communication behavior, which means depending on how a person engages the three concepts of a given situation will depend on whether or not they have active or passive communication behaviors. In researching situational communication, Grunig found that when individuals do not recognize a problem they behave habitually, and problem recognition was both the perception of the individual and was situational in nature (Grunig, 1997, p. 11). Therefore, problem recognition was a primary variable in whether or not a person engaged with an issue. In additional studies he found that a person’s perceived constraint recognition (Grunig, 1969, 1971) and involvement with an issue (Grunig, 1976) were also key factors as to whether or not a person engaged with an issue. If a person didn’t feel like they could do anything to help with an issue, their constraint recognition, they didn’t engage the problem. Inversely, if they recognized there was a problem, and felt they could help in some way, then they engaged the problem. Grunig (1976) found that sometimes people recognized an issue but they didn’t care much about it, so they didn’t seek information regarding the issue. Therefore Grunig added involvement as a primary variable in categorizing publics to explain

passive communication behavior. He stated, “when involvement is low, [a person may] process information passively that is available [to them] without a premeditated search (Grunig, 1997, p. 11),” they will not actively seek the information regarding an issue because they don’t have any emotional attachment to it.

It had become clear to him from his various studies that individuals who had high intellectual and actual involvement in a situation were more likely to be active publics. Similarly he found that individuals that were highly involved also had high problem recognition, although there wasn’t a correlation necessarily with constraint recognition (Grunig, 1983a).

After eight years of study he was able to derive the four general public profiles (p. 13); three active categorizations: all-issue, single-issue, hot-issue, and the one passive categorization he called apathetic.

Communication Behavior vs. Behavior

As Grunig solidified the basis of STP through several studies, he also began questioning how publics become activist. As he described, “activist groups are especially important to public relations practitioners because most limit the autonomy of organizations to pursue their goals (p. 17).” He utilized STP to identify that the most likely group to become activist are single issue publics (Grunig, 1989). But why did they act? He recognized that there was a difference between communication behavior and behavior.

While developing STP he found that, at times, people apply their previous experiences or solutions about an issue to their communication behavior. He called this the referent criterion (Grunig, 1976). In previous studies, Grunig believed that the referent criterion had little effect on the communication behavior, and thus eliminated from the theory (Grunig, 1997, pg. 11). But as he began thinking about how publics become activist, Grunig theorized that maybe it wasn’t a previous solution that people were recalling to a new situation, that it was the attitude toward

that previous experience. An event he called a cross- situational attitude.

Grunig (1997) found that people “actively control their own thinking and behavior, and cannot be easily persuaded by others.” He notes that even though “people [are] less often motivated by cross- situational concepts such as ideologies, attitudes, and values- these concepts frame how [or why] they make decisions (Grunig, 1997, p. 20).” Grunig states that the more active the communication behavior, the more likely the individual is to “construct [ideas], attitudes, and participate in actions/ behaviors (Grunig, 1997, p. 20).” One may deduce then, that if STP can predict how people will communicate, and research shows that active publics are most likely to act, then, STP *should* be able to predict if a person constructs ideas, attitudes and then behaves?

Grunig (1997) found after several studies (Grunig, 1983, 1983a) that STP is not deterministic, meaning it cannot predict the “nature and direction of the ideas or the valence of the attitudes (p. 21).” There was no way for him to determine if the cross- situational attitude is one that would drive a person to act. He called upon Fishbein and Ajzen’s Theory of Reason Action (1975) that found the best indicator of behavior is behavioral intention derived from attitudes and subjective norms, not cross-situational attitudes. Therefore, he argues that STP can only predict how people will purposively communicate based on the other three concepts, and cannot predict behavior (Grunig, 1997, p. 21).

Strength and Weaknesses

There are many practical applications of the theory that have already been tested which make it an excellent theory for use in this study. Grunig tested the theory in health, environmental, campaigns, education, and activist settings (Grunig, 1983; 1989; Grunig et al, 1988; Grunig and Childers, 1988; Grunig & Ipes, 1983). Studies have shown the benefits of segmenting publics for message development (Werder, 2005). Additionally, according to

Aldoory and Sha (2007), STP is a useful framework for segmenting publics that go beyond segmentation theory, which segments publics by demographics, psychographics, and geography. Public relations practitioners can utilize STP to engage aware publics to become active publics by identifying the constraints that keep them from doing so. Similarly, STP identifies how to remove barriers with latent publics, or publics with low problem recognition, to become active publics.

Weaknesses of Grunig's original methodology have also been identified. Aldoory and Sha (2007) identified several weaknesses, such as difficulty measuring constraint recognition because of the ever expanding list of issues related to it; including cultural identity, technology access, new and varied media, social and health issues, and many more (p. 347). They explain that there has not been published research that updates the concept of constraint recognition. In 1968 constraint recognition may have been lack of information, but with the Internet creating a vast accessibility to information, what new variables of constraint recognition are there?

Aldoory and Sha (2007) were also critical of Grunig's survey methodology. His survey's typically posed a hypothetical news lead (p. 348) to participants and then asked questions about the news lead such as "how likely would you be to pay attention to the story after hearing this lead?" The questions, by their very nature, were identifying the issue, making the individual aware of the issue, thus skewing the measure for problem recognition and potentially involvement. Understandably, there are several tests available to correlate other questions that might reduce the likelihood of such an error, but without surveying individuals in the organic mass media marketplace where the noise of other media might overshadow, influence, or otherwise distract an individual from the prompted news lead, the results of the Grunig's original methodology were skewed in favor of active publics. According to Aldoory and Sha (2007), in some instances, the news source made more of an impact on the respondent than the news piece; which begs the question whether STP is in fact issue driven or source driven (p. 348).

Another complexity to STP is in relation to the rapid advent of new technologies and new media. It remains to be seen how information seeking and processing is being impacted by the increase of information available and over new social media channels.

Botan and Soto (1998) identified another significant limitation with STP. Grunig derived his definition of publics from the seminal work of Dewey (1923). Dewey assumed that publics “came into existence in response to a situation.” It doesn’t take into account that the public already exists based on their referent criterion or any cross- situational attitude, variables that Grunig dismissed that both Hallahan (2000), and Botan and Soto (1998) suggest is relevant based on new technologies, information, and internal processes. Botan and Soto (1998) further explain that STP doesn’t explain “what role the communication process and symbol sharing plays in achieving collective recognitions” as active publics supposedly do (p. 26). In addition, the theory is tested solely from the world view of the organization, not the natural way a person’s behavioral communication may be, which Aldoory and Sha (2007) pointed out regarding Grunig’s original survey methodology as described previously. Lastly, STP is a well tested theory in public relations, and as previously mentioned, has been used in many disciplines. However, as far as research can find, never in the arts.

Situational theory of publics is an excellent and well-tested theory for segmenting and identifying publics with which to communicate. Clearly, new technologies, globalization, and new cultural challenges exist which the theory should be tested. Hallahan (2000), Botan and Soto (1998), and Aldoory and Sha (2007) identified that the definition of publics, based on Dewey’s original description nearly 90 years ago, may also need revision within the context of the theory. Looking at communication behavior from the publics side, the theory may also need to include the four categorizations of publics: aware, active, inactive/ passive, and latent. Botan & Soto’s (1998) point that publics don’t exist solely because the organization says it does or only when an issue arises, is compelling analysis to review the communication behaviors. Aldoory & Sha

(2007) suggest that as the world becomes smaller, cultural communication will also need to be taken into consideration. They suggest reintroducing the referent criterion and cross-situational attitude. Grunig has echoed several of these same weaknesses in his most recent research. Kim and Grunig (2011) recently published what they indicate as the “next step in the situational theory of publics (p. 122).” This new theory, they entitled the Situational Theory of Problem Solving, hopes to solve several shortcomings in STP, namely a broader conceptualization of active communication behavior, additional information behaviors like sharing and selecting, the inclusion of the referent criterion and allowances for cross-situational attitudes, and additional causal antecedent variables like motivation. Kim and Grunig (2011) also suggest that STP has been underutilized as a general theory because of the misconception that the theory is only useful for publics, even though Grunig explains that it was first and foremost an information processing theory of communication and behavior (p. 123).

Grunig seemed to discount his previously studied referent criterion and cross-situational attitude. Current research indicates that there may be correlations between cross-situational attitudes and attitudes or subjective norms, essentially combining Fishbein and Ajzen’s Theory of Reasoned Action (1975) and the Situational Theory of Publics (Grunig, 1968), the result could be a theory that accurately predicts the likelihood of behavior based on communication.

Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)

The Theory of Reasoned Action’s (TRA) goal, as described by Fishbein (1979), “is to predict and understand an individual’s behavior.” A primary assumption of the theory is that people are rational and we make choices and decisions based on those rationales (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). The theory states that intention is the best indicator of behavior. Intention of executing the behavior is based on two variables, attitude and subjective norms toward the behavior. The relative weights of the two variables determine the person’s intended behavior

(Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Attitudes are how a person feels, positively or negatively, toward engaging in the intended behavior (Fishbein, 1979). Attitudes are “a function of beliefs” (Fishbein, 1979, p.68). Moreover, they have three basic features: they are learned, they are precursors to an action, and they are judgments toward the outcomes of the intended action (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Behavioral beliefs are salient, or readily available, beliefs toward the intended behavior that inform the positive or negative attitude (Fishbein, 1979, Petty & Cacioppo, 1996). Fishbein and Ajzen (Fishbein, 1979) also argued that one's motivation to comply toward the behavior is informed by subjective norms and attitudes. Motivation to comply included their empathy, involvement, and other influences to engage in the behavior.

Subjective norms are how the affect of peer groups influences the intended behavior (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Peer groups can be family, friends, or others that the person may perceive in high regard (Petty & Cacioppo, 1996). While beliefs also influence subjective norms, they are beliefs in social norms and peer pressures that influence the behavior. If there is belief that the peer group will look favorably on the intended behavior, there is increased motivation to act. Likewise the reverse, if the belief is that the peer group will think unfavorably toward the intended behavior, the motivation to follow through will be decreased (Fishbein, 1979). Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) entitled these normative beliefs.

The most important aspect of TRA is the beliefs a person holds towards the intended behavior. Fishbein (1979) cautions that beliefs are not interchangeable with attitudes or subjective norms. For example, in a smoking study he conducted despite negative attitudes towards smoking and positive subjective norms to quit smoking, smokers continue to smoke. The smoker's beliefs to continue smoking outweighed the benefits of quitting, and thus overruled the intended behavior to quit (Fishbein, 1979). Learning more about all of the person's available alternatives and belief set will increase the likelihood of prediction. Fishbein (1979) explains, “it will often be necessary to consider a person's intentions with respect to all of his or

her available alternatives in order to accurately predict the person's actual behavior" (Fishbein, 1979 p.83). When they aren't mutually exclusive and exhaustive, knowing the beliefs that drive the intentions increase the likelihood of prediction (Fishbein, 1979). As such, the model explains that behavior is a function of a person's belief positioning. Therefore, if a person has a core belief in, for example, value in the arts, then they may behave more favorable toward the arts.

The theory dictates that in order to influence any of the variables, the change must be directed toward the person's beliefs (Petty & Cacioppo, 1996). Petty and Cacioppo (1996) summarized that persuasive communication strategy can be used to influence beliefs. In order to do so, one would need to know the person's beliefs toward the intended behavior and "motivation to comply" or involvement with the intended the behavior (Petty & Cacioppo, 1996, p.201).

Ajzen (1991) developed TRA further after identifying possible shortcomings. He added the component of "perceived behavioral control" and developed the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). Together, attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavior control inform behavioral intention, which he suggests is the best indicator of behavior. Perceived behavioral control accounts for external variables that may be outside of a person's control or ability that has the potential to affect the intended behavior (Glanz, Rimer, Viswanath, 2008). There has only been one study that applied TRA or TPB in an arts context. The study focused on intention to download music illegally from the Internet, or music piracy, utilizing TPB. The study introduced a moral obligation measure to its study, as it identified it as a missing variable of beliefs in both TRA and TPB (d'Astous, Colbert, & Montpetit, 2005). They explain, "TRA has been criticized for its lack of consideration of the internal moral rules the generally guide people's behavioural intentions (d'Astous, Colbert, & Montpetit, 2005, p. 294)." They hypothesized that "one's ethical predisposition" is, as the model dictates, through attitudes. The results of the study were

continued support of the TPB model. The added component of moral disposition was supported, although the intended behavior did not change. Specifically, while people felt negatively toward music piracy and believed that it was morally wrong, they felt that these factors would not inhibit their intended behavior to continue to pirate music. In addition, the knowledge and previous belief didn't deter previous behavior.

Integrating Situational Theory of Publics and Theory of Reasoned Action

The Situational Theory of Publics continues to be a useful theory that identifies issue related publics and their communication behaviors. As indicated, STP is not a theory that can predict how a person will act based on their communication behavior. Grunig's studies found that STP was not deterministic because it could not judge the direction and valence of the attitudes brought forth regarding an issue (Grunig, 1983, 1983a). The theory of reasoned of action does test direction of attitudes brought forth regarding an issue. By combining the two theories, we can learn more about communication behavior and possibly learn if our communication strategies can impact intended behavior (Petty & Cacioppo, 1996). Recall that in order to influence the variables of TRA, subjective norms, attitudes, and intended behavior, one must impact a person's beliefs. This study proposes that the dependent variables of STP, problem recognition, constraint recognition, and involvement, function as a belief set that influence a persons subjective norms and attitudes. In addition, to maintain the critical behavioral belief component of TRA, this study incorporates a variable of "arts value" as a salient belief toward support of arts participation. It is also the suggestion of this model that the variables of STP are acting as components of TRA's motivation to comply. Lastly, Grunig (1997) stated that information seeking and processing are both behaviors, therefore we test these intended behaviors within TRA model as well several others. This study attempts to test the following model that integrates variables from STP and TRA to achieve a fuller explanation

of factors that impact support of the arts. :

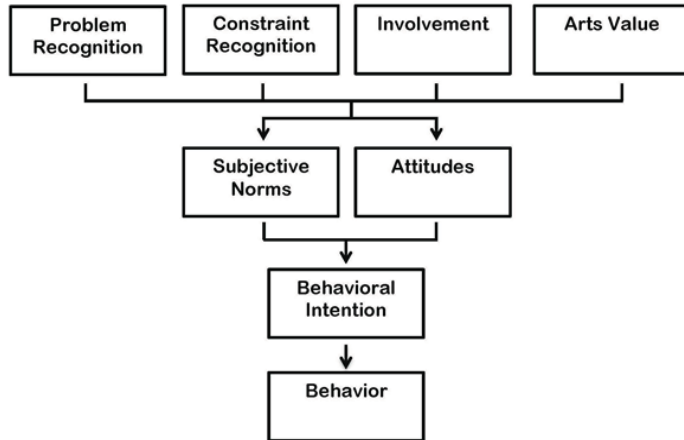


Figure 1: STP-TRA Model

Purpose of this Study

The primary purpose of this study is to learn more about communication behavior toward arts support. The question is, simply, why is support of the arts declining? More specifically, DiMaggio and Pettit (1999) report that over 90% of Americans say they supported the arts; however, declining event attendance, funding, and reduction in arts education do not support that finding.

Market research has been completed many times before by the National Endowment for the Arts, Americans for the Arts, Vh1's Save the Music and by extension Save the Arts campaigns. They focus largely on marketing- sales based initiatives of increasing audience attendance. Many studies site solutions to have better strategic communication tactics, which include flyers, advertisements, earned media efforts, newsletters, social media, and the like. There have been no case studies of the execution of these communication tactics or the effectiveness for the organizations that deployed them. Therefore, this is a first step into learning more about how people engage in the arts, albeit limited in scope.

According to previous arts research, four behavioral support functions in the arts have been identified; advocacy, education, participation, and funding. This study will focus only on the participation support function. Limiting the scope of this study is important because including all support functions are not relevant to all publics; for example, funding support may be a more salient issue to a different target audience. Therefore, studying each issue separately is suggested to learn more about communication behaviors about each support function.

For the scope of this study, findings from the Brown and Novak- Leonard (2012) participation findings will be utilized. These findings broadened the definition of participation and also included all definitions of “arts.” Although 74% of U.S. adults participated in one of the three mentioned modalities, they did indicate that 23% of adults who participated in the arts, did not attend, the majority of them in the 18- 34-age category. This age demographic is important according to the situation of the arts review. Not only because they are next audiences, but because they are defining how the arts are being consumed. The way they participate in the arts will likely change the industry.

Due to the lack of previous research, this study will be an important step toward learning more about communication behavior and arts support toward participation. However, because this is new research, this studies goal is foremost to test the model. Using the literature as a guide, this study will seek to answer research questions and test hypotheses that combine variables from the situational theory of publics and the theory of reasoned action. Below are the research questions and the hypotheses related to this study.

Hypotheses

Because research of this nature has never been conducted previously, the study seeks to examine the model and how the situational beliefs of independent variables influence the dependent variables. The situational beliefs are problem recognition, constraint recognition,

involvement, and arts value. To test the model, the study assumes the following hypotheses:

The first step of the model is to examine the situational beliefs correlations to subjective norms.

H1: There is a positive correlation between problem recognition and subjective norms.

H2: There is a negative correlation between constraint recognition and subjective norms.

H3: There is a positive correlation between involvement and subjective norms.

H4: There is a positive correlation between arts value and subjective norms.

The second step of the model is to examine the situational beliefs correlations to attitudes.

H5: There is a positive correlation between problem recognition and attitudes.

H6: There is a negative correlation between constraint recognition and attitudes.

H7: There is a positive correlation between involvement and attitudes.

H8: There is a negative correlation between arts value and attitudes.

The Theory of Reasoned Action states that the best indicator of behavior is behavioral intention; the best indicator of behavioral intention is the relative weights of subjective norms and attitudes of the intended behavior. The third step is to examine the theory within the new model.

H9: Subjective norms influence behavioral intentions toward behavior.

H10: Attitudes influence behavioral intentions toward behavior.

The next chapter will discuss the steps for testing the variables within the model.

Chapter 3: Methodology

An online survey of mass communications students enrolled at a large university was used to examine the hypotheses of this study. Variables of interest are the variables of the situational theory of publics and the theory of reasoned action, which include: problem recognition, constraint recognition, involvement, arts value, subjective norms, attitudes, behavioral intention, and behavior.

Instrumentation

Each variable was studied within the model; however, it is the situational belief set and how they influence the dependent variables that are of interest to this study. Grunig (1997) stated that problem recognition was a primary variable in whether or not a person engaged with an issue. Many previous market research studies have focused on solutions to building awareness; building a case that problem recognition is low towards arts support, and participation as a function of it (National Endowment for the Arts, 2010; Americans for the Arts, 2013). Questions typically used to measure problem recognition include “How often do you stop to think about an issue,” and “I believe there is a problem with a certain issue.” This study will seek to measure problem recognition toward arts support and participation. Questions to test the problem recognition in this arts context included: 1) I think the fine arts in the U.S. are in danger of becoming extinct; 2) Generally, I think more should be done to support the fine arts; and 3) I do not see support of the fine arts as problematic.

Brown & Novak-Leonard (2012) reported even when people attend an event; they are inhibited by other constraints, such as feeling confined by the venue experience (its not “fun”, I

can't talk to my girlfriend") (p. 30). In addition, Brown & Novak- Leonard (2012) introduced "opportunity cost" into literature, or the concept of having to choose one thing of value in lieu of another as a reason for not attending (p. 25). According to theory, these forms of constraints could influence whether or not a person engaged with an issue. Grunig (1978) stated if a person didn't feel like they could do anything to help with an issue, their constraint recognition, they didn't engage the problem. Questions typically used to measure constraint recognition are, "To what extent can you have an effect on this issue?" and "My actions will improve this issue." Questions in this arts context to test constraint recognition included 1) My actions can help support the fine arts; 2) I don't know how I can help support the fine arts; and 3) My actions are too small to help support the fine arts.

In both problem recognition and constraint recognition, the theory dictates some level of involvement (Grunig, 1997). It can be minimal, if little is known about the issue, or a lot if the person is highly aware. Grunig (1997) defined involvement as the extent that the person has emotionally attached themselves to the issue. He clarified that by stating that involvement is not that same as values, or wholly beliefs. A person could value an issue and have little involvement with it at the time. Likewise the inverse. In Fishbein's (1979) weight loss study, he found many participants who believed that in order to live a healthier life they needed to lose weight, but few took the steps to lose the weight. This study hopes to shed light on this very distinction, which the correlation between involvement and behavior. Questions typically used to measure involvement are "To what extent do you see a connection between yourself and this issue?" and "I do not feel involved to this issue." Questions in this arts context to test involvement included 1) I feel personally connected to the fine arts; 2) Generally, I feel involved with the fine arts; and 3) I often think about the fine arts.

To learn more about the involvement people have with the arts, the distinction needs to be made with their value in the arts. Therefore, the variable of arts value was added to this

study. No previous studies utilized this measure, however the literature dictates that values are deeply ingrained with measurable societal benefits. Therefore, the questions suggested include “The arts are important to my life,” “The arts are valuable to my community,” and “I value participating in the arts.”

Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) defined subjective norms as how the affect of peer groups influences the intended behavior. Because the arts are largely a social function and practice, this variable is an important factor to this study. Questions typically used to measure subjective norms include, “People who are important to me think the intended behavior is important, “ and “Most people think the intended behavior is important.” Questions in this arts context included 1) My family has been involved in the fine arts; 2) People who are important to me think the fine arts are meaningful; 3) Most people think the fine arts are important; and 4) My friends enjoy the fine arts. All previous questions were on a likert scale from one to seven, one being strongly disagree to seven being strongly agree.

Attitude towards the intended variable is also an important variable to this study. Even if a person is involved with the arts and values its existence, they still may not attend an event because they simply don’t like Opera, for example. Questions typically used to measure attitudes include, “I feel positively toward the intended behavior,” and “I believe the intended behavior will have a positive outcome.” To test the dependent variable of attitudes in this arts context, it included one three part range question; “My attitude toward the fine arts (jazz, symphonic, operatic, Broadway style music, ballet and other forms of dance, visual arts that include museums and galleries, live theatre productions like plays and musicals).” The scales included bad to good, unfavorable to favorable, and negative to positive.

This study will investigate the correlations between the stated variables, but most importantly it seeks to understand how they influence behavioral intention. Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) stated a person’s intention to act is the best indicator of behavior. Questions typically

used to measure behavior intention include, "I intend to engage in the behavior." This study will also seek information on past behaviors, which Fishbein (1979) stated had an impact on beliefs, but not always on behavioral intentions. The questions related to past behaviors will include frequency of arts participation related to Brown and Novak- Leonard (2012) three modes, attendance, creation and media participation. These questions will used to measure actual behavior.

Grunig (1997) had stated that information seeking and processing were communication behaviors, therefore it is the hypothesis of the model in this thesis that behavior intentions as defined by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) are interchangeable. Therefore, the questions to test Behavioral Intentions included 1) I plan on learning more about how I can support the fine arts; 2) I plan to seek information about the fine arts in Tampa Bay; 3) I plan to seek information about the fine arts at USF; and 4) I plan to support to the fine arts by participating in them. Questions to test Behavior included 1) I frequently support the fine arts by attending events, 2) I frequently support the fine arts by creating my own artwork; including music, visual art, theatre, and dance; 3) I frequently support the fine arts by engaging in them online, through my mobile device, and/ or television; and 4) I frequently support the fine arts by participating in them.

A pre-test of the survey was sent to 30 randomly selected students (non-Mass Communications students). The results indicated several grammar and spelling errors that were corrected on the survey. It also revealed that several of the test subjects thought that the Behavior items; "I frequently support the fine arts by attending events" and "I frequently support the fine arts by participating in them," were duplicates. Therefore, the second item was dropped.

Sampling procedures

USF School of Mass communications students at the University of South Florida were selected as the population of interest for this study. Approximately 1100 undergraduate and

graduate students are enrolled in this program. This “sample of convenience” (Giere, 1997) was chosen because of its accessibility. Because the study is foremost to test the model and to learn more about communication behavior toward arts participation, requiring a random sample of a whole population isn’t needed. According to Stacks (2011), experimental design would be the best method of research to test a model with behavior intentions. A minimum number of 100 surveys are required for relevant analysis of data for a sample of convenience.

Data collection procedures

Due to the availability of email addresses and the benefits of the Internet-based surveys (Couper, 2000; Dillman, 2000), an online mode of survey administration was used to collect data for this study. The survey questionnaire was built in the online survey tool, Survey Monkey. This tool generates a customizable link distributed via email to students. To ensure respondent confidentiality, online survey responses were not linked to email addresses in any way. Students were contacted via email three times. They received a prenotification message, a request for participation, and a reminder notice. All messages contained the words “The Arts Participation Study” in the subject field of the emails. A copy of the notifications can be found in the appendix.

The USF School of Mass Communications Blackboard listserv was used to distribute the survey. The principle investigator submitted the notification statements with Survey Monkey survey link to the department and the department then sent the survey to the listserv. The Director of Graduate Studies approved the policy to use the Mass Communications listserv to use for research purposes. The notifications were sent to 1,100 students within the department of Mass Communications; 122 surveys were attempted, of those 106 were completed fully for data analysis resulting in an approximate 10% return rate (9.6% to be exact). As previously mentioned, a minimum of 100 returned surveys is required for relevant data analysis. According

to Stacks (2011), a return rate of this size is relevant in a convenience sample and can provide informative data toward the population surveyed.

Data Analysis Procedures

Data analysis will be conducted using SPSS for MAC. A $p < .05$ significance level was used for all statistical tests performed. Due to the nature of the survey instrument, partially completed questionnaires were used in the data analysis, therefore the number of respondents varied for each statistical test. To test the reliability of scales, Cronbach's alpha was performed on each set of questions. A Cronbach alpha of .70 was considered reliable (Stacks, 2002). When a Cronbach's alpha was not above .70, each item was tested individually. Two sets of items did not meet Cronbach's alpha reliable .70 levels. The items for problem recognition and one item in subject norm (further analysis below) did not exceed .70. The item for problem recognition was analyzed individually and one item was dropped from subjective norm. Pearson Correlation tests were run to test the hypotheses. To determine the relative importance of the variables, multiple regression analysis was used.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between variables identified in two theories, the situational theory of publics and theory of reasoned action, by researching a model that attempts to explain communication behavior of publics. This study also seeks to further research in arts as it relates to mass communication. Limited research exists to help inform the industry how it can move forward support and participation in the arts. A model was suggested on how to better predict communication behavior by combining the variables of the situational theory of publics and the theory of reasoned action. Ten hypotheses were tested and the results are provided below.

Descriptive Statistics

Of the 106 respondents (n=106), the majority of those surveyed (78.5%) were undergraduate students (graduate 10.3%, other 5.6%, abstained 4.7%). The majority of those were also millennials, ages 18- 25 years old, a combined 75.7% (18-21, 52.3%; 22-25, 23.4%; 26-29, 8.4%; 20-33, 3.7%; 33-34, 0.9; 35- older, 4.7%; abstained from answering, 5.6%). 72% were female, 22.4% male and 5% preferred not to answer. More than half, specifically 66.3% also had previous arts training (31.8% said no, 4.7% declined to answer).

The following set of statistics are the summaries of the three components of the situational theory of publics based on a seven-point Likert scale from one (*Strongly Disagree*) to seven (*Strongly Agree*). Regarding STP, the second item in the problem recognition set had the highest mean ($M=5.83$, $StDev.= 1.150$). The lowest mean was the third constraint recognition item ($M= 3.67$, $StDev.= 1.656$).

Table 1			
<i>Descriptive Statistics STP Variables</i>			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
PR2: Generally, I think more should be done to support the fine arts.	106	5.83	1.150
IV1: I feel personally connected to the fine arts.	106	5.31	1.687
CR1REV: My actions can help support the fine arts.	103	5.13	1.333
IV3: I often think about the fine arts.	104	4.90	1.851
IV2: Generally, I feel involved with the fine arts.	106	4.69	1.742
PR1: I think the fine arts in the U.S. are in danger of becoming extinct.	106	4.43	1.718
CR2: I don't know how I can help support the fine arts.	105	4.42	1.691
PR3REV: I do not see support of the fine arts as problematic.	106	3.98	1.751
CR3: My actions are too small to help support the fine arts.	105	3.67	1.656
Valid N (listwise)	99		

Table 2 depicts the salient belief variable item descriptive statistics. The highest mean was item three ($M= 6.21$, $StDev.= .997$). The lowest mean in the set was the first arts value item ($M= 5.35$, $StDev.= 1.543$).

Table 2			
<i>Descriptive Statistics Arts Value</i>			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
AV3: I value the fine arts.	105	6.21	.997
AV2: Fine arts are valuable to my community.	106	5.80	1.174
AV1: Fine arts bring meaning to my life.	106	5.35	1.543
Valid N (listwise)	105		

Table 3 depicts the descriptive statistics of the dependent variables of subjective norms and attitudes. The highest mean was the first scaled attitude item, which was negative to positive ($M= 6.58$, $StDev.= .791$). The lowest mean for attitudes was the second scale, which was unfavorable to favorable ($M= 6.54$, $StDev.= .821$). The lowest mean in the set was the third subjective norm item, ($M= 4.04$, $StDev= 1.467$).

Table 3			
<i>Descriptive Statistics Dependent Variables</i>			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
A3: My attitude toward the fine arts are:	106	6.58	.791
A1: My attitude toward the fine arts are:	105	6.57	.807
A2: My attitude toward the fine arts are:	105	6.54	.821
SN4: My friends enjoy the fine arts.	104	5.36	1.222
SN2: People who are important to me think the fine arts are meaningful.	106	5.23	1.423
SN1: My family has been involved in the fine arts.	106	4.73	1.915
SN3: Most people think the fine arts are important.	105	4.04	1.467
Valid N (listwise)	102		

Table 4 shows the mean variables for behavioral intentions and behavior. The highest mean overall was for the third behavior item ($M=5.00$, $StDev= 1.767$). The lowest overall mean was for the second behavior item ($M= 4.39$, $StDev.=2.015$). The highest mean for behavioral intention was for the second item ($M= 4.71$, $StDev.= 1.526$). The lowest mean for behavioral intention was the first item ($M=4.56$, $StDev.= 1.526$).

Table 4			
<i>Descriptive Statistics Behavior</i>			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
B3: I frequently support the fine arts by engaging in them online, through my mobile device, and/ or television.	99	5.00	1.767
B1: I frequently support the fine arts by attending events.	100	4.80	1.608
BI2: I plan to seek information about the fine arts in Tampa Bay.	100	4.71	1.526
BI3: I plan to seek information about the fine arts at USF.	101	4.71	1.602
BI4: I plan to support the fine arts by participating in them.	101	4.57	1.813
BI1: I plan on learning more about how I can support the fine arts.	101	4.56	1.526
B2: I support the fine arts by creating my own artwork; including music, visual art, theatre, and dance.	101	4.39	2.015
Valid N (listwise)	97		

Reliability Testing

Each set of questions was then tested for reliability using Cronbach's alpha. A Cronbach's Alpha of .70 or above was considered reliable (Stacks, 2002). The problem recognition set produced a Cronbach's alpha of .426. After further scrutiny of the internal consistency test, the decision was made to use a single item measure for problem recognition.

Specifically item one; “I think the fine arts in the U.S. are in danger of becoming extinct” was used as a single-item measure. The Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for constraint recognition was .743, for involvement it was .911, and for arts value it was .841. The Cronbach’s alpha for subjective norm was .665. Item three was removed from the four question set, leaving questions one, two and four resulting in a Cronbach’s alpha of .702. The Cronbach’s alpha for attitudes was .981; for behavioral intention it was .896; and for behavior it was .779. This reliability testing allowed each set of items to be averaged together to create a composite measure of each variable of interest for hypothesis testing.

Hypotheses Testing

H1, H2, H3, and H4 asks if there is a correlation between problem recognition, constraint recognition, involvement, arts value and subjective norms; respectively. The results show that at $p < .05$, problem recognition was not correlated with subjective norms at $p = .031$. There are positive relationships with involvement and arts value toward subjective norm and negative relationship with constraint recognition.

Table 5						
H1- H4 Correlations						
		SN	PR1	CR	INV	ArtVal
SN	Pearson Correlation	1	.031	-.607**	.619**	.583**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.756	.000	.000	.000
	N	104	104	99	102	103

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Findings show that all four variables, problem recognition, constraint recognition, involvement, and arts value are significant predictors of subjective norms, $R^2 = .479$, Adj. $R^2 = .456$, $F = 20.890$, $p = .000$. After running a multiple regression test, both constraint recognition ($p = .001$) and arts value ($p = .045$) are unique predictors toward subjective norm.

Table 6
H1- H4 Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.946	.825		4.783	.000
	PR1	.019	.055	.027	.346	.730
	CR	-.332	.100	-.346	-3.315	.001
	INV	.160	.100	.213	1.601	.113
	ArtVal	.261	.129	.235	2.028	.045

a. Dependent Variable: SN

H5, H6, H7, and H8 asks if there is a correlation between problem recognition, constraint recognition, involvement, arts value and attitude; respectively. The results show that at $p < .05$, problem recognition was not correlated with attitudes at $p = .026$. The results showed that there are positive relationships with involvement and arts value and a negative relationship with constraint recognition toward attitude.

Table 7						
H5- H8 Correlations						
		ATT	PR1	CR	INV	ArtVal
ATT	Pearson Correlation	1	.026	-.420**	.556**	.607**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.796	.000	.000	.000
	N	104	104	99	102	103

Findings show that all four variables, problem recognition, constraint recognition, involvement, and arts value are significant predictors of attitude, $R^2 = .389$, $Adj. R^2 = .363$, $F = 14.510$, $p = .000$. After running a multiple regression test, Arts Value ($p = .002$) is a unique predictor toward attitudes.

Table 8						
H5-H8 Coefficients^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	4.443	.588		7.552	.000
	PR1	-.004	.039	-.008	-.095	.924
	CR	-.035	.071	-.055	-.486	.628
	INV	.109	.072	.219	1.522	.132
	ArtVal	.296	.092	.405	3.232	.002

a. Dependent Variable: ATT

H9 and H10 test the remaining elements of the model. H9 and H10 predicted that subjective norms and attitudes influence behavioral intentions; respectively. The findings support this hypothesis, $R^2 = .308$, $\text{Adj. } R^2 = .293$, $F = 20.908$, $p = .000$.

Table 9
H9-H10 Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-1.305	1.057		-1.235	.220
	SN	.415	.111	.351	3.753	.000
	ATT	.577	.173	.312	3.339	.001

a. Dependent Variable: BI

Further Exploration

Because the survey additionally asked questions regarding behavior, we ran three additional multiple regression models to test toward behavior. The first model that was tested, as suggested, and in keeping with the theory of reasoned action, dictates that behavioral intention influence behavior. This was supported by the results, $R^2 = .528$, $\text{Adj. } R^2 = .522$, $F = 93.858$, $p = .000$. The second test adds subjective norm and attitude in this model together with behavioral intention to see which has the strongest influence. The model is still supported, $R^2 = .624$, $\text{Adj. } R^2 = .610$, $F = 45.288$, $p = .000$. Behavioral intention maintains the most influence with $p = .000$. The third test added all of the variables. The model was still supported, $R^2 = .690$, $\text{Adj. } R^2 = .663$, $F = 24.841$, $p = .000$. Behavioral intention was still the most significant predictor of behavior, however involvement ($p = .009$) showed significance as well.

Table 10***Further Exploration Coefficients^a***

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.923	.412		2.239	.028
	BI	.812	.084	.726	9.688	.000
2	(Constant)	-2.534	.981		-2.584	.012
	BI	.610	.088	.546	6.958	.000
	ATT	.420	.164	.196	2.555	.012
	SN	.312	.101	.237	3.097	.003
3	(Constant)	-1.091	1.294		-.844	.401
	BI	.383	.107	.343	3.598	.001
	ATT	.255	.160	.119	1.597	.114
	SN	.069	.114	.053	.606	.546
	PR1	.065	.059	.075	1.091	.279
	CR	-.127	.122	-.104	-1.041	.301
	INV	.296	.110	.305	2.692	.009
	ArtVal	.112	.152	.072	.732	.466

a. Dependent Variable: BEH

The next chapter will further discuss the findings of this study and future research implications.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to first advance the situational theory of publics and the theory of reasoned action. The findings of this study are relevant to informing the next steps to research. The study examined the variables within the model, which was preliminarily supported by the data. While the population was only of mass communication students at a large university, further research should be conducted to continue to test the model. Aspects of model continue to support the original theories. Correlation tests resulted in positive relationships with involvement and arts value toward attitude and subjective norms; and a negative relationship with constraint recognition with subjective norm and attitude. In this study, problem recognition was not correlated with either subjective norm or attitudes. However, according to the data, the independent variables influence the dependent variables in this context. To really understand the data we'll look at the variables individually.

The respondents were moderate toward problem recognition. A four within the survey results represented "undecided," a five "slightly agree," and a six "agree." They were undecided ($M= 3.98$) regarding "I do not see support of the fine arts as problematic," agreeable ($M= 5.83$) toward "Generally, I think more should be done to support the fine arts," and they slightly agreed ($M= 4.43$) with "I think the fine arts in the U.S. are in danger of becoming extinct." Respondents only slightly saw an issue with support of the fine arts, recognizing that there may be a problem in item one (the arts are in danger of becoming extinct). The failure with the item "I think more should be done to support the arts," is that it does not insinuate that the respondent recognize there is an issue, only that they are favorable to helping to support, which in this context they are. Problem recognition was the least supported variable in the set, and was not correlated with either subjective norms or attitudes. This question also had lowest Cronbach alpha

reliability (.70) as well, which begs the question did the respondents not truly recognize a problem? Item one was chosen because internal reliability was greater than item two, however, based on the means, item two was more favorable by the respondents with a higher mean. This could be because the item posited two different sentiments, the thoughts of the respondents towards the arts danger of becoming extinct, an external analysis, and the second, their general support toward the arts. An internal analysis, more closely linked to a belief. The National Endowment for The Arts (2009) reports that fewer Americans recognize that the arts are in a need of support, despite campaigns trying to communicate the very problem. Although, when asked they say they do support the arts (National Endowment for The Arts, 2009; Wolf, 1999). In addition, preliminary research found in this study suggests that many millennials, the age range primarily surveyed, don't view a difference between fine arts and popular arts. This could also result in lower problem recognition.

Respondents felt generally unconstrained in support for the arts. The data states that they generally felt like they knew they could help the arts ("my actions can help support the fine arts" was high), they just didn't know how ("I don't know how I can help support the fine arts" was also high.). Regarding "My actions can help support the fine arts," respondents only slightly agreed ($M= 5.13$). They slightly agree ($M= 4.42$ when asked "I don't know how I can help support the fine arts." However, they felt undecided ($M= 3.67$) regarding "My actions are too small to help support the fine arts." Constraint recognition was a unique predictor toward subjective norm, a surprising independent variable to influence as opposed to attitude. Constraint recognition is a personal assessment on how one feels they can influence an outcome. Based on this study, it would interesting for further research to include constraints that include subjective norm variables (family obligations keep me from attending arts events, arts events are too expensive), as well as the typical questions asked to see if the question is still a unique indicator.

Respondents were only slightly more involved with the arts. They slightly agreed with all questions; they were personally connected ($M= 5.31$), felt generally involved ($M= 4.69$), and often thought about the arts ($M= 4.9$). During further exploration (Table 10) we tested all of the variables of the model toward behavior. As expected by the theory, behavioral intention was the most significant unique predictor, but involvement was also a unique predictor. Subjective norm and attitudes were no longer significant. In this study, comparing all variables, behavioral intention and involvement were the best predictors of behavior.

The respondents supported the integral component of the theory of reasoned action which is the salient belief added in this context as “arts value.” They agreed to all items. Regarding “The fine arts bring meaning to my life,” they agreed ($M= 5.35$). They also agreed ($M= 5.80$) that the “Fine arts are valuable to my community.” Lastly, they generally agreed ($M= 6.21$) that they “Value the fine arts.” Arts value was a unique predictor toward both subjective norm and attitude. As this was added as the salient belief variable from TRA, this finding upheld Fishbein & Ajzen’s (1975) original theory. This data suggests that by increasing peoples belief in arts value will help increase positive attitudes towards the arts.

Regarding subjective norms, respondents slightly agreed that their friends and family were involved or found meaning in the arts. They slightly agreed ($M= 4.73$) that their family had been involved in the arts. They slightly agreed ($M= 5.23$) that those that were close to them think the arts are meaningful. They also slightly agreed ($M= 5.36$) that their friends enjoyed the arts. Interestingly, they were undecided ($M= 4.04$) regarding how others felt about the arts their importance. Whether or not they were actually undecided or that was just the average answer, the response is telling that subjective feeling moderate in this case. Regarding attitudes, there were three scales, bad to good ($M=6.57$), unfavorable to favorable ($M=6.54$), and negative to positive ($M= 6.58$). The data supported that these dependent variables influence behavioral intentions; however, subjective norms ($p=.000$) slightly more than attitudes ($p=.001$). This

suggests that how the respondents weigh others opinions matter more in this context. Two unique predictors help influence subjective norm more in this context as well, constraint recognition and arts value. Therefore, in this context, the optimal profile of an arts attendee in this instance would be someone with low constraints, value the arts, and have family or friends who also think favorable toward the arts.

The respondents slightly agreed that they plan to support the arts or already do. Regarding intended behavior, they slightly agreed (mean= 4.56) they plan on learning more. The respondents slightly agreed ($M= 4.71$) they would seek additional information about the fine arts in Tampa Bay and about USF ($M= 4.71$). In accordance with TRA, behavioral intention was the most significant unique predictor in all three further exploration models. Regarding behavior, the respondents slightly agreed ($M= 4.57$) that they planned to support the fine arts by participating in them. The respondents slightly agreed ($M= 4.80$) that they supported the fine arts by attending events and engaging with them through electronic means ($M= 5.00$). The mean results showed that the respondents were undecided ($M= 4.39$) regarding whether or not they support the arts by creating their own artwork. As expected from previous research, millennials engage with the arts more through electronic vehicles, which was also the case in this study. It was stated in several Americans for the Arts (2013) cases that it behooves arts organizations to find innovative and contemporary ways to integrate the arts into the mobile device.

Several additional points to note from the data, arts value is the only variable that was a unique predictor to both subjective norm and attitude. This suggests that arts value is an integral point to communicate. In addition, the general failure of problem recognition suggests that this population does not sense there is problem. While, as expected, they support and value the arts, they see them in no imminent danger. Future research of this model should be done on a general population to gather richer data to learn these very points for all arts organizations. How

would these findings change the conversation for the industry? Americans for the Arts (2013) already distributes a “Reasons to Support the Arts” document that helps to communicate the value; therefore does the conversation change to constraints? Why do people just not go? In this study, the respondents suggested they didn’t know how they could support the arts. The model is a plethora of data. Additional research implications are discussed below.

Conclusion

Additional research for this study would be to test the model in a general population experiment. This would allow for generalizable results and also test the model. This model is an important step in public relation theory and measuring communication behavior. Not only can this model help to segment publics by their communication behavior, but actual behavior depending on the theme measured. It has possibility to segment publics by loyalty and also predicting why a public can and can’t become a loyal public. For example, using this study as an example, we learned that in an arts context this sample population had issues recognizing that the arts were in any danger of becoming extinct. They felt favorably toward the arts, and were involved. As predictors for behaviors, publics that are involved in the arts and have intrinsic value of the arts are obviously more apt to behave; however what was also interesting from the data those with low constraint recognition are apt to be supportive. Or otherwise put, if support of the arts is made easy, then they are more likely to act. Arts organizations can use this data to help further their communications plans at both marketing and communications strategic operations. By understanding why a public communicates, when they are apt to do so, and their feelings towards those communication behaviors, arts organizations can predict how to change the dialogue with that public and make an impact.

There were several limitations to this study. First, the theme of this study proved to be a challenge. The arts, in and of itself, are subjective in nature. To study them in an objective point

of view, or in a general sense proved a difficult process when constructing the instrumentation. The second limitation was the low response rate of 10%. Had there been a higher response rate for this study, there may have been stronger findings for problem recognition. Problem recognition was the single item measure used and a problematic question from inception. Difficult wording on the survey could have led to skewed results and thus the weaker significance as well. In addition, as indicated, the subjective definition of “the arts” could have also impacted problem recognition results. Lastly, as mentioned, while a survey was an acceptable method to test the variables of the model, an experiment would have been a more appropriate research instrument to test behavior and the model, deterministically.

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Appendix

Instrumentation

The Arts

The following survey seeks your experience and knowledge about the fine arts. For the purpose of this study the "fine arts" are being defined as arts that are typically viewed live and in a formal setting. For example jazz, symphonic, operatic, Broadway style music, ballet, modern and other forms of dance, visual arts that include museums and galleries, live theatre productions like plays and musicals. These are generalizations for the purpose of the study.

Problem Recognition

1. I think the fine arts in the U.S. are in danger of becoming extinct.
2. Generally, I think more should be done to support the fine arts.
3. I do not see support of the fine arts as problematic.

Strongly disagree _ _ _ _ _ Strongly Agree

Constraint Recognition

1. My actions can help support the fine arts.
2. I don't know how I can help support the fine arts.
3. My actions are too small to help support the fine arts.

Strongly Disagree _ _ _ _ _ Strongly Agree

Involvement

1. I feel personally connected to the fine arts.
2. Generally, I feel involved with the fine arts.
3. I often think about the fine arts.

Strongly Disagree _ _ _ _ _ Strongly Agree

Arts Value

1. Fine arts bring meaning to my life.
2. Fine arts are valuable to my community.
3. I value the fine arts.

Strongly Disagree _ _ _ _ _ Strongly Agree

Subjective Norms

1. My family has been involved in the fine arts.
2. People who are important to me think the fine arts are meaningful.
3. Most people think the fine arts are important.
4. My friends enjoy the fine arts.

Strongly Disagree _ _ _ _ _ Strongly Agree

Attitudes

1. My attitude toward the fine arts (jazz, symphonic, operatic, Broadway style music, ballet

and other forms of dance, visual arts that include museums and galleries, live theatre productions like plays and musicals)` are:

- a. Bad to good
- b. Unfavorable to favorable
- c. Negative to positive

Behavioral Intentions

1. I plan on learning more about how I can support the fine arts.
2. I plan to seek information about the fine arts in Tampa Bay.
3. I plan to seek information about the fine arts at USF.
4. I plan to support to the fine arts by participating in them.

Strongly Disagree _ _ _ _ _ Strongly Agree

Behavior

1. I frequently support the fine arts by attending events.
2. I frequently support the fine arts by creating my own artwork; including music, visual art, theatre, and dance.
3. I frequently support the fine arts by engaging in them online, through my mobile device, and/ or television.
4. I frequently support the fine arts by participating in them.

Strongly Disagree _ _ _ _ _ Strongly Agree

Demographic Questions:

1. Gender:
Male
Female
Prefer not to answer

2. Age:
17 or younger
18-21
22-25
26-29
30-33
33-34
35 or older

3. I am:
An undergraduate student
A graduate student
An employee at the university
Other

4. Are you currently enrolled in classes or have you ever been trained in the fine arts?
Yes
No

Notifications

Pre- Notification

Hi,

My name is Ashleigh. I am a fellow student in the Mass Communications department and am seeking your help. In the next day you will be receiving an email from Survey Monkey with a link to a survey for my thesis research. This study is seeking your knowledge and experience about support of the fine arts. The survey should only take about 10 minutes to answer. The survey is completely confidential and voluntary. When your help would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you!

Ashleigh Gallant

Notification

Hi,

The other day you may have seen an email notifying you that you have been asked to help participate in research for my thesis study. Your help would be greatly appreciated. This study is seeking your knowledge and experience about support of the fine arts. The survey should take approximately 10 minutes to complete. It is completely confidential and voluntary.

Thank you for your help and time!

Ashleigh Gallant

Reminder

Hi,

Just a friendly reminder, you may have already received an email about participating in research for my thesis study. If you have already taken part in the survey, thank you for helping! If not, I am seeking your knowledge and experience about support of the fine arts for my thesis research. The survey should take approximately 10 minutes to complete. It is completely confidential and voluntary.

Thank you very much for your help and time!

Ashleigh Gallant

IRB Study Approval



RESEARCH INTEGRITY AND COMPLIANCE
Institutional Review Boards, FWA No. 00001669
12901 Bruce B. Downs Blvd., MDC035 • Tampa, FL 33612-4799
(813) 974-5638 • FAX (813) 974-7091

October 29, 2013

Ashley Gallant
Mass Communication
Tampa, FL 33612

RE: **Exempt Certification**

IRB#: Pro00014941

Title: Communication Behavior Study of Support in the Arts Using the Situational Theory of
Publics and the Theory of Reasoned Action

Study Approval Period: 10/29/2013 to 10/29/2018

Dear Ms. Gallant:

On 10/29/2013, the Institutional Review Board (IRB) determined that your research meets USF requirements and Federal Exemption criteria as outlined in the federal regulations at 45CFR46.101(b):

(2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless:
(i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and (ii) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

Approved Documents:

[A_GallantThesis.pdf](#)

[14941_Edits_v1.docx](#)

As the principal investigator for this study, it is your responsibility to ensure that this research is conducted as outlined in your application and consistent with the ethical principles outlined in the Belmont Report and with USF IRB policies and procedures. Please note that changes to this

protocol may disqualify it from exempt status. Please note that you are responsible for notifying the IRB prior to implementing any changes to the currently approved protocol.

The Institutional Review Board will maintain your exemption application for a period of five years from the date of this letter or for three years after a Final Progress Report is received, whichever is longer. If you wish to continue this protocol beyond five years, you will need to submit a new application at least 60 days prior to the end of your exemption approval period. Should you complete this study prior to the end of the five-year period, you must submit a request to close the study.

We appreciate your dedication to the ethical conduct of human subject research at the University of South Florida and your continued commitment to human research protections. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please call 813-974-5638.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John A. Schinka, Ph.D.".

John Schinka, Ph.D., Chairperson
USF Institutional Review Board