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# Public Perceptions of Organizational Culture and Organization-Public Relationships

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Public Perceptions of Organizational Culture  
and Organization-Public Relationships

by

Cherisse Fonseca Rivera

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts  
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## **Dedication**

*To the past because without you I would have never looked towards the future, and to the future because I never want to go to the past.*

I dedicate this thesis to my mother, Aida Zayas Fonseca, because without her I would have never made it this far in life. You have cried for me, pushed me, lifted me, and cheered me on at every experience in my life.

To my father, Jose Fonseca, D. Min., you have lead by example. You have encouraged me and shown me the power of knowledge in your own way.

I also dedicate this thesis to Derina Holtzhausen, Ph.D. because you have been the voice in my head. I never gave up on this project because of you.

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## **Abstract**

Almost 30 years ago, public relations scholars began to process the idea that the concept of culture was important to public relations practices. In particular, scholars questioned what influence culture might have on the communication process and relationship building between organizations and their stakeholders. Yet, today culture is still an understudied concept in the public relations literature. The purpose of this study is to analyze how of organizational culture, as defined by Sriramesh, J. E. Grunig, and Dozier (1996), is significant to the relationship outcomes in public relations. The theoretical framework for this study consists of organizational culture theory and organization-public relationship theory. A quantitative survey was used to measure an external public's perceptions of organizational culture and organizational-public relationships within an academic department. The research measures of authoritarian/participative culture to determine how it is related to the dimensions of organizational-public relationships, including control mutuality, trust, satisfaction, commitment, communal relationships, and exchange relationships. The results suggest how an organization can utilize perceptions of organizational culture and relationship management from external publics to develop and implement effective communication strategies.

## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction**

The concepts of organizational culture and relationship management are not new in the public relations literature. Numerous studies have examined organizational culture and how it affects public relations practice. J. Grunig, L. Grunig, and Dozier (2002) posit that public relations departments can be influential in changing the larger culture of an organization. More recently, scholars have argued that the main function of public relations practice is relationship management (Bruning, 2002). Research in this area determined that organization-public relationships, when managed effectively, does affect stakeholders' attitudes, evaluations, and behaviors (Bruning, 2002). Despite the abundant literature advocating the importance of both organizational culture and relationship management to public relations, there has been minimal research devoted to how these two concepts are related. Specifically, limited attention has been given to how organizational culture and relationship management function of public relations are related.

The concept of culture, also referred to as societal culture, emerged from the field of anthropology. However, a commonly agreed-upon definition has not been produced, and many articulations and descriptions of culture exist. For example, Kluckhohn (1951) defined culture as a way of thinking, feeling, and reacting. Many scholars, such as Deal and Kennedy (1982), describe culture as a set of core values. Mitroff (1983) defined

culture as shared meanings or symbols. Hofstede (2001) viewed values, which consists of symbols, heroes, and rituals, as the part of culture that cannot be seen (p. 10). Hofstede (1980) defined culture as “the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another” (p. 21).

L. Grunig, J. Grunig, and Dozier (2002) collaborated to find similarities among all the definitions they studied and came up with one, which provides the conceptual definition of culture used in this study. Specifically, “culture is the sum total of shared values, symbols, meanings, beliefs, assumptions, and expectations that organize and integrate a group of people who work together” (L. Grunig, J. Grunig, & Dozier, 2002, p. 482).

Essentially, L. Grunig, J. Grunig, and Dozier (2002) determined that organizational culture is composed of a set of assumptions that provide an organizational worldview and what is produced from it. Values, stories, myths, artifacts, and rituals may be considered to be the product of the worldview. Hofstede (1980) was among the first to link societal culture with organizational behavior, asserting that values are the framework that contributes to culture. Victor (1992) argued that people learn culture, which functions within a group, and that culture is “inseparably tied to communication” (p. 6). He went on to say that “a person’s culture shapes a host of business communication factors” (p. 7).

Similarly, organization-public relationship management theory is founded in communication (Broom, Case, & Ritchey, 1997). Walton (1969) suggested that communication is “the most significant factor accounting for the total behavior of the organization” and the dynamics of the organization can be best understood through its systems of communication (p. 109). Communication leads to relationship building.

Relationships are a connection, association, or involvement, and they represent the exchange or transfer of information, energy, or resources (Broom et. al, 1997, p. 94).

Therefore, a relationship can be formed through social and cultural norms—the sum total of shared values, symbols, meanings, beliefs, assumptions, and expectations that organize and integrate a group of people.

Despite the shared conceptual foundation of organizational culture and relationship management, these aspects of public relations scholarship and practice have not been strongly linked to their contributions to organizational effectiveness. “Culture—although fundamental to any relationship building effort—has yet to be integrated into the discussion of relationship building” (Sriramesh, 2007).

The purpose of this study is to analyze how organizational culture is significant to relational outcomes in public relations. This study attempts to extend theory related to organizational culture and the dimensions of organization-public relationships. Specifically, this study seeks to extend public relations theory by examining how measures of authoritarian/participative culture relate to and influence dimensions of organization-public relationships, including variables of trust, commitment, control mutuality, and satisfaction.

This study attempts to determine how culture might have an effect on the communication process and relationship building function of public relations. Specifically, it asks how perceptions of organizational culture are related to perceptions of organization-public relationships. Therefore, it empirically tests the following hypotheses and related propositions:

H1: Perceptions of participative culture are positively related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

P1.1: Perceptions of participative management style are positively related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

P1.2: The organizational values of innovation, efficiency, and liberalism are positively related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

P1.3: An open organizational environment is positively related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

H2: Perceptions of authoritarian culture are inversely related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

P2.1: Perceptions of authoritarian management style are inversely related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

P2.2: The organizational values of tradition and conservatism are inversely related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

P2.3: A closed organizational environment is inversely related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

H3: Authoritarian culture is positively related to exchange relationships.

H4: Participative is positively related to communal relationships.

To test these hypotheses and propositions, a quantitative survey was used to measure perceptions of organizational culture and perceptions of organization-public relationship. The findings of the survey provide a better understanding of how

organizational culture and relationship management are related and influence one another in the context of an organization (academic department) and one of its key publics (residents).

This study is significant because of its ability to contribute to public relations theory and practice. It will build on previous public relations studies on organizational culture and relationship management to further public relations theory. The hope is that the concept of culture will continue to be integrated into the discussion of relationship building. From an applied perspective, the research presented here can provide public relations departments with effective tools to bring change within organizations to build positive relationships.

Chapter two of this study provides a review of the literature on organizational culture and organization-public relationships. This includes a definition, the importance, and measures of organizational culture. Furthermore, the literature illustrates a link between organizational culture and public relations, as well as relationship management theory. The literature suggests that both concepts influence effective public relations practices.

Chapter three describes the methodology used to gather and analyze data for this study. Chapter four presents the results of the study, and chapter five offers a discussion on the findings of the survey. Chapter six presents the conclusions, including limitations and directions for further research on this topic.



## **Chapter Two**

### **Literature Review**

*“Culture is an idea whose time has come.” (Smircich, 1983, p. 339).*

This study builds on previous studies that have attempted to understand and explain effective public relations practice. J. Grunig, L. Grunig, and Dozier (2002) introduced two distinct types of culture in the Excellence Study: authoritarian and participative cultures. This study uses the measures of authoritarian and participative cultures to determine how they relate to the dimensions of organization-public relationships. This study also uses Hon and J. Grunig’s (1999) six measures of relationship management: control mutuality, trust, satisfaction, commitment, exchange relationship, and communal relationship.

This chapter provides a review of the literature linking culture and organizations. It attempts to explain the concept of organizational culture, the importance of organizational culture, organizational culture and public relations, and measurements of organizational culture. The last part of the chapter focuses on the concept of organization-public relationships, relationship management theory, types of relationships, and dimensions of relationship quality.

#### **Organizational Culture**

According to Smircich (1983), there are different links between culture and organizations. First, Smircich argues that a country transmit culture to an organization

through its employees. Second, organizational culture (internal culture) exists within a societal culture. The last three linkages Smircich posited view culture not as separate from the organization but as something the organization is. Sriramesh and White (1992) describe it as organizations that “each respectively take cognitive, symbolic, and structural perspectives of organizations” (p. 600). Their research determined that societal culture is equally important as corporate culture because it influences the “organization’s human resources as well as its corporate culture” (1992, p. 601).

Whereas societal culture is external to the organization, organizational culture deals with the internal patterns, behaviors, values, beliefs, etc., of an organization. Coinciding with the definition of culture, scholars have provided a plethora of definitions for organizational culture. Culture can be seen as “the glue that hold excellent organizations together and keep mediocre organizations mediocre” (Sriramesh, J. Grunig, & Buffington, 1992, p. 577).

Sriramesh, J. Grunig, and Buffington (1992) referred to organizational culture as the *rules* and *ropes* employees must learn in order to be accepted within the organization. Schein (1985) defined organizational culture as unknown beliefs, which help members of an organization define their views and how it relates to the environment. Schein’s (1985) work defines organizational culture as “the basic assumption that a given group has invented, discovered, or developed in learning to cope with its problems” (p. 6).

Deal and Kennedy (1982) viewed organizational culture as a set of principal values adopted by an organization. They argued that these values determine how an organization will function, from products produced to issues of human resources. Ouchi (1981), along with Pascale and Athos (1981), used the term “philosophy” in their

definitions of organizational culture. They argued that these “philosophies” pushed the policies of an organization onto its customers and employees. These “philosophies” are established over a long period of time and are passed on from one generation to the next.

Many scholars who study organizational culture have described it as containing signs and symbols and have included the concept of stories as an important part of organizational culture. Barley (1983) took this approach and investigated how the use of signs helps create the meaning of communication, identifying the culture within an organization. Martin, Feldman, Hatch, and Sitkin (1983) conducted a study in which they focused strictly on stories. They argued that “stories were selected because they generate, as well as reflect, changes in organizations... stories include rich detail and carry multiple interpretations” (Martin et al., 1983, p. 439).

Hatch (2006) provided a list of the most widely used definitions of organizational culture within her text. Her analysis found that most the definitions included the concepts of shared meanings, beliefs, assumptions, understandings, norms, values, and knowledge, which are common among groups of people. Hatch pointed out that, among all the definitions, the common themes illustrate organizational and subcultural levels of analysis. “This is because culture is a particular way of life among people or community, and organizations are communities that sometimes grow to be complex enough to sustain smaller communities or subcultures” (Hatch, 2006, p. 177). Hatch (2006) defines subculture as a group of members within an organization that identify themselves separately and make decisions based on their “unique collective” understanding (p. 176). She explains that typically the dominant subculture in the organization is set apart by

senior executives and this explains why organizational culture is often called corporate culture.

The definitions included in this review provide a conceptual understanding of organizational culture. Sriamesh, J. Grunig and Dozier (1996) stated that it is “necessary to unify the concept and arrive at comprehensive measures to identify it in organizations” (p. 234). The following section provides a review of the literature related to the importance of organizational culture.

### **The Importance of Organizational Culture**

A conceptual understanding of organizational culture begins to provide an understanding of why organizational culture is important. Deal and Kennedy (1982) argued that organizations do not only pass along products and services, but also values and beliefs as well. Ultimately, a firm understanding of organizational culture can contribute to increased effectiveness of the organization. Sriramesh, J. Grunig, and Dozier (1996) state that “organizational effectiveness is the ultimate aim of most managers” (p. 234). Smircich’s (1983) analysis of the literature revealed that organizational culture is a key tool that strategic managers can use to achieve organizational effectiveness.

According to Tichy (1982), organizational culture is complex and difficult to identify, but it has the most widespread influence on organizational effectiveness (p. 62). Tichy used a metaphorical analysis to reinforce the importance of organizational culture. He referred to an organization as a “strategic rope” made up of three intertwined strands. Each strand represents what he identifies as the key elements—known as environments—that impact an organization. The strands are technical, political, and cultural, and “at first,

from a distance, individual strands are not distinguishable” (p. 63). In addition, just as a major strand of a rope is made of multiple strands of ropes, the “strategic rope” is multifaceted. A thorough analysis of an organization will identify many subsystems, which can be related to subcultures. Last, Tichy uses the image of separating the rope to explain that when the strands are taken apart, the rope becomes weaker. The same happens within organizations whose subcultures begin to clash. “Therefore, the author argued, it is important to know and understand corporate culture” (Sriramesh, J. Grunig, Buffington, 1992, p. 584).

Schein (1992) decided to add a number of practical suggestions for dealing with organizational culture to his work. First, analyzing culture reveals what goes on inside the organization when subcultures exist. The concept of culture is not only important at the organizational level, but it provides an understanding of how different groups work within organizations. Schein states that most often this issue is viewed as a “communication failure” when it is a breakdown of intercultural communications. Second, studying culture “is necessary if we are to understand how new technologies influence and are influenced by organizations” (p. xii). Culture can help an organization understand how new technology influences different groups within the organization both at the development and implementation stages. Third, understanding culture is important when being informed how to manage organizations across national and ethnic boundaries. As organizations build relationships with organizations of other nations and cultures, managers must be able to analyze and solve cultural misunderstandings. Last, culture can be the primary source of resistance when it comes to “organizational learning,” “development,” and “planned change.” Organizational change often involves

some changes in culture, and many times at the subcultural level (p. xiv). Schein argued that, because of these issues, the study of organizational culture must increase and a solid conceptual foundation must be established.

In recent years, business scholars have studied organizational culture and found that its importance is tied to the notion of organizational change. Ke and Wei (2008) discovered that organizational culture was “important to the success of projects involving organizational change” (p. 209). Cameron and Quinn (2006) argued that change in organizations is unavoidable due to the rapid growth and change of external environments. Their research revealed that without change in organizational culture organizations cannot expect to pursue improvement in organizational performance (p. 11). Many organizations have the tools and techniques needed to implement change, but most times organizational change fails because the “fundamental” culture of the organization is not taken into consideration. Organizations fail to study and change values, managerial styles, ways of thinking, and approaches to problem solving (Cameron & Quinn, 2006). Sun (2008) concluded that organizational culture should not be ignored “because culture can be used as a competitive advantage during organizational development” (p. 140). An organizational culture where beliefs and values are widely shared can also have advantages with cooperation, control, communication, and commitment (Sun, 2008, p. 141).

At the core of the literature on the importance of organizational culture is the thought that organizational culture can be managed. Martin, Sitkin, and Boehm (1985) identified two schools of thought. The first is of cultural pragmatists who argue that organizational culture can be managed. They view culture as a tool, which is key to

organizational effectiveness and profitability and can be managed to accomplish organizational goals set by management. Martin et al. (1985) labeled the second school of thought as purists. Purists argue that organizational culture is inherent and cannot be managed. Moreover, purists believe that culture evolves from the majority of individuals in the organization.

Public relations scholars who study organizational culture consider themselves cultural pragmatists. Sriramesh, J. Grunig, and Dozier (1996) found that organizational culture could be measured and managed. Their research began to make the connection between organizational culture and public relations. The next section will discuss the literature on organizational culture, communication, and public relations.

### **Organizational Culture and Public Relations**

Before making the connection between organizational culture and public relations, it is pertinent to connect organizational culture with communications. The connection between organizational culture and communications can be found in the conceptual meaning of communication. Since the 1980s, scholars have derived a communication approach to organizational culture (Barley, 1983; Bormann, 1985; Broms & Gahmberg, 1983; Edelstein, 1983; Glaser, 1994; Marshall & Stohl, 1993; Pacanowsky & Trujillo, 1983; Schall, 1983).

Pacanowsky and Trujillo (1983) viewed communication within an organization as a performance. They concluded that members of an organization—seen as a theater—performed different roles depending on the situation, the position they hold, and their tasks. They argued that organizational communication was a performance that led to ritual, “passion,” sociality, politics, and enculturation (Pacanowsky & Trujillo, 1983).

Bormann (1985) had a similar approach defining communication as “the human social processes by which people create, raise, and sustain group consciousness” (p. 100). In Carey’s (1989) ritual view of communication, communication is a symbolic process where by reality is created, maintained, repaired, and transformed. The ritual view of communication is similar to one of two major models of communication. The other is the transmission model of communication. Bell, Golombisky, and Holtzhausen (2002) briefly describe the differences between the transmission and ritual models of communication:

Transmission asks questions about how we get information from here to there across distances. The ritual model asks questions about how we manage to get along together over time. The ritual model helps us explain how we build shared reality and culture in social groups, including in organizations, even as we account for constant change. (p. 5)

The common conceptual themes support that Sriamesh, J. Grunig, and Dozier (1996) reasoned, “that culture and communication have a symbiotic relation and changing one will facilitate the modification of the other (p. 239).

Sriramesh, J. Grunig, and Dozier (1996) contended that understanding the communication process and linking it to organizational culture is important to public relations scholars. They viewed public relations as a communication activity and saw public relations as both a product of culture and instrument of culture (p. 239). The authors defined public relations as the management of communication between an organization and its internal and external publics (J. Grunig & Hunt, 1984).

Consequently, they conducted a quantitative study to determine whether public relations effects organizational culture and sought to answer if organizational culture can be measured and changed. For them, “public relations consists of the portion of organizational communication that is managed by professional communicators” (p. 239).



J. Grunig and Hunt (1984) identified four models of public relations, which they felt would help conceptualize and practice communication management. The four models are press agency, public information, two-way asymmetrical, and two-way symmetrical. Press agency is applied when excellent public relations practices focus on publicity. Public information “uses ‘journalists in residence’ to disseminate relatively objective information through the mass media and controlled media such as newsletters, brochures, and direct mail (J. Grunig, 1992a, p. 18). Two-way asymmetrical model develops messages based on research to persuade strategic publics to behave the way the organization wants. Two-way symmetrical is based on research and communicates in order to manage conflict and improve understanding with strategic publics. The research suggested that excellent public relations practices model more of a two-way symmetrical rather than the other three. J. Grunig and L. Grunig (1992) later concluded that those who hold the power in the organization, known as the dominant coalition, choose the model of public relations organizations practice. The way the dominant coalition practices public relations is influenced by: the culture of organization, the potential of the public relations department, and the schema for public relations in the organization (p. 298).

Sriramesh, J. Grunig, and Buffington (1992) agreed that corporate culture is comprised by a set of presuppositions that make up a worldview, which are assumptions about public relations and the products of that worldview such as values, stories, myths, artifacts, or rituals (p.591). J. Grunig and White (1992) argued that assumptions and products of a worldview have powerful control over the way members of an organization or an organization itself interprets public relations, what individuals expect to be its effect, and how convinced they are about its social purpose. “The presuppositions of a

culture influence the choice of a model of public relations directly or indirectly by influencing the organization's schema for public relations or by affecting the people or types of people who come to power in an organization" (p. 591).

Sriramesh, J. Grunig, and Buffington (1992) derived three propositions that linked public relations with organizational culture based on the literature review for the Excellence Study. They concluded that presuppositions about public relations are deeply rooted in a wide range of presuppositions of both societal and organizational cultures:

*Proposition 1:* The presuppositions about public relations in an organization will reflect that organization's internal and external culture.

*Proposition 2:* Public relations managers will be most likely to change the model of public relations practiced in an organization when organizational culture is changing.

*Proposition 3:* A public relations department that is high in potential (because of managerial roles, education in public relations, and professionalism) will develop a counterculture when the organization's culture of worldview for public relations do not reflect the presuppositions and worldview for public relations of the department. (p. 592)

Cameron and McCollum (1993) used in-depth interviews and surveys to study the connection between the success of internal communications and shared beliefs among members of the dominant coalition and employees. In turn, they evaluated the link between organizational culture and public relations. The authors proposed that "consensus between employees and management at the level of constructs, ideals, and beliefs is both a product and facilitator of communication between management and employees" (p. 244). The findings extended the idea that public relations practitioners should promote two-way communication between members of the dominant coalition and members of the organization. Consequently, the organization will have a stronger organizational culture (Sriramesh, 2007).

L. Grunig (1995) assessed the link between public relations and organizational culture in her case study of a class-action suit against the U.S. Department of State. L. Grunig (1985) focused her study on “sex discrimination in job assignments as a way of exploring the existence and consequences of organizational culture on public relations” (p. 139). The author specifically studied women professionals wanting to go into a managerial role. She used long interviews, newspaper coverage related to the lawsuit, and State Department periodicals and manuals to examine subcultures that can be found inside a larger organizational context. L. Grunig (1995) concluded that a strong “subculture has perpetuated the pattern of dominance and bias that once characterized the State Department’s dominant culture” (p. 240). Furthermore, she demonstrated that organizational culture does directly and indirectly affect public relations practice. Organizational culture may be more prominent than that of official policy or law. In fact, organizational culture can limit the power of the dominant coalition or the members of the organization who set and implement policy (p. 240). Grunig (1995) suggests that both genders of communication practitioners must examine organizational culture when attempting to practice two-way symmetrical public relations. Then, changing organizational goals and attitudes and behaviors of strategic publics depends on understanding and considering organizational culture.

As stated by Sriramesh (2007), “save for the previously discussed studies, one cannot find published information of empirical research that has specifically linked corporate culture with public relations (p. 516). A few other studies have made references about the linkage of organizational culture and public relations. Reber and Cameron

(2003) did not measure organizational culture specifically, but did discuss organizational culture as a factor that decisively affects the outcome of public relations.

This study aligns itself with Sriramesh, J. Grunig and Dozier (1996) who also reviewed the literature, concluding that:

Public relations practitioners have the greatest impact on the decisions made about public relations when one or more of them are included in the organization's dominant coalition. If a public relations practitioner is not part of the dominant coalition, which is frequently the case, public relations practitioners function more in the implementation of decisions about public relations than in their formulation. Corporate culture also has indirect effects on public relations. Corporate culture is affected by the power holders in the dominant coalition, and it affects which key managers gain enough power to be in the dominant coalition. (p. 240)

The preceding review of the literature suggests that public relations can affect organizational culture, and organizational culture can affect public relations. Public relations practitioners must study and understand organizational culture in order to make decisions about organizational goals and improve relationships with key publics. The next section will discuss the two dimensions of organizational culture practitioners can use to begin to study and understand the culture of an organization.

### **Dimensions of Organizational Culture**

The dimensions of organizational culture described in this section derive from the research conducted by Sriramesh, J. Grunig, and Dozier (1996) for the Excellence Study. Grunig (1992b) identified one of the characteristics of the Excellence Study as strong, participative cultures. The characteristic suggest that:

Excellent organizations share a sense of mission. They are integrated by strong culture that values human resources, organic structures, innovation, and symmetrical communication. (p. 236)

The Excellence Study identified two dimensions of culture: participative culture and authoritarian culture (J. Grunig, L. Grunig, & Dozier, 2002). This section analyzes the

literature on participative and authoritarian culture. Specifically, how these dimensions of culture can be used as measures of organizational culture as they relate to this study.

Sriramesh, J. Grunig, and Dozier (1996) analyzed the relation between corporate culture and the organizations public relations activities using factor analysis, which narrowed down the large number of items they developed into two factors (p. 242). The factors seemed to be consistent with the concepts of authoritarian and participative cultures.

**Authoritarian cultures.** L. Grunig, J. Grunig, and Dozier (2002) describe organizations with authoritarian cultures as focused on centralized decision making, where pertinent decisions are made by members of the dominant coalition. They explain that “different departments pursue their separate agendas that may conflict with each other” (p. 482). Members of the organization believe they have little power to create change. Employees also feel that senior management only perceives them as a function of the organization and fear top management. The authors express authoritarian cultures as closed and resistant to ideas from outside organizations.

**Participative cultures.** Participative cultures emphasize teamwork—a common value among employees (L. Grunig, J. Grunig, & Dozier, 2002). Departments within the organization collaborate together for a shared mission. L. Grunig, J. Grunig, and Dozier (2002) indicated that “departmental agendas match the overall goals and objectives of the organization (p. 483). Members of the organization say they would manage the organization the same way as members of the executive team. Employees believe that the dominant coalition values them as people and not just functions of the organization.

Participative organizations are open to ideas from outside the organization as well as the internal environment (p. 483).

Sriramesh, J. Grunig, and Dozier (1996) derived two different types of organizational culture from different sources, which included the following characteristics from Ouchi's (1981) study of a Japanese company in the United States, where Theory J (Japanese style) compared with Theory A (U.S. style) organizations:

- Collective versus individual responsibility
- Collective versus individual decision making
- Collective versus individual values
- Holistic concern versus lack of such concern for employees
- Long-term versus short-term employment
- Slow versus fast evaluation and promotion
- Nonspecialized versus specialized career paths

Sriramesh, J. Grunig, and Dozier (1996) used several characteristics from their previous research on the relations between organizational ideology and presuppositions and models of public relations (p. 243) and developed the following variables:

- Importance of innovation, tradition, and efficiency as organizational values
- Participative versus authoritarian management style
- Liberal versus conservative values
- Cooperation versus domination in relationships with publics
- System open versus closed to its environment

In order to measure perceptions of organizational culture this study focuses on these variables. Sriramesh, J. Grunig, and Dozier (1996) also included the following from the literature of organizational culture as part of their study: shared mission, rewards for performance rather than personal connections, social atmosphere among employees and managers off the job, integration versus individualism, emphasis on time, style of decision making, and consensual process (L. Grunig, J. Grunig, & Dozier, 2002, p. 484).

L. Grunig, J. Grunig, and Dozier (2002) reasoned that excellent public relations programs would have characteristics of a participative culture. From the beginning of their study, they contend that organizations can have both characteristics of a participative and authoritarian culture. In their conclusion, they linked public relations with organizational culture and suggested that for excellent public relations there need not be a presence of a participative culture. The results pertaining to authoritarian culture did not relate negatively to factors from the Excellence Study. They did find that a participative culture “provides a more supportive, nurturing environment for excellent public relations than does an authoritarian culture” (p. 496).

A conceptual understanding of authoritarian and participative cultures is a starting point in studying how organizational culture might relate organization-public relationships. Basic connections begin with the similarities that both can be measured and changed. The following section begins to define organization-public relationships and presents the dimensions of relationship management.

### **Organization-Public Relationships**

Sriramesh (2007) asserted culture as an essential part of the relationship building process. Yet, only a few studies have attempted to integrate culture with research in

relationship management. Unlike organizational culture, relationship management scholars have emerged themselves into the study “of public relations as the management of relationships between an organization and its key publics” (Ledingham & Bruning, 2000, p. 56). Ledingham (2001) derived at “four pivotal developments, which spurred emergence of the relational perspective as a framework for public relations study, teaching and practice” (p. 286).

The first development Ledingham (2001) proposed was the recognition of the central role of relationships in public relations. Ferguson’s (1984) call gave rise to relationship study within public relations scholarship and practices. Second, Ledingham offered the reconceptualizing of public relations as a management function. The idea of managing organization-public relationships introduced the management process to public relations practice (Ledingham, 2003). Third, scholars began to present the identification of components and types of organization-public relationships, their linkage to public attitudes, perceptions, knowledge, and behavior, and relationship measurement strategies. The last and fourth development established organization-public relationships models, which included antecedents, properties, consequences, and maintenance as well as monitoring strategies (Ledingham, 2003, p. 183). Emergence into relationship management scholarship also advanced a 10-phase development model and a five-step process model. These vital developments contributed to the fundamentals of the relational perspective, which is encapsulated in Center and Jackson’s (1995) observation that “the term for desired outcomes of public relations practice is public relations” (p. 2). Furthermore, “an organization with effective public relations will attain positive public relationships” (p. 2).



Like organizational culture, organization-public relationship is about organizational effectiveness. Just as the Excellence Study identified that effective public relations recognizes strong, participative culture, it also argued that public relations contributes to the effectiveness of an organization when it identifies strategic publics and uses symmetrical communication to “develop and maintain quality long-term relationships” (L. Grunig, J. Grunig & Dozier, 2002, p. 548). Hon and J. Grunig (1999) asserted that public relations contributed to organizational effectiveness when communication programs identify key publics and works to establish and maintain relationships over a long period of time.

Effectiveness is the extent to which organizations can meet their goals. Organizations are more effective when they build quality relationships that allow for more independence, which result in the realization of the organizations mission (L. Grunig, J. Grunig, & Ehling, 1992). J. Grunig (1992a) defined the major purpose of public relations as “building relationships with publics that constrain or enhance the ability of the organization to meet its mission” (p. 20). In order to continue the discussion, organization-public relations needs to be defined.

The pursuit to define organization-public relationships began with Broom, Casey, and Ritchey’s (1997) call for a definition. Ledingham and Bruning (1998) retorted with the first organization-public relationships definition as “the state which exists between an organization and its key publics, in which the action of either can impact the economical, social, cultural or political well being of the other” (p. 62). Their definition links relationships with impact. Broom, Casey, and Ritchey (2000) defined organization-public relationships using a transactional approach. They posited organization-public

relationships “are represented by the pattern of interaction, transaction, exchange, and linkage between organization and its publics” (p. 18). Hung (2007) defined organization-public relationship from “the system theory perspective, where organizations and their publics affect each other with their behaviors” (p. 444). Hung (2005) stated that organization-public relationships appear when organizations and their publics become reliant on each other, which moves the organization to action.

### **Relationship Management Theory**

A common theme that emerges from the definitions of organization-public relationships is the connection between the organization and its strategic publics. In 2003, Ledingham articulated and explicated the theory of relationship management as “effectively managing organization-public relationships around common interests and shared goals, over time, results in mutual understanding and benefit for interacting organizations and publics” (p. 190). The relationship paradigm provides a framework to study the link between public relations objectives and organizational goals, for constructing platforms of strategic planning and tactical implementation, and evaluating programs in a way that members of the dominant coalition understand and appreciate (Ledingham & Bruning, 2000). This section reviews the literature on the dominant paradigm for studying organization-public relationships and its application.

Broom, Casey, and Ritchey (1997) developed a theoretical framework for defining organization-public relations. The notion for this study was based on the authors’ pioneering model that emerged from systems theory, which form definitions of systems on the idea of interdependence, or relatedness, of elements. They posited that the concept of systems theory suggests a concept of relationships:

Relationships represent the exchange or transfer of information, energy, or resources. Therefore, attributes of those exchanges or transfers represent and define the relationship. At the level of organization-public systems, the attributes of linkages among the participants describe the relationships within the system as well as the structure of the system. (p. 94)

Broom, Casey, and Ritchey’s (1997) model incorporated antecedents, subsequent states, and consequences of organization-public relationships. Antecedents included “perceptions, motives, needs, behaviors...posited as contingencies or causes in the formation of relationships (p. 94). They further argued that antecedents are the origin of change due to stressors on the system stemming from the environment. Furthermore, consequences of organization-public relationships were seen as “the outputs that have the effects of changing the environment and of achieving, maintaining or changing goal states both inside and outside of the organization” (p. 94). Broom, Casey, and Ritchey developed Figure 1, where cultural norms are incorporated as an element of antecedents to further explain the concept of relationships and how they impact and form (p. 94).

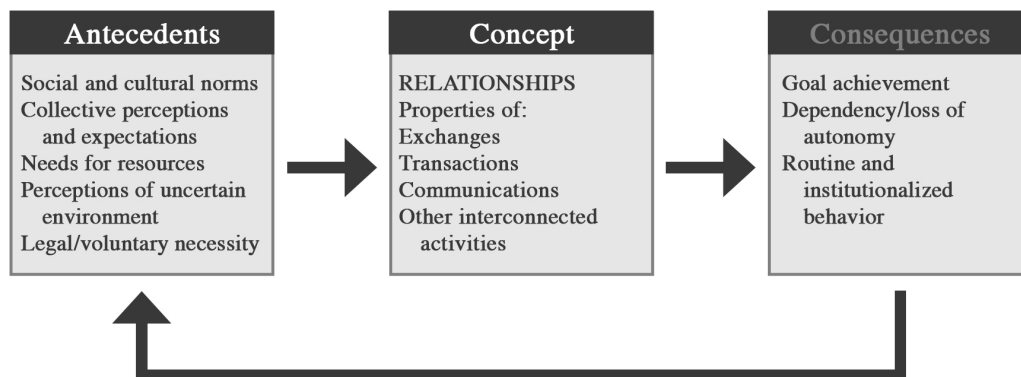


Fig. 1 Antecedents and consequences of organization-public relationships. (Broom, Casey, and Ritchey, 1997, p. 94)

Broom, Casey, and Ritchey (2000) looked more closely at the model, suggesting transactions are part of the process if fulfilling needs and can be used to describe, categorize, and evaluate the quality of relationships (Ledingham, 2003, p. 187). They

added three additional dimensions of relationships—formalization, standardization, and complexity. Broom, Casey, and Ritchey also suggested the intensity and reciprocity of two major relationship processes—information flow and resource flow. The authors concluded that relationships are subject to different interpretations, and agreed on the importance of determining the perceptions of relationship of all publics involved separate from their behavior in the relationship (Ledingham & Bruning, 2000).

J. Grunig and Huang (2000) reconceptualized the model and described antecedents as characteristics of key publics, maintenance strategies as relationship states, and outcomes of those strategies as outcomes. They suggested using environmental scanning to monitor antecedents, continual observations by management and publics for the relationship state, and coorientational measurement for consequences. Furthermore, J. Grunig and Huang organized antecedents of relationships and maintenance strategies into a process model of relationships and added the relationship outcomes identified by Huang (1997). Huang suggested trust, control mutuality, relational commitment, and relational satisfaction as vital indicators, which represent the quality of organization-public relationships.

Broom, Casey, and Ritchey's (2000) model of organization-public relationships classified cultural norms as a source of change, which results in forming and maintaining a relationship. That includes shared values, symbols, meanings, beliefs, assumptions, and expectations of a group. The review on the literature on Broom, Casey, and Ritchey's model illustrates how organizational culture can affect organization-public relationships. The next section discusses the two types of relationships and expands on Huang's (1997) relationship outcomes.

## **Types of Relationships**

Clark and Mills (1993) identified two types of interpersonal relationships that explicate the desired nature of the relationship between an organization and a public. Hon and J. Grunig (1999) established two primary types of relationships that may exist between an organization and its publics as exchange relationship and communal relationship.

**Exchange relationships.** “In an exchange relationship, one party gives benefits to the other only because the other has provided benefits in the past or is expected to do so in the future” (L. Grunig, J. Grunig, & Dozier, 2002, p. 552). Exchange relationships occur when parties give the same value of benefits they expect to receive. L. Grunig, J. Grunig, and Dozier explained that exchange relationship is the nature of marketing relationships, but it often is not sufficient for a public. Organizations are expected to give back to the community and its stakeholders, and frequently receive little or nothing in return (Hon & Grunig, 1999; L. Grunig, J. Grunig, & Dozier, 2002).

**Communal relationships.** In a communal relationship, the two parties involved “provide benefits to the other because they are concerned with the welfare of the other—even when they get nothing in return” (Hon & J. Grunig, 1999, p. 21). L. Grunig, J. Grunig, and Dozier (2002) suggested that the role of public relations is to work with members of the dominant coalition to help them understand the importance of building communal relationships with publics such as employees, the community, and the media. The researchers contended that public relations practitioners add value to the organization when they establish communal relationships. “Communal relationships are important if

organizations are to be socially responsible and to add value to society as well as to client organizations” (L. Grunig, J. Grunig, & Dozier, 2002, p. 553).

Hon and J. Grunig (1999) explained that exchange relationships are not good for an organization. They recommend that public relations professionals should not seek to develop exchange relationships. Clark and Mills (1993) stated that most relationships begin as exchange relationships and develop into communal relationships as they are established. Hon and J. Grunig further explicated that exchanges can begin to build trust, control mutuality, commitment, and satisfaction. In return, public relations professionals can establish long-term communal relationships where the level of these four indicators could become even higher and remain stable over time (Hon & J. Grunig, 1999, p. 21). The process can also be reversed, and there are times when a communal relationship needs to be established in order for an exchange to occur. In perspective, communal relationships contribute to organization effectiveness when public relations professionals become experts in building this relationship type, a practice that sets public relations apart from other organizational functions.

### **Measurements of Relationship Quality**

As mentioned in the previous section, exchange and communal relationships contribute to indicators of relationship quality. Researchers have identified many characteristics that define the quality of a relationship. This study focuses on Huang (1997, 2001), J. Grunig and Huang (2000), and Hon and J. Grunig (1999) four characteristics of measuring quality of organization-public relationships—control mutuality, trust, commitment, and satisfaction.

**Control mutuality.** Control mutuality is the degree to which parties agree on who has rightful power to influence one another. “Although some degree of power imbalance is natural in organization-public relationships, the most stable, positive relationships exist when organizations and publics have some degree of control over the other” (L. Grunig, J. Grunig, & Dozier, 2002, p. 553).

**Trust.** Trust is one party’s level of confidence in and willingness to open oneself to the other party (L. Grunig, J. Grunig, & Dozier, 2002, p. 553). The authors argue that trust is a complicated concept with several underlying dimensions. The dimensions include the following: integrity, the belief that an organization is fair and just; dependability, the belief that an organization will do what it says it will do; and competence, the belief that an organization has the ability to do what it says it will do.

**Commitment.** Commitment is the extent to which one party believes that the relationship is worth spending energy to maintain and promote. Two dimensions of commitment exist—continuance commitment, which refers to a certain line of action, and affective commitment, which is an emotional orientation (Hon & J. Grunig, 1999, p. 20).

**Satisfaction.** Satisfaction is the extent to which one party feels favorably toward the other because positive expectations about the relationship are reinforced. “A satisfying relationship is one in which the benefits outweigh the costs. Satisfaction also can occur when one party believes the other party is engaging in positive steps to maintain the relationship” (L. Grunig, J. Grunig, & Dozier, 2002, p. 553).

These indicators of relationship quality, which are also the variables for this study, can be measured quantitatively using Hon and J. Grunig’s Public Relations Relationship Measurement or qualitatively using parameters design to focus on

interview-type methodologies (Lindenmann, 1997; J. Grunig, 2002). This study applies quantitative measures.

### **Organizational Culture and Organization-Public Relationships**

As mentioned in previous sections of this literature review, few studies have attempted to integrate the measures of relationship quality with organizational culture scholarship. Sriramesh's (2007) research on culture and public relations outlined areas for future study, which needs to be examined beyond the goals and advancement achieved through the Excellence Study. He mentions, specifically, the notion of relationship building.

Hung's (2003) study of multinational companies in China focused on the role culture plays in relationship cultivation. She proposed that relationship cultivation and interactions are influenced by a national culture. The author used qualitative research (interviews) to determine that "multinational companies have different responses as to how culture influences relationship building, ranging from being influenced by their own culture values to total adherence to Chinese cultural values" (Hung, 2003, p. 277). The study revealed that characteristics of Chinese culture, such as family orientation, guanxi, and relational orientation (role formalization, relational interdependence, face, favor, relational harmony, relational fatalism, and relational determination) had influence on multinational companies' relationship cultivation strategies (Hung, 2003, p. 264). Hung discovered that multinational companies from Western countries determined to maintain their own cultural values in relationship building than multinational companies from Asian countries.



In another study on culture and organization-public relationships, Huang (2001) presented a cross-cultural, multi-item scale for measuring organization-public relationships. The goal of the Organization-Public Relationship Assessment (OPRA) was to establish standards of reliability and validity as well as capability. Huang's research helped move organization-public relationships "to a higher theoretical, operational, and cross-cultural level" (p. 85). She used survey and long interview data to present the scale's reliability, factor structure, and validity. Huang added face and favor as a fifth dimension of relationship outcomes in addition to trust, control mutuality, commitment, and satisfaction. Huang defined face and favor as kinds of resources to be exchanged in organization-public relationships (p. 69). Her study concluded that OPRA is a multi-item scale with good reliability and validity that can be used to measure perceptions of relationship quality and improve public relations practices. Huang also extended the proposition that several relationship dimensions are important constructs in relationship measurement.

Although Hung (2003) and Huang (2001) are the only empirical studies that have attempted to integrate culture and relationship building, literature reviewed for this study demonstrates a relation between both concepts. Common themes can be found in the conceptual foundation of organizational culture and organization-public relationships. The definitions explicate how both organizational culture and organization-public relations affect the organization, along with its stakeholders and its environment. Furthermore, the reviewed literature exemplifies that, separately, organizational culture and organization-public relationships are important to public relations and impact organizational effectiveness. This study attempts to continue the discussion of integrating

measures of participative and authoritarian cultures to the relationship outcomes—control mutuality, trust, satisfaction, commitment, exchange relationship, and communal relationship.

### **Hypotheses and Propositions**

The purpose of this study is to explore residents' perceptions of organizational culture and how they relate to organization-relationship building by using measures of organizational culture and dimensions of organization-relationship building. This study attempts to contribute to the review of the literature by asking how perceptions of organizational culture are related to perceptions of organization-public relationships. In order to meet the objective of this study, four hypotheses and related propositions were developed based on the literature review.

H1: Perceptions of participative culture are positively related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

P1.1: Perceptions of participative management style are positively related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

P1.2: The organizational values of innovation, efficiency, and liberalism are positively related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

P1.3: An open organizational environment is positively related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

H2: Perceptions of authoritarian culture are inversely related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

P2.1: Perceptions of authoritarian management style are inversely related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

P2.2: The organizational values of tradition and conservatism are inversely related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

P2.3: A closed organizational environment is inversely related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

H3: Authoritarian culture is positively related to exchange relationships.

H4: Participative culture is positively related to communal relationships.

Chapter Three will discuss the methodology of this study, including methods, procedures, research design, instrumentation, data collection, and analysis.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Methods and Procedures**

The purpose of this study is to measure perceptions of organizational culture and organization-public relationships with key external publics. Specifically, this study seeks to extend public relations theory by examining how measures of authoritarian/participative culture relate to and influences dimensions of organization-public relationships, including variables of trust, commitment, control mutuality, and satisfaction.

This study attempts to determine how culture may affect the communication process and relationship building function of public relations. In specific, it asks how perceptions of organizational culture are related to perceptions of organization-public relationships. This objective is accomplished by empirically testing the following hypotheses and propositions:

H1: Perceptions of participative culture are positively related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

P1.1: Perceptions of participative management style are positively related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

P1.2: The organizational values of innovation, efficiency, and liberalism are positively related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

P1.3: An open organizational environment is positively related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

H2: Perceptions of authoritarian culture are inversely related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

P2.1: Perceptions of authoritarian management style are inversely related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

P2.2: The organizational values of tradition and conservatism are inversely related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

P2.3: A closed organizational environment is inversely related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

H3: Authoritarian culture is positively related to exchange relationships.

H4: Participative culture is positively related to communal relationships.

This chapter outlines the methods and procedures used to examine these hypotheses, propositions, and research questions. It explains the research design, instrumentation, sampling, data collection, pretest, response statistics, and data analysis for this study.

### **Research Design**

To achieve the purpose of this study, it is necessary to examine a specific organization and one of its publics in order to measure the public's perceptions about

organizational culture, as well as its perceptions of its relationships with the organization. The University of Florida Department of Housing and Residence Education (DOHRE) was chosen as the organization of interest. Due to the availability and access to the database of residents' contact information, students residing on the UF campus were selected as the populations of interest.

A survey of DOHRE residents was conducted to measure perceptions of organizational culture and organization-public relationships. Measurement is important in order to understand people's behaviors (Stacks, 2002). A survey was considered appropriate for this study because surveys "attempt to gauge how the public perceives an issue or event or person, and they allow the researcher to probe in a controlled and prescribed way why respondents feel the way they do" (Stacks, 2002, p. 175). In addition, the flexibility of a survey allows for a wide range of responses.

A random sample of residents of the UF Department of Housing and Residence Education during 2010-2011 was used to measure the variables of organizational culture, particularly authoritarian/participative culture, and the dimensions of organization-public relationships. There are approximately 8,230 students residing on campus, which includes both undergraduate students and graduate students with or without families. Online modes of survey administration were used to collect data. The following section describes the instrumentation used for this survey.

### **Instrumentation**

A 50-item questionnaire was developed to measure the variables of interest in this study. Specifically, measures of organizational culture and dimensions of relationship

management were adapted from prior literature. In addition, appropriate demographic characteristics of the population were also measured.

Previous literature indicates that the concept of organizational culture can be assessed through measures of 1) innovation, tradition, and efficiency as organizational goals; 2) authoritarian versus participative culture; 3) liberal versus conservative values; 4) cooperation versus domination in relationships with publics; 5) open system versus closed system to its environment.

In addition, Hon and J. E. Grunig's (1999) *Public Relations Relationship Measurement Scale* was used to measure residents' perceptions of their relationship with the DOHRE. The scale measures six elements/constructs of relationships— control mutuality, trust, satisfaction, commitment, exchange relationship, and communal relationship. Respondents were asked to rate the level to which they agree with each statement on a five-point Likert-type scale from one (*strongly disagree*) to five (*strongly agree*).

The items are discussed in detail in the following sections in order to determine how residents' perceptions of organizational culture influence perceptions of organization-public relationships.

### **Measures of Organizational Culture**

**Innovation, tradition, and efficiency.** To measure the importance of innovation, tradition, and efficiency as organizational goals items previously tested (Sriramesh, J. Grunig, & Dozier, 1996) the following five items were used:

1. As an organization, DOHRE is open to new ideas.
2. As an organization, DOHRE looks to the future rather than the past.

3. As an organization, DOHRE believes it is important to be innovative.
4. As an organization, DOHRE treats efficiency as the most important goal.
5. As an organization, DOHRE values tradition.

**Authoritarian versus participative management styles.** To measure the presence on authoritarian or participative management styles (Sriramesh, J. Grunig, & Dozier, 1996) the following six items were used:

6. The DOHRE administration has nearly total control over student behaviors.
7. Rigid control by DOHRE's administration makes it difficult for me to voice new ideas.
8. The DOHRE administration seems to believe that students lack initiative.
9. The DOHRE believes they know best because they have more experience than residents.
10. The DOHRE administration believes in sharing the power with its residents.
11. Most residents are afraid of the DOHRE administration.

**Liberal and conservative values.** To measure perceptions of liberal and conservative values (Sriramesh, J. Grunig, & Dozier, 1996) the following two items were used:

12. I consider DOHRE to be a conservative (traditional) organization.
13. I consider DOHRE to be a liberal (forward-thinking) organization.

**Cooperation or domination in relationships with public.** Sriramesh, J. Grunig, and Dozier (1996) measured the degree in which participants perceive how cooperative or dominant an organization. The following two items were replicated for the purpose of this study:



14. The DOHRE administration is willing to work with outside groups that have different values.

15. The DOHRE administration tries to take control of groups that disagree with it.

**System open or closed.** The following two items measured participants' perceptions of how opened or closed an organization is to new ideas from outside influences (Sriramesh, J. Grunig, & Dozier, 1996):

16. The DOHRE administration is closed to new ideas from outside influences.

17. The DOHRE administration is open to new ideas from outside influences.

### **Measures of Organization-Public Relationships**

Hon and J. Grunig (1999) suggest measuring outcomes of an organization's relationship with key publics by concentrating on six elements: control mutuality, trust, satisfaction, commitment, exchange relationship, and communal relationship. The questionnaire for this particular study consisted of a series of agree and disagree statements. Participants were asked to evaluate their overall perception of their relationship with the organization using a semantic differential scale. The following statement was assessed on a scale from one to five with the endpoints of positive/negative, good/bad, satisfactory/unsatisfactory, and excellent/poor:

18. Overall, my relationship with DOHRE is:

**Trust.** Trust is one party's level of confidence in and willingness to open oneself to the other party (Hon & J. Grunig, 1999). There are three dimensions of trust—integrity, which is the belief that an organization is fair and just; dependability, meaning the belief an organization will do what it says it will do; and competence, which is the

belief that an organization has the ability to do what it says it will do. To measure trust between residents and the organization the following three items were used:

19. The DOHRE has the ability to accomplish what it says it will do.

(Competence)

20. Whenever DOHRE makes important decisions, I know the administration will be concerned with residents like me. (Integrity)

21. I believe DOHRE takes the opinions of people like me into account when making decisions. (Dependability)

**Control mutuality.** Control mutuality is the “the degree to which parties agree on who has the rightful power to influence one another” (Hon & J.E. Grunig, 1999). To measure the perceptions of the control the organization has over participants and vice versa the following three items were used:

22. I feel DOHRE really listens to what people like me have to say.

23. DOHRE listens to what residents have to say.

24. DOHRE believes my opinions are legitimate.

**Commitment.** Hon and J.E. Grunig (1999) define commitment as the extent to which a party believes and feels that the relationship is worth spending energy to maintain and promote. In order to determine participants’ perceptions of the commitment between the organization and external publics the following three items were used

25. I feel DOHRE is trying to maintain a long-term commitment to people like me.

26. I can tell that DOHRE wants to maintain a relationship with residents like me.

27. Compared to other housing options, I value my relationship with DOHRE more.

**Satisfaction.** “A satisfying relationship is one in which the benefits outweigh the costs” (Hon & J.E. Grunig, 1999). The following items were used to measure the extent to which a party feels favorably toward the other because positive expectations about the relationship are reinforced.

28. I am happy with DOHRE.

29. I am happy with my interactions with the DOHRE.

30. Generally speaking, I am pleased with the relationship DOHRE has established with me.

**Communal relationships.** The following three items were used to measure communal relationships, where both parties provide benefits to the other because they are concerned about the welfare of the other (Hon & J.E. Grunig, 1999). This happens even when they get nothing in return.

31. DOHRE does not especially enjoy helping others.

32. DOHRE is very concerned about the welfare of residents.

33. I feel DOHRE takes advantage of residents.

**Exchange relationships.** Hon and J.E. Grunig (1999) define the exchange in relationships as the action where one party gives benefits to the other only because the other has provided benefits in the past or what it is expected to do so in the future. The following measures were used to measure exchange relationships in this study.

34. Whenever DOHRE gives or offers something to residents, it expects something in return.

35. DOHRE will compromise with residents when it knows that it will gain something.

36. DOHRE takes care of residents who are likely to make it look good.

**Demographics.** Participants were asked thirteen demographic questions.

Categorical level variables included gender, age, race/ethnicity, along with the following:

42. Major:

43. Class standing:

44. Are you involved in a student organization?

45. How long have you been a student at the University of Florida?

46. When is your expected graduation date?

47. Are you a transfer student?

48. Are you from Florida?

49. What is your zip code?

50. I live in a residence hall or Graduate and Family Housing

The response categories for categorical variables were constructed for this study to match those used by the UF Department of Housing and Residence Education to collect student demographic information. A copy of the questionnaire and the cover letter distributed to the sample can be found in Appendix A. The next section describes the sampling procedures used to select participants for this study.

### **Sampling Procedures**

To measure perceptions of organizational culture and organization-public relationships, residents from the UF Department of Housing and Residence Education living on campus during the Spring 2011 semester were chosen as the population of

interest for this study. The sample frame for this study is a list of nearly 8,230 resident emails supplied by the DOHRE.

Calculations of the sample size required to produce generalizable results for this study followed the procedures described in Stacks (2002). According to Stacks, statistical law holds that the distribution of people chosen randomly from a population becomes more evenly distributed as more random selections are made. Thus, the average for all the samplings will begin to estimate the true population characteristics (p. 162). Austin and Pinkleton (2001) and Dillman (2000) reported that for a population of 8,230, a final sample size of 371 is needed to produce findings with a +/-5% margin of error at the 95% confidence level. Therefore, 371 was set as the minimum number of questionnaire responses needed to produce meaningful results.

### **Data Collection**

Residents served by the UF Department of Housing and Residence Education during the Spring 2011 semester were surveyed using an online survey. SurveyMonkey.com was used to construct and host the survey as an online mode of administration. A unique URL (web address), <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/SNRJRWJ>, was created to provide access to the survey instrument. To ensure the confidentiality of respondents, online survey responses were not linked to email addresses in any way. This resulted in anonymous responses. Participants responded to items measuring perceptions of organizational culture and relationship management, along with demographic questions including class standing, involvement in student organizations, length at the University of Florida, expected

graduation date, and transfer student, which may effect perceptions of relationship quality.

Multiple contacts were used to increase response rates (Dillman, 2000). Residents received a prenotification email (Appendix B) informing them of the purpose of the study and alerting them to a future request for participation. Two days later, residents received an email (Appendix C) requesting participation in the survey. The email included the hyperlink to access the survey in order to facilitate connection to SurveyMonkey.com. Also, the email included an Informed Consent Statement required by the Institutional Review Board. Three days after the email request for participation, residents received a reminder email message (Appendix D). Finally, five days after the email request for participation, residents received a final reminder email message (Appendix E).

Prior to administering the survey, a pretest was conducted to determine the validity and ease of use. The pretest also served as a method to troubleshoot potential technical problems associated with the online survey. A sample of 38 University of South Florida students enrolled in Writing for Mass Media were selected to participate in the pretest. The results suggested that the instrument had face validity. Technical problems with the survey were identified and collected in order to ensure reliable data collection. The following section describes the data analysis conducted for this study.

### **Data Analysis**

All the data collected was analyzed using SPSS 19.0 for Windows. Participants responded on 5-point Likert-type scale to indicate the extent to which they perceived that indicators of organizational culture and organization-public relationships described the UF Department of Housing and Residence Education. Frequency and descriptive analysis

were used to examine the demographic variables and categorical variables and were compared across the sample.

Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the internal consistency of the multi-item indexes used to measure variables in interests. In addition, Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient was calculated to determine the relationship between organizational culture and control mutuality, commitment, trust, satisfaction, exchange relationship, and communal relationship. Finally, a factor analysis was used to establish the dimensionality of the measures of organizational culture and test for subdimensions (Stacks, 2002, p. 233). Chapter Four will present the results of the data analyzed in this section.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Results**

This chapter summarizes the data collected for this study and the data analysis outlined in Chapter Three. It discusses the response statistics and scales used to analyze the data, and reports the results of hypothesis testing.

This study attempts to measure perceptions of organizational culture and organization-public relationships with key external publics. In addition, this study seeks to extend public relations theory by examining how measures of authoritarian and participative culture relate to the dimensions of organization-public relationships, including variables of trust, commitment, control mutuality, and satisfaction. Specifically, it asks how perceptions of organizational culture are related to perceptions of organization-public relationships. This objective is accomplished by empirically testing the following hypotheses and propositions:

H1: Perceptions of participative culture are positively related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

P1.1: Perceptions of participative management style are positively related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.



P1.2: The organizational values of innovation, efficiency, and liberalism are positively related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

P1.3: An open organizational environment is positively related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

H2: Perceptions of authoritarian culture are inversely related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

P2.1: Perceptions of authoritarian management style are inversely related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

P2.2: The organizational values of tradition and conservatism are inversely related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

P2.3: A closed organizational environment is inversely related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

H3: Authoritarian culture is positively related to exchange relationships.

H4: Participative culture is positively related to communal relationships.

### **Response Statistics**

An oversampling strategy was employed in order to compensate for the decline of responses to online surveys. From a random sample of 4,000 UF student residents, 317 participants completed or partially completed the online survey. According to Wimmer and Dominick (2006), the response rate range for Internet surveys is generally 1% to 30% (p. 205). The response rate for this study was 8%. Of the 317 participants, 87% completed the survey. This study was conducted for the purpose of exploratory research.

Therefore, partially answered questionnaires were included in the data analysis, and the number of respondents varied for each statistical test used to analyze the data.

### **Descriptive Statistics**

Before beginning the analysis on the hypotheses, standard descriptive statistics were run in order to determine the generalizability of the sample to the population. Frequency distributions were run on the categorical variables. A frequency distribution is a table of scores ordered according to the magnitude and frequency of occurrence. Of the 317 respondents, 28.4% (n=90) were male and 58.4% (n=185) were female. The respondents' indication of gender is shown in Table 1.

Table 1

<i>Gender</i>		
Gender	<i>n</i>	%
Male	90	32.7
Female	185	58.4

The majority of respondents were 18-24 years old (n=242, 76.3%) and Caucasian (n=154, 48.6%). Respondents were asked to indicate their class standing in order to measure the distribution among freshmen, sophomore, juniors, and seniors. Freshmen accounted for 38.5% (n=122), 18.3% (n=58) were sophomores, 10.4 % (n=33) were juniors, 7.6 % (n=24) were seniors, and 11.9% (n=38) were others. The results for class standing are indicated in Table 2.

Table 2

<i>Class Standing</i>		
Class Standing	<i>n</i>	%
Freshman	122	38.5
Sophomore	58	21.1
Junior	33	12.0
Senior	24	7.6
Graduate	35	11
Other	3	.9

Residents were asked general questions about their student life. The majority of residents were involved in student organizations (62.1%, n=197), have been attended the University of Florida less than a year (51.7%, n=164), were not transfer students (81.7%, n=259), and were from the state of Florida (73.2%, n=232). When asked to indicate the expected date of graduation, the majority (52.7%, n=167) responded to other (unknown) date of graduation. The results for expected date of graduation are shown in Table 3.

Table 3

<i>Expected Date of Graduation</i>		
Expected Graduation	<i>n</i>	%
Spring 2011	20	6.3
Fall 2011	4	1.3
Spring 2012	26	8.2
Fall 2012	13	4.1
Spring 2013	38	12
Fall 2013	7	2.2
Other	167	52.7

Respondents were asked to indicate the type of housing they reside and 75.4% (n=239) answered that they reside in a Residence Hall, while 11.4 % of respondents

reside in Graduate and Family Housing. The results for type of housing can be found in Table 4.

Table 4

<i>Living In</i>		
Living in	<i>n</i>	%
A residence hall	239	75.4
Graduate and Family Housing	36	11.4

The data analysis and results presented in this section is divided into the variables of organizational culture and organization-public relationships. The first part includes the results for the variables of organizational culture described as innovation, tradition, and efficiency, authoritarian vs. participative management styles, liberal vs. conservative values, cooperation vs. domination in relationships, and opened or closed system. The second section provides the results for the relationship items of trust, satisfaction, control mutuality, commitment, exchange and communal relationships.

### **Organizational Culture**

Items measuring organizational culture were measured on a five-point Likert-type scale, where 1 represents “strongly disagree” and 5 represents “strongly agree”. Five items where used to test the variables of innovation, tradition, and efficiency in organizational culture. The highest mean of 3.51 was for the statement, “As an organization, the DOHRE believes it is important to be innovative.” The lowest mean ( $m=3.20$ ) was for the statement, “As an organization, the DOHRE treats efficiency as its most important goal.” Table 5 shows the means and standard deviation for all the items used to measure innovation, tradition, and efficiency.

Table 5

*Descriptive Statistics for Culture-Innovation, Tradition, Efficiency*

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
CUL-ITE 3. As an organization, the DOHRE believes it is important to be innovative.	317	3.51	.80977
CUL-ITE 2. As an organization, the DOHRE looks to the future rather than the past.	317	3.44	.72976
CUL-ITE 1. As an organization, the DOHRE is open to new ideas.	317	3.42	.84073
CUL-ITE 5. As an organization, the DOHRE values tradition.	317	3.40	.69427
CUL-ITE 4. As an organization, the DOHRE treats efficiency as its most important goal.	317	3.20	.83755

Six items were used to test the respondents' perceptions of participative and authoritarian management styles. The statement with the highest mean of 3.19 was "The DOHRE administration believes in sharing power with its residents." Respondents showed slight disagreement ( $m= 2.57$ ) with the statement, "Most residents are afraid of the DOHRE administration." Table 6 reports the means and standard deviations for all six items.

Table 6

*Descriptive Statistics for Culture-Participative and Authoritarian Management Styles*

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
CUL-PART 5. The DOHRE administration believes in sharing power with its residents.	317	3.19	.90927
CUL PART 4. The DOHRE believes it knows best because it has more experience than residents.	317	3.11	.91040
CUL-PART 3. The DOHRE seems to believe that students lack initiative.	317	2.72	.85605
CUL-PART 2. Rigid control by the DOHRE makes it difficult for me to voice new ideas.	317	2.69	.94688
CUL-PART 6. Most residents are afraid of the DOHRE administration.	317	2.56	.99013
CUL-PART 1. The DOHRE has nearly total control over student behaviors.	317	2.27	.98191

Table 7 shows the results for respondents' perceptions of liberal versus conservative values, cooperation or domination in relationships, and opened or closed systems. Two items were used to measure perceptions of liberal vs. conservative values. The statement, "I consider the DOHRE to be a liberal (forward-thinking) organization," yielded a mean of 3.17. From the two items used to test perceptions of cooperation or domination in relationships, the statement, "I consider the DOHRE to be a liberal (forward-thinking) organization," yielded a mean of 3.38. The last two items shown in Table 7 were used to measure perceptions of an opened or closed organizational system.

The statement with the highest ( $m=3.44$ ) was “The DOHRE is open to new ideas from outside influences.

Table 7

*Descriptive Statistics for Culture-Liberal vs. Conservative Values, Cooperation vs. Domination, and Opened or Closed Organizational Systems*

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
CUL-OPE 2. The DOHRE is open to new ideas from outside influences.	310	3.4355	.75943
CUL-DOM 1. The DOHRE is willing to work with outside groups that have different values.	310	3.3839	.74460
CUL-LIB 2. I consider the DOHRE to be a liberal (forward-thinking) organization.	310	3.1742	.78537
CUL-LIB 1. I consider the DOHRE to be a conservative (traditional) organization.	310	3.1323	.77497
CUL-DOM 2. The DOHRE tries to take control of groups that disagree with it.	310	2.6581	.76271
CUL-OPE 1. The DOHRE is closed to new ideas from outside influences.	310	2.6129	.83521

Next, the dimensionality of the 17 items was assessed using maximum likelihood factor analysis. Factor analysis was considered appropriate due to the large sample size ( $N=317$ ) and the large ratio of observations to variables (19:1). The factorability of the correlation matrix was also assessed. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was .885, indicating an adequate sample. In addition, Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity was significant ( $p=.000$ ). Finally, an examination of descriptive statistics

indicated that the skew (-.906 - .438) and kurtosis (-.582 - 1.290) of the individual organizational culture items were smaller than the recommended threshold for questioning the adequacy of the maximum likelihood estimation method (West, Finch & Curran, 1995).

The analysis was conducted in two stages (Green, Salkind, & Akey, 2000). Factor extraction in stage one was conducted using principal components analysis. Four criteria were used to determine the appropriate number of factors to extract: 1) a priori conceptual beliefs about the number of underlying dimensions of the organizational culture construct; 2) the latent root criterion; 3) the scree test; and 4) the interpretability of the factor solution. Both the latent root criterion and the scree test suggested a three factor solution, rather than the two factor structure hypothesized. Consequently, three factors were rotated using a Varimax procedure. The rotated solution, shown in Table 8, yielded two interpretable factors labeled authoritarian culture and participative culture, as well as a third factor that captured the two items intended to measure organizational liberalism and conservatism: 1) "I consider the DOHRE to be a conservative (traditional) organization." 2) "The DOHRE tries to take control of groups that disagree with it." Thus, these two items were deleted and a second factor analysis was conducted.



Table 8

*Rotated Factor Matrix<sup>a</sup>*

Statement	Authoritarian	Participative	Factor 3
CUL-INN 1. As an organization, the DOHRE is open to new ideas.	-.344	.685	.285
CUL-INN 2. As an organization, the DOHRE looks to the future rather than the past.	-.030	.548	.162
CUL-INN 3. As an organization, the DOHRE believes it is important to be innovative.	-.175	.660	.241
CUL-EFF 4. As an organization, the DOHRE treats efficiency as its most important goal.	-.109	.533	-.059
CUL-TRAD 5. As an organization, the DOHRE values tradition.	.030	.524	-.112
CUL-AUTH 1. The DOHRE has nearly total control over student behaviors.	.439	-.039	-.067
CUL-AUTH 2. Rigid control by the DOHRE makes it difficult for me to voice new ideas.	.668	-.211	-.150
CUL-AUTH 3. The DOHRE seems to believe that students lack initiative.	.552	-.136	-.079
CUL-AUTH 4. The DOHRE believes it knows best because it has more experience than residents.	.419	.103	-.083
CUL-PART 5. The DOHRE administration believes in sharing power with its residents.	-.426	.540	.177

CUL-AUTH 6. Most residents are afraid of the DOHRE administration.	.596	-.149	-.095
CUL-CONS 1. I consider the DOHRE to be a conservative (traditional) organization.	.231	.009	-.669
CUL-LIB 2. I consider the DOHRE to be a liberal (forward-thinking) organization.	-.196	.445	.636
CUL-COOP 1. The DOHRE is willing to work with outside groups that have different values.	-.409	.510	.175
CUL-DOM 2. The DOHRE tries to take control of groups that disagree with it.	.609	-.317	-.105
CUL-CLOSE 1. The DOHRE is closed to new ideas from outside influences.	.705	-.430	-.217
CUL-OPEN 2. The DOHRE is open to new ideas from outside influences.	-.520	.544	.254

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*Note.* Extraction Method: Maximum Likelihood.  
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.  
a. Rotation converged in 4 iterations.

The second factor analysis also used the maximum likelihood analysis was conducted with the 15 remaining organizational culture items. The results of the rotated factor matrix are shown in Table 9. Seven items loaded on the authoritarian culture factor, which accounted for 38.5% of the item variance (eigenvalue=5.77). Eight items loaded on the participative culture factor, which accounted for 12.12% of the item variance (eigenvalue=1.817). Together, the two-factor solution explained 51% of the variance in the organizational culture items.

Table 9

*Rotated Factor Matrix<sup>a</sup>*

Statement	Participative	Authoritarian
CUL-INN 1. As an organization, the DOHRE is open to new ideas.	-.378	.721
CUL-INN 2. As an organization, the DOHRE looks to the future rather than the past.	-.036	.590
CUL-INN 3. As an organization, the DOHRE believes it is important to be innovative.	-.200	.695
CUL-EFF 4. As an organization, the DOHRE treats efficiency as its most important goal.	-.098	.492
CUL-TRAD 5. As an organization, the DOHRE values tradition.	.044	.470
CUL-AUTH 1. The DOHRE has nearly total control over student behaviors.	.434	-.063
CUL-AUTH 2. Rigid control by the DOHRE makes it difficult for me to voice new ideas.	.687	-.215
CUL-AUTH 3. The DOHRE seems to believe that students lack initiative.	.551	-.139
CUL-AUTH 4. The DOHRE believes it knows best because it has more	.432	.093

experience than residents.		
CUL-PART 5. The DOHRE administration believes in sharing power with its residents.	-.440	.560
CUL-AUTH 6. Most residents are afraid of the DOHRE administration.	.615	-.136
CUL-COOP 1. The DOHRE is willing to work with outside groups that have different values.	-.429	.515
CUL-DOM 2. The DOHRE tries to take control of groups that disagree with it.	.613	-.315
CUL-CLOSE 1. The DOHRE is closed to new ideas from outside influences.	.714	-.467
CUL-OPEN 2. The DOHRE is open to new ideas from outside influences.	-.552	.568

---

*Note.* Extraction Method: Maximum Likelihood.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

Finally, reliability analysis was conducted on the eight-item authoritarian culture measure and the seven-item participative culture measure to determine internal consistency of the multi-item scales. The alpha coefficient for the authoritarian culture

index was .751. An assessment of the analysis indicated that the internal consistency of the scale would be stronger if the item, “As an organization, the DOHRE values tradition,” was deleted. The omission of this item yielded an alpha coefficient of .80 for the eight-item authoritarian culture measure. The alpha coefficient for the participative culture index was .844, indicating strong internal consistency. However, the researcher decided it was appropriate to exclude the item, “As an organization, the DOHRE treats efficiency as its most important goal,” which measures efficiency and was the counterpart for the organizational tradition item. Deleting the item resulted in an alpha coefficient of .847. The items in each index were then combined to create composite measures of authoritarian and participative cultures for hypothesis testing.

The average means for the multi-item scales used to test the variables of interest were then collapsed to create composite measures for hypothesis testing. The composite mean for participative culture was 3.40 (n=310) and authoritarian culture was 2.66 (n=310). Respondents tended to slightly agree with the measure of participative culture and slightly disagree with the measure of authoritarian culture.

### **Organization-Public Relationships**

This section provides the means and standard deviations for the relationship items of trust, satisfaction, control mutuality, commitment, exchange, and communal relationships. This set of results is based on a five-point Likert type scale, where 1 represents “strongly disagree” and 5 represents “strongly agree.” Three items were used to measure trust. The means and the standard deviations are shown in Table 10. The highest mean was 3.46 for the statement, “The DOHRE has the ability to accomplish what it says it will do.” The lowest mean was 3.20 for the statement, “Whenever the

DOHRE makes important decisions, I know the administration will be concerned with students like me.” The means for three statements are in the mid-range of the scale, which means that generally the majority of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement.

Table 10

*Descriptive Statistics for Relationship-Trust*

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
T 1. The DOHRE has the ability to accomplish what it says it will do.	289	3.47	.84585
T 2. Whenever the DOHRE makes important decisions, I know the administration will be concerned with students like me.	289	3.27	.89638
T 3. I believe the DOHRE takes the opinions of people like me into account when making decisions.	289	3.20	.89822

Three items were used to measure the relational variable of satisfaction. The means and standard deviations are shown in Table 11. All three items measured within produced means scores neat the midpoint of the scale. The highest mean was 3.40 for the statement, “I am happy with the DOHRE.” The lowest mean was 3.31 for the statement, “Generally speaking, I am pleased with the relationship the DOHRE has established with me.” Table 11 also shows that there was not a large difference among the means of all three items.

Table 11

*Descriptive Statistics for Relationship-Satisfaction*

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
SAT 1. I am happy with the DOHRE.	289	3.47	.84585
SAT. 2 I am happy with my interactions with the DOHRE.	289	3.27	.89638
SAT 3. Generally speaking, I am pleased with the relationship the DOHRE has established with me.	289	3.20	.89822

Three items were used to measure commitment. Respondents tended to neither agree nor disagree with the statement reporting the highest mean (3.18), which was “I can tell that the DOHRE wants to maintain a relationship with residents like me.” The lowest mean was 2.99 for the statement, “I feel the DOHRE is trying to maintain a long-term commitment to people like me.” Table 12 shows the standard deviations for all three items measuring the relational variable of commitment.

Table 12

*Descriptive Statistics for Relationship-Commitment*

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
COMM 2. I can tell that the DOHRE wants to maintain a relationship with residents like me.	289	3.18	.97654
COMM 3. Compared to other housing options, I value my relationship with the DOHRE more.	289	3.01	.95377
COMM 1. I feel the DOHRE is trying to maintain a long-term commitment to people like me.	289	2.99	.96998

Three items were used to measure control mutuality. The highest mean was 3.37 for the statement, “The DOHRE listens to what residents have to say.” The lowest mean was 3.10 for the statement, “I feel the DOHRE really listens to what people like me have to say.” Table 13 shows the means and standard deviations for all three items. All three items were above the midpoint, which means respondents slightly agree with the three statements.



Table 13

*Descriptive Statistics for Relationship-Control Mutuality*

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
CTL 2. The DOHRE listens to what residents have to say.	289	3.3702	.81943
CTL 3. The DOHRE believes my opinions are legitimate.	289	3.2318	.81109
CTL 1. I feel the DOHRE really listens to what people like me have to say.	289	3.1003	.85815

Three items were used to measure communal relationships. Respondents agreed with the statement, “The DOHRE is concerned about the welfare of residents,” which yielded the highest mean ( $M=3.63$ ) among the items for communal relationship. Generally, reversed items, such as, “The DOHRE does not especially enjoy helping others,” falls below the scale mid-point showing that the majority of respondents disagree ( $M=2.52$ ) with the item. In addition, three items were used to measure exchange relationships. The highest mean was 3.16 for the statement, “DOHRE will compromise with residents when it knows that it will gain something.” The lowest mean was 2.71 for the statement, “Whenever the DOHRE gives or offers something to residents, it expects something in return.” The results indicate that respondents perceive an exchange relationship between the DOHRE and its residents. Table 14 shows the means and standard deviations for both communal and exchange relationships values.

Table 14

*Descriptive Statistics for Relationship-Communal and Exchange Relationships*

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
COM REL 2. The DOHRE is concerned about the welfare of residents.	278	3.6259	.83923
EXCH REL 2. DOHRE will compromise with residents when it knows that it will gain something.	278	3.1619	.76879
EXCH REL 3. The DOHRE takes care of residents who are likely to make it look good.	278	3.1223	.81467
COM REL 3. I feel the DOHRE takes advantage of residents.	278	2.7302	.89274
EXCH REL 1. Whenever the DOHRE gives or offers something to residents, it expects something in return.	278	2.7122	.83898
COM REL 1. The DOHRE does not especially enjoy helping others.	278	2.5180	.86948

Prior to hypotheses testing, Cronbach's alpha was used to determine the reliability of the multi-item scales used to measure the relational variables of trust, satisfaction, commitment, control mutuality, as well as the three-item measure of communal and exchange relationships, and the four-item measure of overall relationship quality. According to Stacks (2002), coefficients of .70 or higher are good reliability, .80 or higher are great reliability, and .90 or higher are excellent reliability. The majority of the variables estimated coefficients higher than .80, which means this study supports the

survey instrument Hon and J. E. Grunig (1999) created to test the qualities of relationships.

Table 15 shows the Cronbach's alpha for all the items. Trust ( $\alpha=.81$ ) and commitment ( $\alpha=.81$ ) estimated coefficients of .80 or higher, which means that the coefficients have great reliability. Satisfaction ( $\alpha=.92$ ), control mutuality ( $\alpha=.90$ ), and overall relationship ( $\alpha=.947$ ) estimated coefficients of .90 or higher, which means that the coefficients have excellent reliability. Communal relationships alpha was .781, which means the items have good reliability. The alpha for exchange relationships was .447. Due to the low estimated coefficient, the items for exchange relationships were excluded and each item was tested individually.

Table 15

*Reliability Analysis*

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	N
TRUST	.811	3
SATISFACTION	.920	3
COMMITMENT	.810	3
CONTROL MUTUALITY	.903	3
EXCHANGE RELATIONSHIPS	.447	3
COMMUNAL RELATIONSHIPS	.781	3
OVERALL RELATIONSHIP	.947	3

The average means for the multi-item scales used to test the variables of interest were then collapsed to create composite measures for hypothesis testing (see Table 16).

The highest means was for communal relationship (3.46). The lowest mean was for commitment (3.06).

Table 16

<i>Overall Means</i>			
Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
EXCHANGE			
RELATIONSHIPS	278	3.46	.72360
COMMUNAL	278	3.46	.72360
RELATIONSHIPS			
COMMITMENT	289	3.36	.83055
TRUST	289	3.32	.75006
CONTROL MUTUALITY	289	3.23	.75931
SATISFACTION	289	3.06	.82309

### **Analysis of Hypotheses and Propositions**

This section provides the results for the hypotheses and propositions. Correlation analysis was used to measure the relationships between the variables of organizational culture and organization-public relationships. Correlations were analyzed via the Pearson product-moment coefficient. According to Stacks (2002), correlations are expressed in terms of a continuum from -1.00 to +1.00 (p. 229). He also suggests that correlations below  $\pm.30$  are “weak”, between  $\pm.40$  and  $\pm.70$  “moderate”, between  $\pm.70$  and  $\pm.90$  “high”, and above  $\pm.90$  “very high”. To test hypotheses 1 and 2, a linear regression analysis was conducted.

**H1.** Hypothesis 1 posited that perceptions of participative culture are positively related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality. A correlation analysis was used to test this hypothesis. Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient revealed a significant positive association between participative culture and

trust ( $r=.699$ ,  $p< .01$ ), satisfaction ( $r=.621$ ,  $p< .01$ ), and control mutuality ( $r=.722$ ,  $p< .01$ ). The Pearson correlation for commitment was  $r=.524$  ( $p< .01$ ), indicating a moderate correlation to participative culture. Table 17 shows the correlations results for hypothesis one. The strength of these relationships was moderate.

Table 17

*Hypothesis 1 Correlations (N=289)*

	Participative Culture
TRUST	.699*
SATISFACTION	.621*
COMMITMENT	.534*
CONTROL MUTUALITY	.722*

Note. \* $p< .01$

**P1.1.** Pearson product-moment correlation was used to determine if a significant positive relationship exists between participative management style and perceptions of trust ( $r=.550$ ,  $p< .01$ ), satisfaction ( $r=.480$ ,  $p< .01$ ), commitment ( $r=.442$ ,  $p< .01$ ), and control mutuality ( $r=.593$ ,  $p< .01$ ). Table 18 shows the results that indicate participative management style has a moderate positive relationship to the measures of trust, commitment, satisfaction, and control mutuality. The strength of these relationships was moderate. The results support proposition 1.1.

Table 18

*Participative Management Style Correlations (N=289)*

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	CUL-PART 5. The DOHRE administration believes in sharing power with its residents
TRUST	.550*
SATISFACTION	.480*
COMMITMENT	.442*
CONTROL MUTUALITY	.593*

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*Note.* \* $p < .01$

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**P1.2.** Pearson product-moment correlation was used to determine if a significant positive relationship exists between the variables of innovation, efficiency, and liberalism and the measures of trust, commitment, satisfaction, and control mutuality. The results show that trust has a significant moderate relationship to the two of the measures used to test innovation ( $r=.604$ ,  $p < .01$ ,  $r=.491$ ,  $p < .01$ ), and a significant positive relationship with CUL-INN 2 ( $r=.36$ ,  $p < .01$ ), although it was weak. The measures for trust also yielded a significant positive moderate relationship to the measure for efficiency ( $r=.541$ ,  $p < .01$ ), and a significant positive weak relationship with the measure for liberalism ( $r=.223$ ,  $p < .01$ ). The measure for liberalism also had a significant positive weak relationship with commitment ( $r=.223$ ,  $p < .01$ ), satisfaction ( $r=.175$ ,  $p < .01$ ), and control mutuality ( $r=.184$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Table 19 shows the results that indicate that innovation, efficiency, and liberalism have a significant positive relationship with the measures of trust, commitment, satisfaction, and control mutuality. The strength of these relationships was moderate. The results support proposition 1.2.

Table 19

*Innovation, Efficiency, and Liberalism Correlations (N=289)*

	CUL-INN 1. As an organization, the DOHRE is open to new ideas.	CUL-INN 2. As an organization, the DOHRE looks to the future rather than the past.	CUL-INN 3. As an organization, the DOHRE believes it is important to be innovative.	CUL-EFF 4. As an organization, the DOHRE treats efficiency as its most important goal.	CUL-TRAD 5. As an organization, the DOHRE values tradition.
TRUST	.604*	.359*	.491*	.423*	.223*
SATISFACTION	.559*	.316*	.462*	.370*	.175*
COMMITMENT	.450*	.252*	.403*	.365*	.223*
CONTROL MUTUALITY	.627*	.342*	.490*	.411*	.184*

Note. \*p< .01

**P1.3.** Pearson product-moment correlation was used to determine if a significant positive relationship exists between perceptions of an open organizational system and perceptions of trust ( $r=.600$ ,  $p< .01$ ), satisfaction ( $r=.538$ ,  $p< .01$ ), commitment ( $r=.390$ ,  $p< .01$ ), and control mutuality ( $r=.508$ ,  $p< .01$ ). Table 20 shows the results that indicate that open organizational systems have a positive relationship to the perceptions of trust, commitment, satisfaction, and control mutuality. The strength of the relationship was moderate. The results support proposition 1.3.

Table 20

Open Organizational System Correlations (N=289)

	CUL-OPEN 2. The DOHRE is open to new ideas from outside influences.
TRUST	.600*
SATISFACTION	.507*
COMMITMENT	.507*
CONTROL	.447*
MUTUALITY	

Note. \*p< .01

**H2.** Hypothesis 2 posited that perceptions of authoritarian culture are inversely related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality. A correlation analysis was used to test the relationship between perceptions of an authoritarian culture and perceptions of trust, commitment, satisfaction, and control mutuality. Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients revealed a significant negative relationship between authoritarian culture and trust ( $r=-.538$ ,  $p< .01$ ), satisfaction ( $r=-.508$ ,  $p< .01$ ), and control mutuality ( $r=-.582$ ,  $p< .01$ ). The Pearson correlation for commitment was ( $r=-.390$ ,  $p< .01$ ), indicating a significant weak relationship to authoritarian culture. Table 21 shows the correlations results for hypothesis 2. The results support hypothesis two.



Table 21

*Hypothesis 2 Correlations (N=289)*

	Authoritarian Culture
TRUST	-.538*
SATISFACTION	-.508*
COMMITMENT	-.390*
CONTROL	-.582*
MUTUALITY	

*Note.* \* $p < .01$

**P2.1.** Pearson product-moment correlation was used to determine if a significant inverse relationship exists between authoritarian management style and perceptions of trust satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality. The highest Pearson correlations for the five authoritarian management style measures and the relationship measures are trust ( $r = -.494$ ,  $p < .01$ ), commitment ( $r = -.376$ ,  $p < .01$ ), satisfaction ( $r = -.494$ ,  $p < .01$ ), control mutuality ( $r = -.514$ ,  $p < .01$ ). The authoritarian management style measure CUL-AUTH had a significant negative relationship to the measures of commitment ( $r = -.094$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Measure CUL-AUTH 4 for authoritarian culture was not significant and produced a negative relationship to the measures of trust ( $r = -.107$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and commitment ( $r = -.109$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Table 22 shows the results that indicate authoritarian management style has an inverse relationship to the measures of trust, commitment, satisfaction, and control mutuality. The results support proposition 2.1.

Table 22

*Authoritarian Management Styles Correlations (N=289)*

	CUL- AUTH 1. The DOHRE has nearly total control over student behavior s.	CUL- AUTH 2. Rigid control by the DOHRE makes it difficult for me to voice new ideas.	CUL- AUTH 3. The DOHRE seems to believe that students lack initiative.	CUL- AUTH 4. The DOHRE believes it knows best because it has more experience than residents.	CUL- AUTH 6. Most residents are afraid of the DOHRE administra tion.
TRUST	-.157*	-.494*	-.362*	-.107*	-.412*
SATISFACTION	-.248*	-.494*	-.305*	-.119*	-.408*
COMMITMENT	-.094*	-.376*	-.266*	-.109*	-.313*
CONTROL MUTUALITY	-.244*	-.514*	-.392*	-.166*	-.402*

Note. \*p< .01

**P2.2** Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was used to determine if a significant inverse relationship exists between tradition and conservatism, and the measures of trust, commitment, satisfaction, and control mutuality. Table 23 shows that the measures for tradition have a significant positive relationship to measures of trust ( $r=.223$ ,  $p< .01$ ), commitment ( $r=.223$ ,  $p< .01$ ), satisfaction ( $r=.175$ ,  $p< .01$ ), and control mutuality ( $r=.184$ ,  $p< .01$ ); however, the relation is weak. The measure for conservatism had a significant negative relationship to trust ( $r=-.236$ ,  $p< .01$ ), commitment ( $r=-.160$ ,  $p< .01$ ), satisfaction ( $r=-.201$ ,  $p< .01$ ), and control mutuality ( $r=-.270$ ,  $p< .01$ ). The results support proposition 2.2.

Table 23

*Tradition and Conservatism Correlations (N=289)*

	CUL-TRAD 5. As an organization, the DOHRE values tradition.	CUL-CONS 1. I consider the DOHRE to be a conservative (traditional) organization.
TRUST	.223*	-.236*
SATISFACTION	.175*	-.201*
COMMITMENT	.223*	-.160*
CONTROL MUTUALITY	.184*	-.270*

Note. \*p< .01

**P2.3.** Pearson product-moment correlation was used to determine if a significant inverse relationship exists between perceptions of closed organizational system and perceptions of trust ( $r=-.558$ ,  $p< .01$ ), satisfaction ( $r=-.386$ ,  $p< .01$ ), commitment ( $r=-.457$ ,  $p< .01$ ), and control mutuality ( $r=-.565$ ,  $p< .01$ ). Table 24 shows that perceptions of a closed organizational system have an inverse moderate relationship to the measures of trust, commitment, satisfaction, and control mutuality. The results support proposition 2.3.

Table 24

*Closed Organizational System Correlations (N=289)*

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CUL-CLOSE 1. The DOHRE is closed to new ideas from outside influences.

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TRUST	-.558*
SATISFACTION	-.457*
COMMITMENT	-.386*
CONTROL	-.565*
MUTUALITY	

---

*Note.* \* $p < .01$

**H.3.** Hypothesis 3 posited that an authoritarian culture is positively related to exchange relationships. Pearson product-moment correlation was used to determine a significant positive relation between authoritarian culture and perceptions of exchange relationships ( $r=.536$ ,  $p < .01$ ). The results support the hypothesis that there is a significant positive relation between authoritarian culture and exchange relationships.

**H.4.** Hypothesis 4 posited that a participative culture is positively related to communal relationships. Pearson product-moment correlation was used to determine a significant positive relation between participative culture and perceptions of communal relationships ( $r=.657$ ,  $p < .01$ ). The results support the hypothesis that there is a significant positive relation between participative culture and communal relationships.

This chapter summarized the statistical data attained for this study. Chapter Five will discuss the results of the studies, state the limitations, and suggest areas of research for the future.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Discussion**

This chapter discusses the analysis of the data presented in Chapter Four followed, by the limitations of the study and the suggested areas for future research.

This study sought to investigate perceptions of organizational culture and how they relate to organization-public relationship building using measures of organizational culture and dimensions of organization-public relationships building. Specifically, it attempted to explore the organizational culture and relationship management for the UF Department of Housing and Residence Education (DOHRE) from residents' perspective. This study attempts to contribute to public relations literature by asking how perceptions of organizational culture are related to perceptions of organization-public relationships. The following four hypotheses and related propositions were developed based on a review of relevant literature.

H1: Perceptions of participative culture are positively related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

P1.1: Perceptions of participative management style are positively related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

P1.2: The organizational values of innovation, efficiency, and liberalism are positively related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

P1.3: An open organizational environment is positively related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

H2: Perceptions of authoritarian culture are inversely related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

P2.1: Perceptions of authoritarian management style are inversely related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

P2.2: The organizational values of tradition and conservatism are inversely related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

P2.3: A closed organizational environment is inversely related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

H3: Authoritarian culture is positively related to exchange relationships.

H4: Participative culture is positively related to communal relationships.

The results for this study were divided into frequencies of the sample used in this study, organizational culture variables, organization-public relationship variables, and test of the hypotheses and corresponding propositions posited by this study. The discussion of the results that follows in this chapter is organized in the same manner.

Before discussing the organizational culture and organization-public relationship variables, a general discussion is necessary about the population for this study is provided. The participants for this study were unique because they are college students

residing on the University of Florida campus. The frequency distribution showed that the majority of the participants were females with freshmen class standing, with an uncertain graduation date, who live in a residence hall. Reference to the unique population will be mentioned throughout the discussion of the results and in the limitations.

**Organizational culture variables.** The results for the means and standard deviations revealed that participants slightly agreed with most of the participative culture statements and slightly disagreed with the majority of the authoritarian culture statements. The means and standard deviations exhibit that the majority of residents perceive the DOHRE to generally have a participative culture. Therefore, the DOHRE can be described as an innovative, efficient organization with a participative management style. Also, the resident's perceive the DOHRE to value liberalism, be open to different thinking, and function as an open organization system.

The factor analysis for the measures of organizational culture supported previous studies that found the items measured two culture types: authoritarian culture and participative culture. This result supports Sriramesh, J. E. Grunig, and Dozier's (1996) results. It also demonstrates that these two dimensions of organizational culture can be measured using quantitative research methods. The DOHRE can be described as an organization that depicts a participative culture, which emphasizes collective responsibility, decision-making, and values. Residents perceive the organization to be concerned with their needs.

**Organization-public relationships variables.** The means and standard deviations provide a glimpse at the participants' perception of their relationship with the DOHRE. Overall, residents slightly agreed that they are happy with their relationship

with the DOHRE. Participants also slightly agreed with measures of commitment, except for the statement, “I feel the DOHRE is trying to maintain a long-term commitment to people like me,” which yielded a mean of 2.99, indicating slight disagreement. The uniqueness of the population may be the reason for these results. It could be that they do not perceive a long-term relationship with the DOHRE because campus housing is mostly seen as temporary. The means and standard deviations for control mutuality revealed that, overall, residents perceive that the DOHRE listens to them and believes that their opinions are valued. Lastly, the means and standard deviation results showed that students perceive their relationship with the DOHRE as an exchange relationship. Means for the measures of communal relationship revealed slight disagreement, where means for measures of exchange relationship showed a slight agreement.

**H1.** Hypothesis 1 proposed that perceptions of participative culture are positively related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality. The results for this study supported hypothesis 1. The findings support that participative culture can be related to all four the variables of organization-public relationships: trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality. The results for this hypothesis support the theoretical framework for organizational culture where an organization with characteristics of a participative culture can influence an external public’s perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

**P1.1.** Proposition 1.1 proposed that perceptions of participative management style are positively related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality. The results from this study support this proposition. Correlations analysis revealed that residents perceive a positive significant relationship between participative



management style and trust, satisfaction, commitment and control mutuality. A participative management style is open, pluralistic, and democratic (Sriramesh & White, 1992). Comparing the six elements of organization-public relationships theory can define a clear relationship between a participative management style and the factors of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality. An open, pluralistic, and democratic manager must agree when someone else has the rightful power to influence, to be open to the other party, to recognize that the relationship is better than the cause, to invest time in others and to expect nothing in return. These characteristics can also be descriptors for control mutuality, trust, satisfaction, and communal relationships.

**P1.2.** Proposition 1.2 proposed that the organizational values of innovation, efficiency, and liberalism are positively related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality. The correlation analysis revealed a significant positive relationship between the factors of innovation, efficiency, and liberalism and the measures of trust, commitment, satisfaction, and control mutuality.

**P1.3.** Proposition 1.3 proposed that an open organizational environment is positively related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality. Cutlip, Center, and Broom (1999) define an open organizational environment as a set of interacting units that have permeable boundaries and exchange information via inputs and throughputs. An open organizational system can be identified by its external orientation, its adeptness to work together to accomplish a goal, and seeks understanding. All of the characteristics of an open organizational environment fit the descriptions of a participative culture. This proposition contributes to the theoretical framework because it supports that there is a positive relationship between open organizational environments

and measures of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality. The proposition supports the findings that if an organization is perceived as an open organizational environment, then it is more likely to be perceived as an organization that supports the organization-public relationships items of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality. Organizations whose publics perceive an open organizational environment have a greater opportunity at establishing trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

**H2.** Hypothesis 2 posited that perceptions of authoritarian culture are inversely related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality. The results from the correlation analysis support this hypothesis. Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient yielded a significant negative relationship between the authoritarian culture factor and trust, commitment, and satisfaction. The results for trust, satisfaction, and control mutuality indicate a moderate relationship due to the fact that the numbers fall between a  $\pm 40$  and a  $\pm 70$ . Commitment yielded a weak relationship with authoritarian culture since the number was less than  $\pm 40$ . The number of freshmen participants could have had an effect on their perceptions of an authoritarian culture and commitment because they have not lived on campus an entire collegiate semester. Also, residents could also perceive the DOHRE as a rules and policy driven organization.

An authoritarian culture can also be described as an autocratic organization (Sriramesh & White, 1992). Organizations with authoritarian cultures emphasize individual values and responsibility (Sriramesh, J. E. Grunig, & Dozier, 1996). The hypothesis supports the theory through this study because an inverse relationship between authoritarian culture and trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

**P2.1.** Proposition 2.1 proposed that perceptions of authoritarian management style are inversely related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality. The correlations analysis for the factor of authoritarian management style provided informative results about the organization and the population. The results for the statement, “The DOHRE administration has total control over student behaviors,” revealed a significant negative relationship; however, it was weak for trust, commitment satisfaction, and control mutuality. The numbers reflect the description of the majority of participants. Freshmen who have resided on the University of Florida campus less than a year may not be aware of their options, and so they perceive the DOHRE to have control of their behaviors. Another possibility may be the way the question was phrased. The wording “student behaviors” can be interpreted by college students as the rules they must follow while living in a residence hall, and if the rules are broken then there are consequences.

Another statement that had a significant negative relationship with the factors of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control was, “The DOHRE believes it knows best because it has more experience than the residents.” Again, the numbers yielded a weak relationship and can be explained by the majority of freshmen residents who responded, as well as the larger number of residents who have lived on campus less than a year and have little experience with the organizational culture of the DOHRE.

The other three measures of authoritarian management style support the hypothesis and contribute to the theoretical framework that suggests organizational culture and organization-public relationships are related. Sriramesh, J. E. Grunig, and Dozier’s (1996) describe authoritarian management style as managers who do not have

concern for the lives of people outside the organization. Therefore, an authoritarian culture is inversely related to the items of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality. Managers who have no regard about people's lives does not project a perception of being trusting, committing, and collaborating with those they are involved with on a day to day basis.

**P2.2.** Proposition 2.2 proposed that the organizational values of tradition and conservatism are inversely related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality. Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient revealed that there is a significant negative relationship between organizational values of tradition and conservatism to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality. This study supports this proposition and contributes to the theoretical frameworks for organizational culture and organization-public relationships. However, the results did measure a weak relationship for both tradition and conservatism. First, residents' response to the statement, "As an organization the DOHRE values tradition," could have been interpreted differently than the intended meaning of the measure. Also, freshmen residents could have little experience about the traditional values of the DOHRE due to length of involvement. Second, the statement, "I consider the DOHRE to be conservative (traditional)," is a problematic statement because the term conservative has a political connotation.

**P2.3:** Proposition 2.3 proposed that a closed organizational environment is inversely related to perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality. The correlation analysis yielded results showing that a closed organizational environment

has a significant negative relation to the factors of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

Cutlip, Center, and Broom (1999) define a closed organizational environment as a set of interacting units that have impermeable boundaries and cannot exchange information with environments. A closed system in an organization can be identified by its internal orientation; workers do what they are told; and members of a dominant coalition that seek control. All of the characteristics of a closed environment fit the descriptions of an authoritarian culture. This proposition contributes to the theoretical framework because it supports that there is an inverse relationship between a closed organizational environments and measures of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality. The proposition supports the findings that if an organization is perceived as a closed organizational environment, it will also be perceived as an organization that does not support the organization-public relationships items of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality.

**H3:** Hypothesis 3 proposed that authoritarian culture is positively related to exchange relationships. A correlation analysis was used to test this hypothesis. The results yielded a significant positive relationship between the measures for authoritarian culture and an exchange relationship. This study supports the presented hypothesis and theory. The data revealed that perceptions of an authoritarian culture are related to perceptions of exchange relationships. Exchange relationships are relationships where one party benefits from the other. Exchange relationships are self-centered. The organization acts dependent on the benefits that it will receive. As previously mentioned in this chapter, authoritarian culture is characterized as being concerned with individual

values and responsibility. The descriptors for both authoritarian culture and exchange relationships share similar characteristics. The data confirms the definitions of authoritarian culture and exchange relationship and shows that the perceptions of authoritarian culture will be positively related to exchange relationships.

**H4:** Hypothesis 4 proposed that a participative culture is positively related to communal relationships. Pearson's product-moment revealed a significant positive relation between a participative culture and communal relationship. Much like Hypothesis 3, a participative culture and communal relationship share similar characteristics. The data supports the hypothesis and contributes to theories of an organizational culture and organization-public relationships. The findings that support Hypothesis 4 help extend organizational culture theory by showing how the theory can connect to the variables organization-public relationships theory.

### **Limitations**

The first limitation of this study is the 8% response rate. Stacks (2002) states that online surveys should be approached in the same manner as a mail surveys. He suggests that following Dillman's five steps to increase response rate. The following four attempts were made to contact participants. They were: a pre-notification email, email with survey link to invite residents to participate, a reminder email asking them to participate, and a final reminder email asking them to participate. Wimmer and Dominick (2006) state the response rate range for Internet survey is 1% to 30% (p. 205). The number of respondents and its consistency with past research maintains the validity of this study (Werder, 2005).

Another limitation is the construction of the statements used to measure the variables for organizational culture. The statements were adapted from previous studies

and used language that could have been misinterpreted by residents who are students at a university. This could be the reason why statements had to be excluded from the factor analysis in order to yield two interpretable factors. Also, items had to be excluded from the reliability analysis in order to increase the internal consistency. Doing so increased the alpha coefficients, indicating a strong internal consistency. In the future, the questionnaire must be adapted to meet the understanding of the population. Despite this limitation, this study did produce consistent results that support the validity of previous studies.

Although the results support the hypotheses and propositions presented in this study, the means present another limitation. The means yielded for most items a slightly disagree or slightly agree response. There was not a larger difference within each statement. As mentioned previously the population for this study was unique. In the future, further explanation may be needed and an introduction about the organization can be presented in order for respondents to be aware. Also, the large majority of respondents were freshmen that lived on campus less than a year, which could also result in the lack of awareness.

One final limitation is the length of the questionnaire. In attempt to connect the two theories, the questionnaire was adapted from two previous studies, which resulted in a 50-item questionnaire. In the future, this study could reduce the numbers of measures so that each participant spends less time taking the survey. Furthermore, the statements were long, and the survey required a lot of reading. This resulted in 13% of respondents not completing the survey.

Despite these limitations, this study contributes to a unique body of research on the variables of organizational culture and organization-public relationships. Also, there has not been any research attempting to relate organizational culture with organization-public relationships. The results of this study constitute an important preliminary step in extending both the organizational culture theory and organization-public relationships theory.

### **Conclusions**

This study is significant to the extension of public relations theory. The research presented here will provide a greater understanding about perceptions of organizational culture and organization-public relations from an external publics perspective. The findings for this study support previous measures created to test organizational culture and organization-public relationships. This study also opens opportunities for further discussions on how organizational culture is related to organizational-public relations, and how both can influence each other. Furthermore, this study also contributes separately to organizational culture theory and organization-public relationships theory.

The premise for this study sprang from a previous study on organizational culture. Sriramesh (2007) expressed that “culture—fundamental to any relationship building effort (including the six outcomes listed by Hon & Grunig)—has yet to be integrated into the discussion of relationship building” (p. 520). This study uses the two factors of authoritarian and participative culture developed by Sriramesh, J. E. Grunig, and Dozier to measure perceptions of organizational culture. Then, the measures developed for the six outcomes of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality by Hon and Grunig were used to test relationship theory. Connecting the two theories materialized at



the analysis of the results when the two measures of organizational culture were tested with the measure organization-public relationships to determine the level of relation between the items.

The results presented in this study support the hypotheses and propositions developed for this study. When an organization is perceived to have characteristics of a participative culture, it will have positive perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality. Vice versa, when an organization is perceived to have characteristics of an authoritarian culture, it will have negative perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality. Specifically, an authoritarian culture shares characteristics with exchange relationships, and a participative culture shares characteristics with communal relationships. This study supports the idea that when an organization has a participative culture it also practices communal relationships.

This study not only contributes to theory, but also to public relations practice. First the UF Department of Housing and Residence will be able to use the data presented in this study to better understand their organizational culture and the quality of the relationships that exist with residents. This study can also be used to create a strategic communication plan for the DOHRE. Organizational objectives to increase commitment can be developed from the data presented here, along with strategies and tactics to deliver and receive messages to and from residents. The DOHRE can develop messages and activities to create change in organizational culture and to improve the qualities of relationships based on the feedback from this study.

## **Future Research**

Organizational culture is an understudied topic. Future research should incorporate discussions about organizational culture with other well-studied theories. Also, future research should focus on measures of societal culture, and how they are related to relationship management theory. Research on societal culture could reveal if organizational culture reflects the external culture of an organization. Furthermore, future studies should test if conflicts between societal culture and organizational culture affect perceptions of trust, satisfaction, commitment, control mutuality, communal and exchange relationships.

From a methodological perspective, future studies should incorporate qualitative research methods. According to Sriramesh, Grunig, and Dozier (1996), qualitative research methods provide an in-depth understanding about individual cultures and how they originated. The same can be applied to the study of relationships. In relationships study, qualitative methods can provide an in-depth understanding of the relationship measurement and how the length of relationships affects perceptions of the outcomes of organizational-public relationships. In addition, qualitative methods can be useful when little or no data exists.

Finally, it would be imperative to replicate this study to gather perceptions of organizational culture and organization-public relationships from an internal publics perspective. Sriramesh, Grunig, and Dozier (1996) “theorized that employees would be the best sources of information that would lead to an understanding of organizational culture” (p. 243). This would also provide an opportunity to retest the items presented here with a more formidable population.

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**Appendix A**  
**Survey Instrument**

# My Perception of DOHRE's Culture and Relationship

## 1. Introduction

This survey is being conducted to determine the perceptions of University of Florida student residents about the Department of Housing and Residence Education's (DOHRE) organizational culture and relationship management.

The results from this survey will be used for research purposes only. Respondents will remain anonymous and all answers are confidential.

The survey will take approximately 10 minutes and participation is voluntary. There are no right or wrong answers. Please answer questions to the best of your ability.

## My Perception of DOHRE's Culture and Relationship

### 2. Part One-UF Department of Housing and Residence Education's Culture

This section evaluates your perceptions of the Department of Housing and Residence Education's culture. DOHRE in this section refers to the UF Department of Housing and Residence Education.

**Please answer how strongly you disagree or agree with the following statements:**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The DOHRE believes it knows best because it has more experience than residents.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Rigid control by the DOHRE makes it difficult for me to voice new ideas.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
As an organization, the DOHRE looks to the future rather than the past.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
As an organization, the DOHRE treats efficiency as its most important goal.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
As an organization, the DOHRE is open to new ideas.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
As an organization, the DOHRE believes it is important to be innovative.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The DOHRE has nearly total control over student behaviors.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
As an organization, the DOHRE values tradition.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The DOHRE seems to believe that students lack initiative.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Most residents are afraid of the DOHRE administration.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The DOHRE administration believes in sharing power with its residents.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## My Perception of DOHRE's Culture and Relationship

### 3. Part Two-My Perception of the Department of Housing and Residence Education...

This section will evaluate your perceptions about the values of the UF Department of Housing and Residence Education. DOHRE refers to the UF Department of Housing and Residence Education.

**Please answer how strongly you disagree or agree with the following statements:**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I consider the DOHRE to be a conservative (traditional) organization.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I consider the DOHRE to be a liberal (forward-thinking) organization.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The DOHRE is closed to new ideas from outside influences.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The DOHRE is open to new ideas from outside influences.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The DOHRE is willing to work with outside groups that have different values.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The DOHRE tries to take control of groups that disagree with it.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## My Perception of DOHRE's Culture and Relationship

### 4. Part Three-My Relationship with the UF Department of Housing and Residence ...

This section evaluates your perceptions about the relationship you have with the UF Department of Housing and Residence Education. In this section, DOHRE refers to the the Department of Housing and Residence Education.

**Please answer how strongly you agree with the following statements:**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Compared to other housing options, I value my relationship with the DOHRE more.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Generally speaking, I am pleased with the relationship the DOHRE has established with me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am happy with my interactions with the DOHRE.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am happy with the DOHRE.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I believe the DOHRE takes the opinions of people like me into account when making decisions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can tell that the DOHRE wants to maintain a relationship with residents like me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel the DOHRE is trying to maintain a long-term commitment to people like me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel the DOHRE really listens to what people like me have to say.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The DOHRE believes my opinions are legitimate.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The DOHRE has the ability to accomplish what it says it will do.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The DOHRE listens to what residents have to say.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The goals of residents are compatible with the goals of the DOHRE.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Whenever the DOHRE makes important decisions, I know the administration will be concerned with students like me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## My Perception of DOHRE's Culture and Relationship

### 5. Part Four-My Type of Relationship with the UF Department of Housing and Res...

This section will gather data about your perceptions of the relationship you have with the UF Department of Housing and Residence Education. Any reference to DOHRE refers to the Department of Housing and Residence Education.

**Please answer how strongly you agree with the following statements:**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
DOHRE will compromise with residents when it knows that it will gain something.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel the DOHRE takes advantage of residents.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Residents want the same things the DOHRE wants.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The DOHRE and residents have different goals.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The DOHRE does not especially enjoy helping others.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The DOHRE is concerned about the welfare of residents.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The DOHRE takes care of residents who are likely to make it look good.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Whenever the DOHRE gives or offers something to residents, it expects something in return.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## My Perception of DOHRE's Culture and Relationship

### 6. My Overall Relationship with UF Department of Housing and Residence Educati...

Please answer the following statement:

Overall, my relationship with the UF Department of Housing and Residence Education is:

Select one	Negative	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Positive
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Select one	Bad	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Good
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Select one	Unsatisfactory	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Satisfactory
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Select one	Poor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Excellent
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## My Perception of DOHRE's Culture and Relationship

### 7. Part Five-Demographics

#### What is your gender?

- Male  
 Female

#### What is your age?

- Under 18  
 18-24  
 25-29  
 30-34  
 35-39  
 40 or older

#### What is your race?

- Caucasian  
 African American  
 Hispanic  
 Asian  
 Native American  
 Other  
 Prefer not to answer

#### What is your major?

#### What is your class standing?

- Freshman  
 Sophomore  
 Junior  
 Senior  
 Graduate  
 Other



## My Perception of DOHRE's Culture and Relationship

**Are you involved in any student organizations?**

- Yes  
 No

**How long have you been a student at UF?**

- Less than one year  
 One Year  
 Two Years  
 Three Years  
 Four Years  
 Five Years  
 More than 6 years

**When is your expected date of graduation?**

- Spring 2011  
 Fall 2011  
 Spring 2012  
 Fall 2012  
 Spring 2013  
 Fall 2013  
 Other

**Are you a transfer student?**

- Yes  
 No

**Are you from Florida?**

- Yes  
 No

**What is your permanent zip code?**

## My Perception of DOHRE's Culture and Relationship

### I live in:

- A residence hall.
- Graduate and Family Housing.

## My Perception of DOHRE's Culture and Relationship

### 8. Conclusion

Thank you so much for your valuable input. Your time is greatly appreciated and will be a great benefit to our research.

**Appendix B**  
**Prenotification Email**

Send: Thursday, February 24, 2011

Email Subject: The Department of Housing and Residence Education (DOHRE) Organizational Culture Survey

Dear UF Resident:

I am a graduate student conducting research to better understand your perceptions of the UF Department of Housing and Residence Education's (DOHRE) organizational culture and your relationship with the DOHRE. Your participation in this study is greatly appreciated and will help the DOHRE better meet the needs of student residents.

You are randomly selected among all students who live on campus at the University of Florida. You are going to receive an email that invites to participate in an online survey. The survey will take 10 minutes to complete.

Only you can provide the information needed about the DOHRE. I hope that you will take the time to complete this very important survey.

Thank you!

Cherisse Fonseca Rivera

[cmfonsec@mail.usf.edu](mailto:cmfonsec@mail.usf.edu)

**Appendix C**  
**Participation Email**

Send: Friday, February 25, 2010

Email Subject: Survey Invitation: The DOHRE's Organizational Culture Study

Dear UF Resident:

You recently received an email informing you about an online survey being conducted to understand the UF Department of Housing and Residence Education culture and your relationship with the organization. You were randomly selected as part of an important sample of residents served by the DOHRE. Here is the link to the survey:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/SNRJRWJ>.

Please click on the link to access the survey. It will take about 10 minutes to complete. Your participation is extremely important. All your responses will remain anonymous and will be used for research purposes only.

Thank you in advance for your participation. Your response is greatly appreciated and will help the DOHRE better meet the needs of its residents.

Cherisse Fonseca Rivera

[cmfonsec@mail.usf.edu](mailto:cmfonsec@mail.usf.edu)

Informed consent statement: This research is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Kelly Page Werder, USF School of Mass Communications, 4202 East Fowler Ave, CIS1040, Tampa, FL 33620; (813) 974-6790. Your responses will remain confidential to the extent provided by law. You do not have to answer any questions you do not wish to answer, and you have the right to withdraw consent at any time without consequence. There are no anticipated risks associated with your participation in this research and you will receive no compensation for your participation. If you have any questions concerning the procedures used in this study, you may contact me at the e-mail address [cmfonsec@mail.usf.edu](mailto:cmfonsec@mail.usf.edu). Questions or concerns about your rights as a participant can be directed to the University of South Florida Institutional Review Board at (813) 974-5638. Please reference IRB pro00002426.

**Appendix D**  
**Email Reminder 1**



Send: Monday, February 28, 2011

Email Subject: Student Survey on DOHRE's Culture

Dear UF Resident:

This is a friendly reminder about the UF Department of Housing and Residence Education organizational culture survey.

If you have already completed the online questionnaire, I sincerely thank you. If you have not yet participated, please click on the link below to access the survey. Your participation is greatly appreciated. Your responses are anonymous and will only be used for the purpose of this research project.

Please access the survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/SNRJRWJ>.

Thank you for your time,

Cherisse Fonseca Rivera

[cmfonsec@mail.usf.edu](mailto:cmfonsec@mail.usf.edu)

Informed consent statement: This research is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Kelly Page Werder, USF School of Mass Communications, 4202 East Fowler Ave, CIS1040, Tampa, FL 33620; (813) 974-6790. Your responses will remain confidential to the extent provided by law. You do not have to answer any questions you do not wish to answer, and you have the right to withdraw consent at any time without consequence. There are no anticipated risks associated with your participation in this research and you will receive no compensation for your participation. If you have any questions concerning the procedures used in this study, you may contact me at the e-mail address [cmfonsec@mail.usf.edu](mailto:cmfonsec@mail.usf.edu). Questions or concerns about your rights as a participant can be directed to the University of South Florida Institutional Review Board at (813) 974-5638. Please reference IRB pro00002426.

**Appendix E**  
**Email Reminder 2**

Send: Wednesday, March 2, 2011

Email Subject: Student Survey on DOHRE's Culture

Dear UF Resident:

This is a friendly reminder about the UF Department of Housing and Residence Education organizational culture survey.

If you have already completed the online questionnaire, I sincerely thank you. If you have not yet participated, please click on the link below to access the survey. Your participation is greatly appreciated. Your responses are anonymous and will only be used for the purpose of this research project.

Please access the survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/SNRJRWJ>.

Thank you for your time,

Cherisse Fonseca Rivera

[cmfonsec@mail.usf.edu](mailto:cmfonsec@mail.usf.edu)

Informed consent statement: This research is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Kelly Page Werder, USF School of Mass Communications, 4202 East Fowler Ave, CIS1040, Tampa, FL 33620; (813) 974-6790. Your responses will remain confidential to the extent provided by law. You do not have to answer any questions you do not wish to answer, and you have the right to withdraw consent at any time without consequence. There are no anticipated risks associated with your participation in this research and you will receive no compensation for your participation. If you have any questions concerning the procedures used in this study, you may contact me at the e-mail address [cmfonsec@mail.usf.edu](mailto:cmfonsec@mail.usf.edu). Questions or concerns about your rights as a participant can be directed to the University of South Florida Institutional Review Board at (813) 974-5638. Please reference IRB pro00002426.