American Public Relations in the Middle East:

Perceptions of Middle Eastern Bloggers toward American Campaigns

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Abstract

Public relations is becoming a vital component in the development of relationships between nations because of our global community. This study looks to the Middle Eastern blogging community to examine members perceptions of American-based public relations efforts throughout the Middle East. More specifically, it uses a Delphi-type method to examine whether American public relations efforts have moved beyond a basic awareness of campaigns and whether these participants perceive these campaigns are beneficial. The study also seeks to discover campaign characteristics that are deemed important by the participants.
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Introduction

Never before have the practices of public relations and public diplomacy (here used interchangeably) been more important to the attainment of world peace, never before have Arabs and Americans had more at stake in their mutual relations, and never before has globalization made this discussion more urgent. (Heibert, 2005)

As more and more organizations are striving to get their message out in this highly mediated world, the public relations arena is expanding. Press releases, speeches, and conferences, among many other tactics, are communication-based experiences firmly rooted in public relations communication tactics. These tend to indulge and reflect the culturally based experiences of those doing the publicity and communicating. Public relations “provides a vital communication function for organizations, nations, and even the world, helping to develop an understanding among groups and eventually reduce conflict” (Grunig, 1993, p.1). Grunig also establishes public relations as “one of the critical management functions in modern organizations” in part because of the use of image-making but more importantly, the long-term contributions public relations makes to an organization (1993, p. 2).

Cultural differences are becoming more apparent and are necessary to address as nations grow more dependent on each other for resources. The use of public relations in the modern government sector has rapidly increased due to globalization, the expansion of communication technology, and broader public participation in foreign affairs. The distinct form of public relations known as public diplomacy is becoming a means in which “both government and private individuals and groups influence directly or indirectly those public attitudes and opinion which bear directly on another government’s foreign policy decisions” (Grunig, 1993, p.4).
Because of the emergence of newer technologies, people have to expand on new ways of using media in order to achieve mutual respect for the differences in cultures, religions and governments. Now, Middle Easterners are getting news information from more sources outside of their borders. Satellite television and satellite radio are offering new perspectives for Middle Easterners that were obsolete ten years ago. Without effectively using these newer media and understanding their effects on public relations, organizations and governments exclude an important component of public relations or public diplomacy. It is important to remember that, more often than not, these aforementioned media are the only method of obtaining information about other countries.

It is also imperative that cultural differences among nations are fully recognized by campaign creators to decrease the likeliness of public relations projects failing, not even beginning, or backfiring (Zaharna, 2001). When people enter into multicultural settings, new cultural assumptions arise that public relations specialists need to be aware of. Comparative public relations applies a culture-specific approach and looks at public relations in different countries and locations. This information is then used to create effective campaigns that are culturally aware, sensitive and serve to influence how a campaign planner might view the country (Zaharna, 2001).

During this critical time (war between nations), it is vastly important for nations to consider utilizing public relations in developing relationships and maintaining ties with other countries. Studies show the growing dissatisfaction between governments of the United States and Middle Eastern nations (Zaharna, 2001, Furia & Lucas, 2006, Heibert, 2005). For instance, Jordan is the fourth-largest recipient of United States aid, and 75%
of Jordanians have a negative view of the United States (as referenced by Heibert, 2005). Studies such as these demonstrate the need for public relations as a relationship tool in Middle Eastern nations. For these reasons and others, it becomes a necessity of the United States government to effectively communicate with other nations through public relations and public diplomacy.
Chapter 1: Study Objectives

The spread of democracy worldwide along has increased people’s access to news and information. Public perception can be useful in making sense of these vast amounts of new information. Understanding public perceptions in public diplomacy involves studying the ways in which foreign publics interpret another country’s culture, ideas and beliefs. This perception can be either enabling or disabling. It is the partial role of effective public relations to counter disabling perceptions and create enabling environments in which countries can negotiate.

This study followed a longitudinal format allowing for data to be gathered over a period of several months and allowed for a panel research style with the same participants answering survey questions over the course of those months. The data gathered focused on the perceptions of Middle Eastern people toward programs in the Middle East region that are developed by American public diplomacy efforts. The sample includes residents in the Middle East region. Participants were selected via two online Web sites: Global Voices Online and TravBuddy. Global Voices Online is a Web site where employees select bloggers from regions of the world who are considered to be regular bloggers and in some cases bridgebloggers, or bloggers who work to inform others of their country or culture. Regular bloggers, in this instance, blog at least twice a week and are linked to by other bloggers. TravBuddy is a networking Web site that enables people from various areas of the world to create a profile and then blog about their travel experiences and their home country. Participants were asked to make note of recent programs used in the Middle East that are American-based as well as what media made them aware of this program. Participants were also asked to report their attitudes toward the benefits of such programs in their own country and their perceptions of cultural sensitivity.
This research followed a Delphi-type research method (Linstone and Turoff, 2002) in which survey questions were administered in two phases to narrow in on what aspects of public diplomacy campaigns are important to these particular participants. In the first survey, participants offered feedback as to what public relations campaigns they were aware of. Instead of the researcher suggesting campaigns to the participants, the participants identified campaigns to the researcher during this first phase. Ultimately, the first phase determined whether there was a basic awareness of American-based public relations campaigns in the Middle East. During the second survey, the researcher questioned participants about aspects or characteristics of these campaigns that stood out above others. In other words, which campaign attributes did the participants deem most important?

This method allowed for data analysis to identify attitudes and concepts that are most important to this particular sample when developing public relations campaigns. By allowing the participants to evaluate the programs according to the attributes they deem most important, it can be determined how well the programs are tailored specifically to that sample.

This research looked to uncover perceptions of Middle Easterners toward American-based public relations campaigns. More specifically, what public relations campaigns are Middle Easterners able to identify and demonstrate a basic awareness of, and what attributes or characteristics of those campaigns are more important when dealing with these Middle Eastern participants?
Chapter 2: Review of Literature

2.1 Public Relations

Public relations is defined as the “management of communication between an organization and its publics” (Grunig, 1992, p. 4). As a process, public relations describes the overall planning, execution, and evaluation of an organization’s communication with external as well as internal publics. However, the definitions surrounding the practice vary widely among organizations. As a narrow function, public relations is seen as serving the public through publicity, promotion, media relations, or marketing. As a broader function, it can be seen as a policy-making function of an organization or can be termed public affairs so as to broaden the practice to include interaction between groups that lead to formulating public policy decisions (Grunig, 1992). In any case, regardless of the multitude of definitions, one can be certain that public relations is “a communicative process; this is, it involves some form of communication, whether it be written, verbal or neither, as a purposeful choice, and it is a process (Curtin & Gaither, 2007, p.6).”

Bobbit and Sullivan (2005) offer another modern definition of public relations. They describe the process as the “management function that uses two-way communication to receive information from and give information to an organization’s various publics” (p.2). Through this definition, three key terms are highlighted as important public relations attributes. Management function offers that the process must be an integral part of the management’s operations instead of simply offering reports to higher-end officials. Two-way communication offers the distinction between public relations and publicity. Using two-way communication offers the added dimensions of research, measurement, and feedback. Various publics refers to the constituent groups
that an organization has relations with. Instead of tailoring to a broad audience, an organization would segment groups into small units (Bobbit & Sullivan, 2005).

2.2 Communication Models

One-way communication can be described as the act of communicating simply to get a message out. One such way could be sending out brochures through direct mail (Heath, 2001). These brochures usually offer information and aid in helping to build an image of a certain organization that is relaying the information. Rarely is there the ability of the recipient to respond to such communication. Thus, relationships are less likely to develop.

At the start of the Iraq War, when negotiations initiated between the United States and the Middle East, the communication migrated into a one-way “conversation” where ultimatums were presented instead of compromise. President Bush himself addressed the American people saying, “We are not doing a good job of getting our message out,” which reflected informational, one-way communication. The United States relied on facts and figures to create logical, persuasive arguments that were void of emotion (Zaharna, 2001). In a culture where communication is synonymous with creating valuable relationships, this form of communication was unacceptable and ineffective to Middle Easterners.

“Public diplomacy is not merely about advocating and promoting political and economic goals to the international public; it is, instead, about relationship building between nations and cultures through better communication” (Wang, 2006, p.93). This relationship building is the foundation of effective two-way communication. When dealing with international public relations, effective relationships between countries are
developed through this two-way communication while ineffective relationships are focused on one-way communication. For example, after the 911 attacks, President Bush was able to rally the American people. Zaharna calls this the “epitome of effective public diplomacy” because this communication was displayed as two-way, it was highly symbolic of cultural values, emotionally harmonious with the public, and represented true communication between leaders and their publics (2001, p. 1). With the majority of communication coming from nonverbal expressions, a move from “intellectual forms of communication” must occur (Leonard, 2002, p. 53). Public relations must evoke imagination; it must utilize symbolism.

According to Wang, national reputation (i.e., image) acts as an “instrument of power” and a form of public good that “creates either an enabling or a disabling environment in which nation-states pursue political goals and policies in the global arena” (2006, p. 91). Relationships and reputation often act as more powerful tools than any military or economic power of a nation. This was dubbed “soft power” by Nye (1990, 2004) and refers to the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments. This soft power arises from the attractiveness of a country’s culture, political ideas, and foreign policies. Through effective public relations or public diplomacy, relationships can be built thus aiding to develop this “soft power.” It is clear that national relationships serve as one clear indication of the strength of a nation and the power it is able to exert. A positive relationship with other nations affects the ability of that nation to build alliances in order to achieve international political objectives, its ability to influence purchasing power regarding products of specific countries, and the ability to attract foreign investments and in-bound tourism.
2.3 Public Relations Campaigns

Campaign communication is a broad topic, and public communication campaigns encompass a large variety of campaign efforts. Campaigns are usually regarded as public service programs, to assist a community or society. Typically the goals are widely supported by publics and policymakers. The other side of the spectrum, however, shows the potential for campaigns to be controversial. These are termed advocacy strategies (Rice & Atkins, 2001). Because society is always evolving, changes in attitudes will cause changes in campaign strategies. For instance, new technology arises almost daily and with that comes new responsibility to familiarize oneself with the technology and the group it influences. A campaign targeting elders will not be laden with iPods or social networking sites, for instance because iPods are a component of the younger generation.

Among all the changes, there are two key concepts used to define a campaign.

According to Rice and Atkin (2001) public communication campaigns can be defined in terms of two key characteristics. The first of these, objectives, focuses on a group's intentions to change another group's beliefs and behaviors. This usually occurs when campaign topics are sensitive or controversial. Changes in beliefs and behaviors may be accomplished through a campaign or through other non-communication strategies such as aid programs. The second, methods, refers to the methods that are used to employ the campaign. These changes are usually achieved through a plethora of brochures, posters, advertisements, commercials, or combine to use an array of all. Therefore, "the definition of public communication campaigns can focus on objectives (Are they strategies of social control insofar as one group intends to influence the beliefs or
behavior of another group?) or methods (Are they a genre of communication that could be called noncommercial advertising?)" (Rice & Atkin, 2001, pp. 5-6).

In today's public relations field, campaign managers use a large variety of individuals to construct campaigns. Journalists, media producers, educators, activists, specialists, and other practitioners use different approaches to design campaigns (Rice & Atkin, 2001). This variety is crucial because of the various target audiences for campaigns. Each audience is unique and filters messages that are congruent with their culture. For this reason, when creating campaigns for an entire region, practitioners must adapt campaigns to fit the multitude of cultures within that specific region. The Middle East, for example, is teeming with multiple cultures and religions that create different sets of beliefs and values that must be considered. Are campaigns that are targeting that region tailored to the various cultures that encompass such a vast area? This research will serve to answer such a question through the evaluation of participant answers regarding cultural characteristics of campaigns. Such cultural characteristics for this research will include language, family values, and religion.

2.4 Campaign Evaluation

Evaluation is one of those aspects of public relations that is often overlooked. However, evaluation is the key element in determining the success or failure of a campaign. "Although most professionals acknowledge the measurement and evaluation of public relations programs and activities as being important, some admit that the concept is talked about far more than it is practiced" (Bobbit & Sullivan, 2005, p. 178). One reason for this lack of effort is that it is often too difficult to determine such economic benefits of public relations. However, Bobbit and Sullivan (2005) and Rice and
Atkin (2001) argue that evaluation can be directly linked to the bottom line in organizations making evaluation a key concept in the public relations process that deserves more attention.

There is no one direct method of evaluation for campaigns. In most cases, a variety of methods must be employed and tailored to the various types of campaigns possible (Rice & Atkin, 2001, Bobbit & Sullivan, 2005). Evaluation efforts are typically focused on the front end of the campaign with little or no effort being placed once the campaign is complete. This research will demonstrate the ability to evaluate the campaign after the target audiences have displayed a basic level of awareness. Going straight to the target audiences for campaign evaluation may prove to be an important tactic or technique of campaign evaluation. In this instance more than basic levels of awareness can be measured; specific campaign traits can be evaluated such as cultural characteristics in international campaigns, thus providing valuable information to improve campaigns and programs.

2.5 International Public Relations

Public relations is a practice that occurs across the globe by means such as nation-building, international businesses, non-government organizations, and multi-national corporations, all of which are attempting to brand themselves worthy of attracting investment. Because of such diversification it would be too constricting to place one single definition on the concept of international public relations (Curtin & Gaither, 2007). Instead, according to Botan (1992):

We need a definition of practice not tied to any one set of assumptions, particularly the assumption that public relations is a management function.
We need a view that focuses on the process at the center of public relations – using communication to adapt relationships between organizations and their publics.” (p.153)

When constructing international public relations, a practitioner must consider that the evolution of public relations has occurred along a different path and at different times around the world. These differences can be attributed to cultural nuances, and recognizing and respecting these nuances is the key to understanding international public relations (Curtin & Gaither, 2007, Zaharna, 2001, Wang, 2006). Each country in the Middle East has its own unique background and history, which in turn has worked to shape a particular culture. While these characteristics may be important to all countries within the sample, these differences in cultures may be the key to shaping the public relations campaign.

2.6 Eliminating Cultural Assumptions

As stated before, a lack of awareness in these cultural differences among nations may cause public relations projects to fail, not even begin, or backfire, (Zaharna, 2001) even if the communication is focused on two-way relationship building. Edward T. Hall introduced concepts to solve the problem of hidden cultural assumptions. These concepts are known as “in-awareness” and “out-of-awareness.” Being out-of-awareness only aids in identifying that which is “explicit, known or observable” in a culture (Zaharna, 2001, p. 136). Being in-awareness is more beneficial to the public relations person because it helps to identify that which is “implicit, unknown and hidden – even to members of the culture” (Zaharna, 2001, p. 136). Being able to grow from out-of-awareness into in-awareness allows campaign creators to better prepare themselves to explore beliefs outside of their own (Leonard, 2002).
Zaharna (2001) further developed Hall’s “in-awareness” approach within the international public relations realm. Because of national differences as well as cultural differences, Zaharna calls for the development of a “country profile” and a “cultural profile” in aiding the public relations specialist in attaining in-awareness. The country profile must include political structure, economic structure, mass media, infrastructure, legal structure, and social structure and can provide insight to what may be feasible within a nation or culture. This acts as an avenue for determining which media are necessary for a public relations campaign. The cultural profile provides insight to what may be more effective within a specific cultural region in the public relations campaign. Things to consider in the cultural profile include high- verses low-context communication, monochromatic and polychromatic time conceptions, doing verses being societies, future tense verses past-tense orientations, and linear and non-linear cultural conceptions. The in-awareness approach operates under national and international parameters and helps to “highlight areas of potential difference that may intrude upon public relations practices” (Zaharna, 2001, p.144). In doing so, one will develop a plethora of cultural aspects that must be considered when creating campaigns.

2.7 Cultural Considerations

While researching for creation of such profiles, public relations practitioners must remember to examine even the most basic aspects of cultures, from human and gender rights to health and safety. Culture forms the basis of a society’s shared meaning system. It provides a classification schema to enable sense making of something as small as a community to something as large as the world. Within every system (i.e., a society, an organization, etc.) culture, meaning and language are all inextricably linked (Curtin &
Gaither, 2007). It is imperative to consider how these characteristics of culture will work when put in practice (Curtin & Gaither, 2007, Leonard, 2002). For instance, when working with the Middle Eastern region, it is important to understand the culture specific to that region. When discussing communication in Arab, Persian, Jewish or other societies one can find them to be associated with creating valuable relationships, not information-centered ultimatums or threats. America relied on facts, figures and logical arguments void of emotion to build persuasive political arguments. However, to remain neutral in an emotionally charged context was seen as a form of deception by the Arab people (Zaharna, 2001).

Knowing your audience is the top priority for any effective communication (Leonard, 2002, Zaharna, 2001, Grunig, 1993). Fully understanding the publics is an efficient, and imperative, tool in creating effective public relations. By understanding the public and their culture, the appropriate tools and strategies define themselves and reflect the sincerity of the campaign. For America to become more culturally sensitive in dealing with the Arab people would mean to explore different methods of communication; methods that reflect relationship-building with the people of Middle Eastern societies. A communication strategy can’t work if it cuts against the grain of a country’s foreign policy, cultures, ideas or values (Leonard, 2002).

Utilizing research that determines which cultural nuances are important to regions will aid in eliminating cultural assumptions concerning international public relations. This research will use participant responses to campaigns in their own regions to develop a checklist of campaign characteristics the participants deem most important. In theory these characteristics will act as a future guide when creating campaigns for the Middle
East in the future. The next section will focus on a method that can be applied to public relations that will aid in considering culture as a factor.

2.8 Circuit of Culture

Because there are so many variables within culture it is important to develop a shared meaning and use that shared meaning as a basis for international campaign construction. The Circuit of Culture model helps to provide a shared cultural space in which meaning is created, shaped, modified, and recreated. There is no beginning or end to this model; instead all the moments “work synergistically to create meaning” (Curtin & Gather, 2007, p.38). The circuit of culture doesn’t act as a means to define cultures; instead it provides a system to indicate how meanings might arise in particular situations within an organizational context. This circuit also aids in eliminating assumptions within cultures and allow for varying considerations. In other words the circuit embraces a degree of relativism important to considering culture:

What is being argued, in fact, is not that “everything is culture” but that every social practice depends on and relates to meaning; consequently, that culture is one of the constitutive conditions of existence of that practice, that every social practice has a cultural dimension. Not that there is nothing but discourse, but that every social practice has a discursive character. (S. Hall, 1997c, pp. 225–226)

The five phases of the circuit contribute to a larger piece of the whole and include regulation, representation, identity, production, and consumption. Regulation is defined as follows.

Comprising controls on cultural activity, ranging from formal and legal controls, such as regulations, laws, and institutional systems, to the informal and local controls and cultural norms and expectations that form cultural in the more commonly used sense of the term. (Curtin & Gaither, 2007, p. 38)
In short, regulation helps to form the context in which public relations can take place. Meanings that are generated during this moment aid in creating rules and norms of societies. Because culture is a very active influence regarding rules and regulations in societies, this demonstrates the need to incorporate local practices in order to allow for cultural relativism. This research will seek to discover if media regulations within countries impact the way participants utilize public relations efforts.

*Production* refers to the process that is often labeled encoding. Production outlines the process that creators of public relations campaigns complete when embedding campaigns with meaning for the intended audiences. Although production processes take place at a number of levels (i.e., individual talent, the organizational culture, and circumstantial happenstance), organizational culture probably plays the largest role because production is most often dictated by corporate constraints and cultures (Curtin & Gaither, 2005, see also du Gay et al., 1997) that in turn can create one-sided campaigns that potentially are biased. Participants will be questioned regarding the production efforts of media outlets toward public relations efforts; specifically what media production outlets do the participants use more frequently?

*Representation* is “the form of an object takes and the meanings encoded in that form” (Curtin & Gaither, 2007, p. 40). It is important to remember that meaning is not inherent but is actually socially constructed. Not only is meaning socially constructed, it is ever changing as well, thus creating new social meanings to replace old theory. Therefore, it is vastly important to consider the social constructions imbedded in the campaign and whether those are appropriate
Consumption occurs when the audience dissects or decodes the campaign message (Curtin and Gaither, 2007). Consumption can never occur without production. This decoding by the audience allows for additional meaning to be interjected into the campaign. Audiences are actively creating new meanings while using new products in their own ways. This can drastically shape the campaign in ways the creator had not expected. For instance, audiences have the potential to utilize products in ways that were not intended (i.e.-Myspace.com) and as a public relations practitioner for an organization, one must respond to that evolution (B.C. Taylor, et al., 2002). For this research, each participant was asked to describe in detail what campaigns he or she was aware of and utilized, or consumed.

The last phase in the Circuit is identity. Identity refers to “meanings that accrue to all social networks” (Curtin & Gaither, 2007, p. 41). It is the role of effective public relations to establish and maintain an organizational identity that can be shared within the organization and its consumers or publics. However, just as with consumption, consumer groups can establish their own identities and these identities can change over time. According to Bourdieu (1984) public relations practitioners function as a mediator between producers and consumers of products where meanings are actively created through identification. Because of the ability for meanings to change and evolve, campaigns must also change and evolve with
newer meanings and identities. Understanding that each culture has its own identity and then using Zaharna's idea of a cultural profile to understand each public's identity is necessary in the development of well-constructed public relations campaigns.

The five phases used together, create a model for campaign development in a variety of situations, organizations, and cultures. Each moment will lend itself to the forecasting of what may occur in the next moment, which will in turn allow for more precise campaign decision-making and construction. There is very little research on this Circuit outside of Curtin and Gaither (2005, 2007) that limits the actual elements that could lend themselves to public relations. However, as stated before, the exact outcome for any type of campaign is too difficult to determine because of the ever-changing environment and contingency factors. Therefore, this circuit of culture must act as a loose guide for any campaign creation or analysis.

2.9 Production: Media Outlets

With the emergence of newer technologies, especially in under-developed countries, people are gaining access to newer outlets for media. It is not only the traditional styles of media that should be considered. Instead, it may be advantageous to explore more diverse media such as "secondary media" (i.e. billboards), entertainment-education materials (i.e. comics), and interactive media (i.e. Web sites, CD-ROM). The interactive nature of these latter media allows for customization to a community or even an individual (Rice & Atkin, 2001). The ability to customize will allow for more American-based media to be read in other national languages, media to be tailored to
developing country’s current capabilities, and even allow for more compatibility with current beliefs. Heibert (2005) describes public relations as “the act of achieving mutual understanding and adjustment through communication” (p. 318). Understanding each of these communication outlets in terms of individual nations will aid public relations creators in developing their message and the relationship.

In the Middle East, for example, more people are receiving their news information from sources outside of their borders and with different technologies. Heibert (2005) references a study conducted by Professor Shibley Telhami in which six Arab nations – Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Lebanon and the United Arab Emirates, were surveyed to determine technology uses. A repeat survey two years later (2003) showed a huge increase in the use of satellite television. For instance, use of satellite increased in Egypt from eight percent to 46 percent with similar numbers in other nations. These new outlets of news media are having a “profound effect” on the Arab public opinion (Heibert, 2005, p. 318). News outlets such as Al-Jazeera or Al-Arabiyya are emerging as more trustworthy throughout the region. Now Arabs have access to “live pictures of death and injury to Palestinian civilians, or Israeli tanks in West Bank cities, and emotional interviews with parents of fallen children” (Heibert, 2005, p. 318) and such images have the potential to cause public opinions to flare out of control among citizens.

2.10 American-based media

The U.S. State Department’s creation of Alhurra satellite television, or “the free one,” was part of America’s efforts to counter the negative publications of Arab media’s. Launched in 2004, Alhurra was one part of a larger public relations campaign by the United States to counter the negative images of Arab media. The U.S. government’s
primary intentions of this satellite network were to move the people of the region away from extremism and violence while directing them toward democracy and freedom (Sefsaf, 2004). Air time of Alhurra consists of mostly speeches and interviews with American government officials, primarily President George W. Bush, local debates and coverage of Middle Eastern elections, as well as cooking and fashion shows, entertainment, geographic and technological programs, and documentaries (Sefsaf, 2004, Baylouny, 2005).

Television is not the only U.S.-based media outlet for public relations to occur in the Middle East. Radio Sawa was another dimension of the larger campaign to silence negative opinions of the United States. Radio Sawa was intended to serve as a "model of principles -- of accuracy and free flow of information and a full intellectually honest debate of ideas -- that account for the reason for a free press" (Tomlinson, 2007, p. 2). Sawa, or "together," features mostly American pop music with news briefs intermittently spread throughout the programming. Also included in this same campaign was the creation of Hi magazine. All three were publicly funded by the United States Government through grants.

However, during a critical time, simply broadcasting messages across airways or through print media may not be an effective means of public relations and relationship building. A report issued to the Voice of America (VOA) claims that researchers in Cairo, Kuwait City and Baghdad respect Alhurra for "accurate, impartial relevant new coverage and analysis" (Tomlinson, 2007, p. 7). During the panel of that same study, a Syrian man declared that "he would never watch Alhurra's Equality that focuses on women's rights. The topic did not reflect consideration of our customs and traditions. I do
not want to see the day when my wife will ask for divorce” (Tomlinson, 2007, p. 8). The messages that were being conveyed across airways do not account for cultural considerations of the regions being broadcast to.

In contrast, a poll completed through Zogby International in 2004 found that no one polled in Arab countries turned to Alhurra as a first choice of news coverage, while only 3.8% picked it as a second choice overall. A poll in Palestine showed that only 1.1% watched Alhurra. Only 6% of Iraqis had viewed Alhurra the previous week while Egyptians totaled 3%. Another survey of satellite users in Cairo found that 64% of people polled believed the station to be a non-trustworthy site for news information. Of those who did view Alhurra, only 8% deemed the coverage by the station to be trusted. Another poll focused on Jordanians and Saudis; those who watched Alhurra at least once a week did not see Alhurra as a primary source for news (Baylouny, 2005).

It is important to note which media are being used to further campaign efforts of the United States in the Middle East. More importantly what are the perceptions of Middle Easterners toward such media outlets? By understanding initial perceptions of these outlets, you may be able to determine if using another outlet, such as locally supported media, may be more effective. This research does not delve too deep in analyzing media usage in campaign efforts. Participants are being asked to note what type of media was used that made them aware of such campaigns. The researcher would then be able to determine whether one medium is used more often than others to disseminate campaigns. The researcher would be able to ask participants whether other media would be more efficient in conducting campaign communication.
2.11 Regulation and Media Systems

Recent changes and advancements in the societies of the Middle East have succeeded in making the borders of countries more porous; however existing national political systems are still the influence Arab media, according to Rugh (2007):

Just as changes in Arab domestic political circumstances in the past have brought about changes in the media systems that operate within their borders, the domestic political factors that exist today still have a major influence Arab newspapers, radio and even television, which in turn remain the most important means of mass communication (Rugh, p.1).

It is important to note that media systems\(^1\) are not static and are rooted in political systems of nations. It is of even greater importance to recognize this when developing public diplomacy campaigns and efforts. For instance, in Saudi Arabia there have been great achievements toward freedoms of press and media making it easier to extend the message and develop relationships. In an area such as the Middle East where there is political unrest, it is easy for media progress to lapse. “Despite the achievement of a greater measure of freedom of the press and the media in Saudi Arabia in recent years, some writers and media people who advocate reform have been arrested” (Al-Misri, 2007, p.1). Ali Sa’d al-Musa, a Saudi writer, asserts that “the freedom of the media has retrogressed to square one, after achieving progress in the past years” due to cultural activity being based on the exploitation of intellectuals in times of crisis (Al-Misri, 2007, p. 1). Once order has been restored, censorship is reinstated in a stricter manner, leading to the digression of media. As a public relations specialist or public diplomacy advocate,

\(^1\) Four types of media have been described – authoritarian, libertarian, social responsibility and Soviet communist. For more information see Rugh, 2007.
one must consider heavily how the political systems have affected media within that nation. Often times, using the appropriate media outlet is difficult, but necessary.

2.12 Representation of Attitudes

There has been an ever-increasing growth of negative sentiment toward the United States by the world, in particular by Middle Eastern nations (Furia & Lucas, 2006; Kohut, 2002; Heibert, 2005). The “Arab Values Survey” conducted by Zogby International in 2002 was used to find determinants of public opinion in Arab nations. The results gathered indicated that “it is particular foreign policy behaviors of individual object countries that are in fact driving perceptions of these countries throughout the Arab world” (Furia & Lucas, 2006, p.594). Furia and Lucas determined that Arab nations respond in particular to two things: “A country’s specific foreign policy actions and foreign policy actions affecting Arab countries other than their own” (p.596).

In a survey conducted by the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, similar results were found. Participants expressed a decrease in attitudes of good will predominately in the Middle Eastern world, and bitterness toward America was on the rise worldwide (Kohut, 2002). For instance, Jordan is the fourth-largest recipient of United States aid, and 75% of Jordanians have a negative view of the United States. This figure carries over to Pakistan and Egypt where 70% also have a negative view (Kohut, 2002; as referenced by Heibert, 2005).

It seems that current foreign policy by the United States toward Jordan is aimed at providing aid for the benefit of the country, a positive use of foreign policy. However, in the Pew Research survey, it was found that the majority of Jordanians expressed negativity toward the United States. One can infer from this survey that foreign policy is
not reflective of tangible actions of the United States while in the Middle East. Current policy by the United States is focused on this informational, image-making use of public relations instead of the two-way relationship-building. Therefore, the aid might have no influence on how Jordan views the United States.

These statistics pose a great challenge for the United States and the public relations and public diplomacy departments when trying to build relationships. This information is particularly important to people conducting international public relations. Knowing what is influencing public opinion in the Arab world can assist in constructing effective campaigns that develop relations with that specific region. In the case of the United States, it is important to recognize that our foreign policies are causing the ever-growing negative sentiments of that region. The foreign policy representatives of the United States, by considering Arab opinion and their unique culture, will be able to create relationships that are more constructive in repairing national ties and the country's reputation.

2.13 Previous Research

During the spring of 2006, research was conducted concerning Middle Eastern perceptions of three campaigns sponsored by the Middle East Partnership Initiative, or MEPI (Ware, 2006). MEPI is a program established by President Bush and the Department of State in which more than $293 million has been dedicated over four years (Middle East Partnership Initiative, 26 Feb, 2007). Funding is applied to organizations such as non-governmental programs, businesses and universities located in sixteen countries. There are four pillars that address challenges within the Middle East. These pillars include political, economic, education, and women's empowerment. These
specific four are addressed “so democracy can spread, education can thrive, economies can grow, and women can be empowered” (Middle East Partnership Initiative, 26 Feb, 2007).

Overall, MEPI has sponsored over 100 initiatives in fourteen Middle Eastern countries. Programs include judicial reform, journalist training, strengthening of legislation, training of local government officials in public administration, educational exchanges, strengthening of political structures, voter education, and support for women’s empowerment (Dalacoura, 2005). There have been mixed opinions of this initiative concerning the success of such programs (Dalacoura, 2005, Zaharna, 2001, Heibert, 2005). Such programs may have been making important contributions to the society but without creating a clear path to reformation or relations, the program is obsolete. The question remains as to whether Middle Easterners are utilizing these programs and whether or not they believe such programs are leading to reform in their country or whether these programs are beneficial to their nation.

More than 30 regular bloggers (bloggers who blog more than three times a week and are linked by other bloggers) in seven Arab nations participated in this research. Findings showed that only 28 percent of participants had heard of the United States-based initiative program. On a more specific level, participants were asked about three campaigns:

- My Arabic Library is a program that is “devoting significant resources to accelerate educational reform so more students have the educational opportunities they deserve” (My Arabic Library, 2007). The first campaign focuses on the educational pillar of the Middle Eastern Partnership Initiative (MEPI).
• The second campaign addresses the economic pillar as well as women's empowerment and involves a women's summit. The United States is co-sponsoring a Women's Business Leaders Summit that will take place in Jordan at the end of February. This Summit is an outreach program that hopes to facilitate links between the United States, Jordan and other Middle Eastern communities.

• The last campaign will address the educational pillar in higher education and involves providing financial assistance to United States and Middle East Universities. Four American universities will cooperate with four Middle Eastern universities (Algeria, Qatar, Lebanon, and Libya) to aid in creating programs that address managerial skills, journalism, ICT training, and economic teaching skills (University Partnerships, 2007).

Twenty-six percent of participants had heard of the first program, 43 percent had heard of the second, and 18 percent had heard of the third. These response rates were extremely low for public diplomacy campaigns. Such a number indicates that awareness is low for MEPI campaigns. This current research will differ slightly - instead of the researcher providing campaigns for bloggers to analyze, the participants will be asked to seek programs they deem acceptable and important.

Based on current literature and previous research, this study addresses:

1. What, if any, programs and campaigns are being identified by Middle Easterners that are American-based public relations efforts?

2. Are there particular media through which these campaigns are being identified more often than others?

3. What specific attributes or characteristics are deemed more important to the participants when working with the public relations programs/campaigns?

4. Do these Middle Easterners find these programs to be beneficial to their country?
3.1 American-Based Public Relations Efforts in Middle Eastern nations

*America-Based Public Relations Efforts* refers to any program or campaign occurring in any Middle Eastern country that is funded and/or sponsored by the United States of America. However, while the campaigns that are being disseminated by the United States are typically referred to as public relations efforts or propaganda, the same campaign in the Middle East may be referred to as an aid program. For instance a public relations campaign to aid in raising the literacy rate by placing small libraries in classrooms would be viewed as an aid program in the Middle East. These efforts may be disseminated in various ways and can occur through any media that are accessible to the people in this region. Such media would include television, radio, print or the World Wide Web. Public relations efforts include, but are not limited to, educational programs, economic programs, and political programs or funding of any kind. Participants would be instructed to make note of what American-based public relations programs they encounter over the course of several weeks. Participants would be asked to list programs by name (if possible) and provide a description of the program in order to correctly identify the program that was encountered. These answers will be collected through open-ended responses.

3.2 Media

*Media* refers to any media that were used by participants when describing the campaigns or programs and may include Internet, television, radio, or print. Research will look to determine what sort of media are being utilized for various campaigns and if there is a dominant medium in that region when learning about international public relations.
efforts. These media may be different for various groups of programs. For instance, a program covering education may have been heard of more through the use of the World Wide Web than radio, making the World Wide Web a more important medium for disseminating educational programs. Research may also find that there is a specific medium that is used a majority of the time to learn of any international public relations efforts.

Participants will be required to list which media they used when they learned about the campaign and if possible identify the channel, Web site, or newspaper. This will be answered via open-ended questions. This study would like to determine if any participants use American-based media such as Radio Sawa, which was previously mentioned. By being more specific about channels, Web sites, or newspaper, that information may surface.

3.3 Beneficial

The term beneficial refers to how advantageous a program is for the people of a particular country. It must be pointed out that the "beneficial" term is ambiguous and varies from person to person. The term becomes a cultural issue. However, for the purpose of this study, beneficial will be broken down into specific aspects:

- Whether the program has been utilized by the participants or anyone they know;
- Whether the program is perceived as being tailored to the specific culture of that country;
- Whether the participant believes the program could have a positive impact on the Middle East.
Participants will be required to answer questions with the following answer options.

Not enough information to answer

1. disagree
2. somewhat disagree
3. somewhat agree
4. agree

Participants will have the opportunity to elaborate on their answer via open-ended responses. This will include explaining why the participant chose a particular answer.

3.4 Campaign/Program Attributes

*Campaign/Program Attributes* refer to the specific characteristics that are identified by the participants when reviewing the campaigns/programs. Such characteristics may include the availability of the program in the national language, how well the campaigns are tailored to religious beliefs, the use of symbolism in the campaign, and the appearance that the campaign upholds the participants own beliefs and values.
4.1 Sample

Bloggers influence media and politics and are considered by some to be leaders in online information dissemination (Gordon-Murnam, 2006; Jost & Hiploit, 2006; Lawson-Borders & Kirk, 2005). They act as gatekeepers and information disseminators. Information is received via sources, sometimes traditional media as well as independent media, but from word of mouth as well. These bloggers are then able to send information around the net. Blogs offer the full spectrum of communication mass media models meaning a blogger will act as both a sender of information and a receiver of input from his or her readers. This capability gives bloggers the ability to be leaders in information. Alternatively, blogs provide the ability to be linked allowing social networks and relationships to develop among fellow bloggers. This also gives bloggers the ability to be leaders in relationship and network building.

Sixteen participants in this research were selected because they are bloggers who reside in the Middle East. Participants were selected via two online Web sites: Global Voices Online and TravBuddy. Global Voices Online is a Web site where its employees scan the Internet and select bloggers from regions of the world who are considered to be regular bloggers and in some cases bridgebloggers, or bloggers who work to inform others of their country or culture. Regular bloggers, in this instance, blog at least twice a week and are linked by other bloggers. TravBuddy is a networking Web site that enables people from various areas of the world to create a profile and then blog about their travel experiences and their home country.

Both of these Web sites have compiled lists of residents who live in the Middle East. From these lists come bloggers who have an average monthly viewer-ship that
ranges from 50 to over 300 unique hits a month with a Technorati authority – a blog
database – that ranges from six to over 100 (technorati.org). Blog topics covered by this
sample include politics, daily journaling, news, and country information for travel
purposes. Fifty-three participants were randomly selected via Random.org from these
compiled lists to receive an email with a survey link. Sixteen participants responded to
both online surveys and represented the following countries in the research: Oman,
United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Israel, Egypt, Iran, Lebanon, Bahrain and
Kuwait.

4.2 Procedure

This research followed a Delphi-style survey method. Delphi refers to a set of
procedures for eliciting and refining the opinions of a specific sample (Dalkey, 1967,)
where group communication is structured in a manner that allows a group to come to a
consensus (Linstone and Turoff, 2002). In this case, research aimed at refining what is
perceived to be the most important characteristics of public relations campaigns by this
Middle Eastern sample.

There are a few benefits to this type of research for this particular study. First the
survey respondents remain anonymous to the rest of the participants through the entire
procedure (Dalkey, 1967, Linstone and Turoff, 2002). This may alleviate the aspects of
social pressure that could occur allowing for more open, honest responses. Second, this
research allows for controlled feedback (Dalkey, 1967), which became a necessity given
the small amount of time in which this research took place. Instead of having research
responses full of unnecessary noise that did not pertain to public relations programs, the
participants were kept focused on only these concepts. This allowed for quicker response
times for the participants as well as faster preliminary evaluation by the researcher. Lastly, because of the lack of information and research available concerning public relations practices in the Middle East, the Delphi method served as a way to flesh out information pertinent to the topic at hand or gain insight to personal values or social goals (Linstone and Turnoff, 2002). “The Delphi procedure is one of the most efficient I know for uncovering the implicit models that lie behind opinions in soft areas” (Dalkey, 1967, p. 9).

4.3 Instrument

Participants in the sample were administered an online survey created through SurveyMonkey.com. A database was compiled of all e-mails of participants from Global Voices Online and TravBuddy by the researcher, void of IP addresses. A randomly generated email list was then produced from this database wherein a link to the online survey was included in an email (see appendix A). Participants were asked to follow the link to the survey and once completed, select “submit” where the anonymous survey was sent to an inbox in the researcher’s account. If there were not enough responses after approximately two weeks, another email following the same format was generated. In this email, those who had already participated were generously thanked and those who had not were given another opportunity to participate through the same link as before. This process was repeated each time an additional survey was administered. The ability to collect responses via an Internet survey aids in shortening distribution and response time, allowing the participants to access the survey at their convenience, and allows the researcher to collect responses more efficiently (Boynton, 2006).
4.4 Surveys

Delphi research involves the use of two or more feedback responses from participants. The first survey (see appendix B) included questions based solely on research from the literature review and worked to narrow a list of public relations campaigns the participants were familiar with. Results from this survey were evaluated, summarized and then fed back to the participants to allow for another narrower scope on factors of public relations. The second survey (see Appendix C) consisted of a specific healthcare campaign note by participants in the first survey. All participants were asked to identify characteristics and describe these characteristics in terms of importance where such characteristics could potentially make the campaigns effective or ineffective. These characteristics were predicted to be most likely culturally based responses from the particular region of the participant. Ultimately, these characteristics could be predicting factors of the success or demise of public relations campaigns in terms of these participants.
Chapter 5: Findings and Analysis

5.1 Round 1- Findings

The first survey (See appendix B) was administered through SurveyMonkey and focused on allowing participants to describe public relations campaigns to the researcher instead of the researcher offering specific programs to the participants. This method allowed the researcher to go directly to a public of the campaign. In doing so, campaigns were presented to the researcher for which participants already were familiarized and had a basic awareness. A total of 16 people participated in round one – seven male and nine females. These participants came from six different Middle Eastern nations – Egypt, Jordan, Iran, Israel, Lebanon, and Bahrain.

A certain attrition rate was noticed with the participants in the first round. The survey began with a total of 16 participants. Immediately that number fell to 13 because three participants from Iran were not able to identify any American-based campaigns. When asked specific details about the campaigns, only seven participants of the remaining 13 were able to answer at least four of the seven detail questions.

Round one focused on finding a basic level of awareness by the participants toward American-based public relations campaigns. All participants with the exception of those in Iran identified two specific American campaigns in their county – the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Educational Reform Project (ERP) that is actually a sub-campaign funded in part by USAID (See Appendix E).

Along with identifying campaigns, participants were asked questions about the particular media used to find information concerning the campaigns. While not everyone was able to recall exactly where the information had been gathered, several responses were given that included colleagues, friends, professors, Al-Rai (a local newspaper),
Fann FM (a local radio station), and the Internet. Participants were also asked about their own personal experience with the campaigns—more specifically if either he/she or someone he or she knew had used the campaigns in some way. All 13 participants responded they had not used any of the campaigns and did not know of anyone who had. To take this one step further, participants were asked if they perceived the program to be one they might consider using if they had not already. Responses varied, with only one saying he or she would consider, five declaring no they would not, and seven were not sure.

Survey Questions

An additional seven survey questions asked participants in more detail about their perceptions of the identified campaigns. These questions followed two themes—cultural considerations (see table 1) and resources (see table 2)—both of which could be the prime reason whether someone would accept a campaign. Cultural considerations (Table 1) include responses to questions in the following cultural attributes, cultural identity, religion, community, national language, and family values. If these questions are grouped together in terms of the five cultural attributes from the campaigns noted by the participants, 16 agree that cultural attributes were a factor, while 14 disagreed that cultural attributes were a factor in campaign creation. However, 35 did not have enough knowledge about the campaign to make these decisions while 15 were unable to identify a campaign.
Table 1

Combined Responses to 5 questions on cultural attributes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Enough Information</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing Answer</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>80</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Attributes included cultural identity, religion, community, national language, and family values. All participant responses from these questions were grouped together to form a set of perceptions concerning cultural considerations. In doing so, 16 responses to each of the five questions came to a total of 80 answers. Three participants from Iran did not provide answers, so this total number was reduced to 65 answers.

Resources (table 2) include responses to the following questions - *providing valuable information* and *providing assistance necessary to the people of a particular country*. When these questions are grouped together according to resources being administered based on the perceptions of these participants toward these campaigns, then 14 participants agree that these campaigns are in fact providing beneficial resources. This is actually larger than the total number of those who did not have enough information to answer the question – 11 – and 7 who were unable to identify a campaign.
Table 2

Combined Responses to 2 questions on resource attributes:
Survey 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Enough</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing Answer</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>32</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All participant responses from these questions were calculated in much the same way as those for cultural considerations — 16 responses to two questions for a total of 32 responses — to get perceptions toward proving information and assistance. However, because the lack of responses from Iranians, this actually brought the total of responses to 25.

Cultural Considerations—Theme 1

Mindful of my cultural identity

When surveyed about mindfulness of cultural identity, four participants responded that they disagree that the campaign identified was being mindful of their own cultural identity. Nine participants did not have enough information to answer while three did not respond for a total of 16 responses. Those who disagreed included one participant from Lebanon, one participant from Jordan, and two from Egypt. Two participants were male and two were female. All four of these participants who disagreed were among the seven to answer a majority of the detail questions.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Not mindful of my Cultural Identity</th>
<th>Providing Important Information and resources to my country</th>
<th>Tailored to my own religious beliefs</th>
<th>Available in my National Language</th>
<th>Localized to my community</th>
<th>Providing Assistance to my Country and its people</th>
<th>Considerate of my family values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>Not Enough Information</td>
<td>Not Enough Information</td>
<td>Not Enough Information</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Not Enough Information</td>
<td>Not Enough Information</td>
<td>Not Enough Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Not Enough Information</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Not Enough Information</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>Not Enough Information</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Not Enough Information</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Not Enough Information</td>
<td>Not Enough Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Not Enough Information</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Not Enough Information</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>Not Enough Information</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Not Enough Information</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>Not Enough Information</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Not Enough Information</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>Not Enough Information</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tailored to my religious beliefs

The next survey question involves whether the campaign identified by the participant was tailored to the participant’s religious beliefs. Six participants disagreed that the campaign was tailored to their own religious beliefs while seven did not have enough information to answer and three did not respond. Two participants from Egypt and Jordan and one participant each from Israel and Lebanon disagreed. All six participants who disagreed were among the seven who answered a majority of the questions.

Available in my national language

The next question in the survey regarded the availability of the campaign in the participant’s national language. Twelve of the sixteen participants agreed the campaign could be found in their national language for a total of eight females and only four males. Only one participant from Egypt did not have enough information to respond. This was the only cultural question where the majority of participants were able to offer a definite answer.

Localized to my community

The fifth question addressed in the survey questioned whether the campaign was localized to the community of the participant. Four participants, two female and two males, agreed that the campaign was in fact, localized to the needs of their community - among those include Egypt, Lebanon and two participants from Jordan. Nine participants did not have enough information to answer while the last three from Iran did not respond.
Considerate of my family values

Survey questions concerning family values followed. A mere three participants -- two females and one male -- disagreed with the statement that the campaign is considerate of the respondents family values. Those who were willing to respond were participants from Jordan, Egypt, and Lebanon.

Resources- Theme 2

Providing important information and resources to my country

When asked if the campaign was providing important information and resources to their country, eight participants agreed with the statement while five did not have enough information. Among those who agreed were participants from Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Bahrain, and Lebanon; four male and four female. Five of these eight participants were among the seven who answered a majority of detail questions. This is one of two questions addressing resources; both resource questions received a majority of definite responses from participants.

Providing assistance to your country and its people

The last question involved providing assistance to the participant's country and its people. A total of eight participants, four male and four female, agreed the campaign was providing some form of assistance while five did not have the information necessary to answer the question. Six of the seven participants who were able to answer a majority of the questions were among the eight who agreed that the campaign was providing beneficial assistance. This question was the second of two that addressed providing resources that are beneficial to not only the participant but also the participant's country
and fellow citizens. As with the previous question concerning the provision of resources, participants were able to offer a definite answer.

5.2 Round 1-Analysis

In modern public relations, as stated earlier, awareness is only the first step in creating campaigns. A successful campaign will move beyond creating awareness into building relationships or changing attitudes. Round one of this research shows a gap in participant’s awareness levels and making that second step. While 13 of 16 participants clearly stated they were aware of American-based campaigns in their country, only one stated he or she would consider utilizing the program he or she reported. There is a breakdown in public relations efforts by the United States that causes these participants to not want to utilize such campaigns. While these participants were able to name a campaign, a clear lack of additional information was evident.

When questioned about particular media being used to learn about these campaigns, local media, both traditional and non-traditional, were noted. The main purpose of this inquiry was to determine if participants were utilizing American-based media, such as Radio Sawa. Not one participant listed any media that was established by the United States, which demonstrates that these participants do not use American-based media to find information. Thus, public relations practitioners are wise to look beyond American-based media to create awareness and most importantly to begin developing relationships.

In terms of questions asked in the survey regarding cultural considerations, the overwhelming majority did not have enough information to respond accurately to the question being proposed. This may have occurred from the lack of experience or first-hand knowledge about the campaign. It could stand to reason that this factor – cultural
considerations— is missing from American-based campaigns causing participants to have no desire to learn or accept such campaigns. However, a general level of awareness is present, and the researcher cannot eliminate those who did not have the information to offer answers to the more detailed questions. These participants are still extremely valuable because even though they demonstrate awareness, they are not able to offer details concerning basic questions of the campaign. Again, awareness is present but progress to the second step is not evident, meaning there has been no change in attitude, and that no relationship has been built.

The researcher did examine data to determine if there were notable patterns in gender differences. For this research there were no identified patterns between genders; for the majority of survey questions asked there was an almost even distribution between males and females.

There were, however, differences noted between countries. Table 3 displays the current attitudes of participants toward these two factors in which responses have been broken down according to country of residence. Participants from the same country of residence all have similar responses to questions asked. For instance, those participants from Iran could not identify an American-based public relations program. All Iranian participants noted they would not be able to find American-based programs in their country due the lack of support from the American government. One participant from Iran stated, “the U.S. and Iran haven’t had any level of relation since 1979, including any program supported by the states.” These participants had no responses for the first round of research. Participants from Jordan, however, had the opposite experience. Most responses from these participants were the same with the exception of some cultural
markers including cultural identity and family values. Jordanian participants mostly agreed that these noted campaigns were being considerate of cultural values as well as providing resources. Looking at current and past relations between the United States and these two countries, one could find possible answers to why Jordanians are more accepting of American-based public relations efforts and Iranians are not. For instance, Jordan has a longer history of positive government relations with the United States than does Iran.

While a basic awareness level was measured during this first round of research, a successful public relations strategy moves beyond awareness. Round two of this research looks to use one of the identified campaigns from round one and question participants about the most important characteristics of the campaign.

5.3 Round 2 – Findings

The second survey (See Appendix C) was administered through SurveyMonkey. It focused on one specific health campaign (See Appendix F) sponsored by USAID. Participants in the previous round of research noted this particular campaign, therefore participants expressed a strong level of awareness about this chosen campaign again in this round. Round two looked for participants to identify specific campaign characteristics or attributes that were either perceived as successful/important or unsuccessful/not important and explain why this particular characteristic should be noted.

Afterwards a question was devoted to identifying characteristics that might be missing from this campaign that the participants deem important. This method allowed the researcher to go directly to the consumers of the campaigns to find important characteristics of public relations campaigns. For round two, there were a total of 13
participants – eight male and five female. These participants came from seven different
Middle Eastern nations – Egypt, Jordan, Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Israel.

All thirteen of these participants were given a campaign synopsis to read over and
then identify the major characteristics within that campaign. As with the first survey, two
participants from Iran chose not to answer questions because the American government
has no ties to their country. This would bring the total number of responses down to
eleven. Interestingly, one Iranian chose to examine the campaign objectively and offer
his/her opinions on the basis that the given campaign could potentially be for any given
Middle Eastern nation. This person responded, “However, I thought to let you know that
because of the political issues there are no American programs in Iran. The closest thing I
can think of is “The American University of Dubai” that many Iranians go there but as far
as an aid program there are none here.2” Upon receiving responses concerning important
attributes or characteristics in conjunction with this particular campaign, a majority of
participants identified five characteristics – rehabilitation, improvement of water systems,
education, United States government, and funding.

Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation refers to the renovation and building of necessary infrastructure to
improve health care systems across the nation. From responses of the participants it is
clear that improvement in rehabilitation efforts in their country will also improve other
areas of health care in the region. For instance, one participant responded, “The increase
in clinics and hospitals leads to increase in resident’s health awareness and opportunities
of people from different streams of life to undergo medical treatment.”

2 Quotations have been edited for typographical errors in such a manner where the
meaning of the quote has not been affected
According to participants, rehabilitation also refers to rehabilitation of civilians. Proper rehabilitation would also work to assist those who are facing poverty, discrimination, or live in a war zone, in addition to rebuilding infrastructure.

"Rehabilitation of people in Iraq who are still facing the consequences of the war" was deemed as important by one participant, while another stated, "Rehabilitation of the innocents who live in poverty and unhealthy circumstances due to the war in Iraq because they need aid in getting their lives back on track to normalcy."

**Improvement of Water Systems**

Improving water systems was also a response from the majority of participants. In this instance, improving water systems refer to the establishment of necessary water systems that many countries in this region are missing. Jordan, for instance does not have adequate water supplies. One participant responded, "According to Jordan, water is a big issue that makes the government asks for it from the neighbour countries, such as Syria and Israel. Government says that a canal between the Dead Sea and the Red Sea will solve a big part from the water problem in Jordan." However, the participant goes on to explain that currently there is not enough funding and support to make this sort of change and with the rapid increases in population this will continue to be an issue. "Although that it might be early to talk about a population of a 5 million Jordanian only as an issue, however it's interesting to know that the number of citizens increased from 3 million in 1980, to become 5.5 million in 2008. It might be a big problem in the next 20 years."

Another participant noted this was, "Important since pure filtered water is essential for a health living. Contaminated water could be the reason of many a disease."
Education

The third, education, refers to both educating the public about current health care issues or problems and providing both doctors and nurses with the necessary training and education to assist with health care in this region. Proper education is necessary to the success of such healthcare programs. As one participant put it: “Doctors are few and are required to improve health.” Not only do participants note the importance to the healthcare sector, some also noted the direct link between education and the economy of any given nation. One participant responded, “important in the overall growth of a human being and the country.” Another noted, “Education is the backbone of success and economic growth. It is important since education leads to overall development of human being.”

Funding

Funding refers to establishing research and financial opportunities that will lead to treatment of chronic diseases thus increasing current life expectancies. It is important to note that the above characteristics – education, rehabilitation, and improved water systems are only available pending proper funding, which has been noted by one participant from Jordan who explained a canal would be the best option but funding is not available. Others note that funding will assist with proper vaccinations against diseases as well as provide healthcare for those with chronic conditions. “Vaccinations are compulsory and treatment is being given for malaria and measles.” Improved mortality rates that came with additional funding and improved healthcare systems were also noted as being important.
Involvement of United States Government

The fifth characteristic noted by a few participants, although not a majority, was the involvement of the United States government in handling the campaign. The campaign was clearly established and implemented via the United States Department of State program, USAID. One participant from Iraq described this as being the problem with the campaign. He/She stated this campaign was using a sensitive issue such as healthcare as a means of ‘winning over people.”

5.4 Round 2- Analysis

Four of the five above characteristics—education, funding, rehabilitation, and improvement of water systems—were noted as being important and successful in terms of this healthcare campaign. Without these characteristics, this campaign would hold not value to the participants of this research. One notable fact about these four characteristics is that all revolve around providing assistance and resources necessary to the betterment of a nation. In the first round of research, resources and assistance were the only characteristics of campaigns that were unanimously described as being important.

The fifth characteristic noted by a few participants, although not a majority, was the involvement of the United States government in handling the campaign. The campaign was clearly established and implemented via the United States Department of State program, USAID. One participant from Iraq described this as being the problem with the campaign. The campaign was described as “American propaganda” and a “wastage of American taxpayers’ money.” Another statement included “America can’t bomb and cure at the same time.”
When dealing with this particular campaign characteristic, it must be noted that the reason the participant would not accept such a campaign or think this campaign could be successful would be because the participant though it was from a non-credible source. The statement “America can’t bomb and cure at the same time” shows a clear division and conflict in attitudes, which the researcher assumes is the primary reasoning for these participant’s not accepting the campaign. The participant demonstrates that a nation living by two different codes (war and aid) is not perceived as providing benefits to a nation – a nation cannot implement war and provide aid at the same time.

While there are differences between these nations, several participants identified one similarity that could also aid in the creation of campaigns. This similarity encompasses the wealth of nations, specifically the Gulf Cooperation Council, or GCC. The GCC is also known as the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (CCASG) and consist of six Arab nations – Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates – that hold similar economic and social objectives (Cooperation Council). These nations are experiencing some of the fastest growing economies in the world (Cooperation Council), making their public relations needs vastly different from those in other Middle Eastern nations. One participant elaborates on the needs of the GCC countries in terms of American public relations.

“Now first thing you should know is that GCC countries are rich countries which have vast oil resources. Now with regard to their security, ever since the Gulf War in 1991 they have realized that they need a huge superpower to protect and support them. Though the war started out because Iraq invaded Kuwait, The driving away of Iraqi forces back was decisive in the US getting a foothold in the region. Ever since the people here have started seeing US as an ally. And the alliance is in every term favourable to US due to economic factors.”
Public relations efforts in these GCC countries moves from providing resources such as funding to making efforts to build positive relationships. Because of their economic situation, using public relations to promote aid campaigns in this region is completely unnecessary, according to participant responses. One participant noted, “Well GCC does not generally depend on any kind of AID programmes. They get the best professionals and have excellent infrastructure in the region.” Having the United States as an ally and using public relations to build more powerful, positive relationships offers them an advantage in the overall global market.

The other situation in the Middle East would be the opposite of the wealthy countries of the GCC – counties such as Iraq, Iran, Syria, Palestine, Lebanon, and Egypt – all of which have experienced both economic and social turmoil from civil wars and political unrest and instability. The public relations campaigns targeting these countries would very much focus on providing resources.

The previous paragraphs in the second round of research outlined the five characteristics that were noted most often in this campaign – funding, education, improvement of water systems, rehabilitation, and United States involvement. This list refers to some of the areas noted by the participants to be important. These characteristics appear to be more a result of the physical needs of the participant’s home countries rather than public relations tactics or efforts, however. The implications of this will be further discussed in chapter six.
Chapter 6: Discussion of Findings

The following section reviews each research question in terms of research gathered in the two rounds of the study. Each section will be devoted to a particular research question – media, campaigns, characteristics of those campaigns, and benefits of those campaigns.

6.1 What, if any, programs and campaigns are being identified by Middle Easterners that are United States-based public relations efforts?

Round one asked, very broadly, to identify a campaign that is United States-based in their country. All participants, with the exception of those in Iran, identified USAID. Participants were asked to describe the campaigns in as much detail as possible. Thirteen of the initial 16 participants were able to accurately describe USAID and its mission demonstrating a strong level of awareness of campaigns created by USAID. Responses from participants included

- Works on education reform
- Works with education policy in my country
- Supports economic opportunities
- Provides water resource management
- Supports democracy

Only participants from Iran were unable to identify campaigns in both rounds of research. Both rounds had three participants from Iran; however, no one from Iran could identify a campaign for the first round of research and for the second round, two Iranians decided not to answer questions based on a particular campaign given due to their lack of knowledge. The other Iranian chose to answer questions based on the assumption that the
particular campaign listed could be offered in Iran. This is of particular importance especially to public relations practitioners. If one were to look at current and past relations between the United States and these two countries, one could find possible answers to why other countries are more accepting of American-based public relations efforts and Iranians are not. History between the two nations will reveal a long-standing relationship that is not built on positive relationships. In fact, the United States has cut off ties with Iran and its government and does not offer any type of aid campaigns to that nation.

Other countries, such as Jordan (whose participants mostly agreed with the campaign efforts of the United States), have a longer history of working with the United States than does Iran. Therefore, until government relations are mended and a working partnership is built, public relations practitioners will not have the basis to create aid campaigns in this country. However, in terms of public affairs on an international level, public relations officers may be of assistance in building and maintaining those relationships after the governments of the corresponding countries have agreed to work together. Public relations officers would have the ability to work closely with government agencies to ensure cultural considerations are adhered to while conducting communications between the counties.

Participant responses correctly identify the presence of United States-based campaigns in their country. This basic level of awareness is important, and for some public relations practitioners this would be deemed a successful campaign. However, according to research identified in the literature review, moving from a basic level of awareness to a relationship or even changing of attitudes is important.
6.2 Are there particular media through which these campaigns are being identified more often than others?

The second research question asked if there was a specific medium where campaigns are being identified more often than other media. Several responses were given that included colleagues, friends, professors, Al-Rai (a local newspaper), Fann FM (a local radio station), and the Internet. This broad list of media is particularly beneficial to public relations practitioners. Knowing which media publics utilize is imperative in information dissemination and makes the job of the public relations practitioners much easier producing more reliable results. Being able to deliver a message through the participant’s media of choice is more efficient than attempting to deliver a message through a medium that is not utilized by the participants.

The main purpose of this question was to determine if participants were utilizing American-based media, such as Radio Sawa. Not one participant listed any medium that was established by the United States, which demonstrates that these participants do not use American-based media to find information. From the research, one participant discussed the important of culture but noted “I’m not sure if these AID programs would be successful without local teams and media who can help out in making it tailor made [to their own country].” Thus, public relations practitioners would need to look beyond American-based media to create awareness and most importantly to begin developing relationships. Seeking media in the country of the campaign will offer a more credible means of information dissemination that has more viewership by a country’s citizens.
6.3 What specific attributes or characteristics are deemed more important by the participants when working with the public relations programs/campaigns?

Round two focused on finding specific characteristics of a United States-based campaign that were deemed important by the participants. Five characteristics were identified—funding, improvement of water systems, rehabilitation, education, and United States involvement. However, these characteristics are typically not directly related to public relations. The use of public relations for these matters would be pending the involvement of outside agencies or governments. For instance, once the government implemented a plan for the improvement of water systems in Jordan, public relations practitioners would have the task of disseminating important useful information about the new plan. According to one participant "By advertising and various fund raising [public relations] make people aware of the situation in that country." The relationship between management or government and public relations management is imperative to the communications of the organizations as well as the publics.

The one attribute that can be directly attributed to a lack of successful public relations would be the fifth characteristic—the involvement of the United States in the creation of the campaign. A few participants noted the involvement of the United States in both the war and aid campaigns such as these is not beneficial to the campaign and actually discredit the campaign as a useful, beneficial resource. The underlying meaning of such aid programs does not reflect what is actually occurring in Middle Eastern countries such as Iraq. This misrepresentation could be considered poor public relations. An important element in the previously mentioned circuit of culture was representation, which referred to meanings that are encoded in any message (Curtin and Gaither, 2007).
When a nation such as the United States is striving for two differing missions in the same country, the audience construes meanings making the message difficult for their interpretation. For instance, one participant relayed the contradictory meanings and made it clear this campaign was not successful because of the different representations of the United States. Public relations, in this case, must work to correct the negative image of the country, and only then can relationships flourish.

The differences between these countries were previously noted in the analysis of round two. It is important to note that each country has its own unique background and history, which in turn has worked to shape a particular culture. While these characteristics may be important to all countries within the sample, these differences in cultures must be key to shaping the public relations campaign. For instance, a campaign involving an increase in funding for new clinics for Iran will be planned and implemented different than the same campaign planned and implemented in Jordan. Keeping this in mind, refer back the Zaharna’s (2001) country and culture profile. These profiles called for the creation of a database of sorts that includes differences in countries and their cultures. Knowing these differences allow the same campaign to be altered for each country in which the campaign will be distributed. For this reason, broad public relations campaigns should not blanket an entire region such as the Middle East.

6.4 Do these Middle Easterners find these programs to be beneficial to their country?

Of the participants who were familiar enough with the campaign to complete these questions, the majority believe cultural considerations are not being used in the creation of public relations campaigns in the Middle East. Research question 4 asked if
these participants find such identified campaigns to be beneficial to their country. When asked whether campaigns were providing important resources to people in the Middle East in the first round of research, a majority of the participants responded they either completely or somewhat agree; either way, participants do think said campaigns can be beneficial. This leads the researcher to assume participants would not chose to utilize these campaigns due to the lack of benefits for a country or possibly the lack of a necessity for these health campaigns for the participants personally.

Participants were questioned about their future use of campaigns noted in both rounds of research. During the first round of research, only one participant expressed interest in considering the use of the noted campaigns while seven were not certain. It could be assumed that these seven participants who stated they were not sure might be uncertain due to the lack of knowledge about these particular campaigns or the lack of need for the campaigns specifically.

When questioned during the second round, only one participant stated he or she would use the campaign after evaluating the campaign and listing the benefits and important characteristics. The vast majority would still not consider using the campaign despite statements from the participants that demonstrate the benefits of the campaign. Given the benefits of the campaign, the researcher is led to assume that cultural factors, negative relations between countries, or lack of necessity cause participants to chose not to utilize these campaigns. Given the research, there is no question that participants deem these campaigns beneficial.
Chapter 7: Limitations and Future Research

While the research answered four research questions, participant answers have brought about other questions that should be considered in future research.

While these bloggers act as important mediators in disseminating information to the online world, the research has revealed that these bloggers may not be the most important beneficiaries to campaigns such as the healthcare campaign discussed in the research. Bloggers typically have a financial status that allows access to a computer and Internet. These bloggers may not be the typical public of healthcare aid campaigns. The one exception in this sample would be the participants from Jordan – where all citizens of the country have problems with satisfactory water supply.

To completely discredit these bloggers would eliminate an important element in the dissemination of information to a particular public within the region. This public, being online opinion leaders, does hold value in terms of demonstrating a strong level of awareness of American-based campaigns in the region. However, it seems that there are two differing publics regarding these healthcare campaigns. Bloggers, one specific public, are aware of this campaign; however, due to their financial circumstances and potential socioeconomic status are not the public that directly benefits from these campaigns. The second public would include those citizens who come from impoverished circumstances that rely on healthcare aid. Identifying the networks, if any, between these bloggers and those whom are in need of this aid would lead to understanding the influences between these two publics. Network analysis would work to identify these networks and assist in determining whether readers’ attitudes are changed from the sharing of information through blogs or whether blog readers change the attitudes of
bloggers based on what they perceive in their own country. At any rate, bloggers are able to have this dialogue that is necessary for relationship building and eventually attitude change. Additional research using network analysis would also enable the discovery of shared meaning between publics of campaigns.

Another particularly interesting factor concerns the participant who noted the alliance is favorable to the GCC noting “I don’t think the GCC would admit being dependent on the U.S.” This puts public relations practitioners in a tight position. These GCC countries are very much aware of the relationship between their country and the United States albeit a positive or negative one; however, what must public relations practitioners do to take this relationship to the next step where both countries become active in the relationship? More research in the area of situational theory of publics could assist in determining what barriers are keeping these relationships from becoming active. Perhaps these barriers are strictly political; however, public relations could be necessary to bring about dialogue between nations. Disseminating these campaigns, regardless of perceptions between nations, can bring about the necessary dialogue that could help to improve relations. Referring back to Nye’s (1990, 2004) concept of soft power, improved relations and two-way communications could bring about a greater power and enable both countries better positions in the global market.
Chapter 8: Conclusions and Implications for Public Relations

This study set out to determine how Middle Eastern bloggers perceived public relations efforts developed by the United States. The research looked at four specific research questions – what specific campaigns were participants aware of, what media were used to learn about the campaigns, what characteristics made these campaigns successful, and whether the participants perceived these campaigns to be beneficial. The participants identified campaigns produced though USAID and ERP as the major public relations campaigns in their region. Various production media outlets were used to learn about these campaigns; however, none of those media were American-based. The regulation of various media within a country though government restrictions did not impact the study. Specific attributes identified by the participants, while important, were more basic needs than public relations tactics or cultural factors. Based on responses, these programs were deemed beneficial to the Middle Eastern public even though participants did not have direct experience with the campaigns identified.

The sample, while an important public, was not necessarily affected by campaigns such as the healthcare campaign discussed. In terms of this research, this sample may not have been the correct sample to survey because of the participants’ socioeconomic status; however, this was not made evident until after the first round of research. Referring back to Zaharna’s (2001) in-awareness cultural and country profiles, the researcher identified differences between nations that would contribute to these profiles. For instance, identifying GCC countries in comparison to non-GCC countries could provide different outcomes of public relations efforts as stated by the participants. The researcher also identified the sample as being associated with a higher socioeconomic status, which in
turn may have caused a difference in opinions toward public relations efforts identified by the participants. This difference in socioeconomic status would be a crucial component in country profile. Differences in historical relationships between nations also proved to be important. Participants from Iran were not able to fully participate because of current and past government relations between the two nations. This impacted the outcome of the research and thus, historical perspective would also be an important component in a country’s profile. Recognizing these differences within a profile will lead to improved public relations efforts.

In terms of public relations theory, this research verified the importance of establishing credible, positive relationships. When participants in a sample are unwilling to utilize a campaign based on its origin, as was the case in this research, a public relations practitioner should realize efforts have failed and a revamp in strategy is needed. A lack of two-way communication could result in a campaign not being revamped and a disconnect between what campaign creators deem successful and what a public deems successful. Proper evaluation measures should follow the implementation of a campaign to determine how the publics of a campaign perceived the public relations efforts.

Ample communication between public relations practitioners and the publics is critical. Identifying specific key publics and realizing the necessity to market to each public differently because of the various cultural nuances is of utmost importance. For instance, the public sampled in this research was very much aware of these campaigns but stated they would not use the resources this campaign provided. Additional research involving another key public of this campaign (those who are in poverty-stricken nations for instance) should identify the level of awareness and acceptability of that public
toward the same campaign. This will aid in determining the success of that particular campaign.

More importantly, public relations practitioners need to understand the difference between what is public relations and what is not. Just because a campaign or marketing plan looks like public relations efforts, it very well could be another situation or issue altogether, as was this campaign. This research involved a public that was only concerned with getting clean water, good hospitals, and better education for doctors. How those resources come packaged on paper is not of importance to this sample. When this is the case, public relations practitioners need to have the ability to leave well enough alone. In some instances, not everything is communications or public relations; in fact is could be a political issue — such was the case with this research. Sometimes public relations efforts should remain behind-the-scenes work.
Appendix A

Aloha! Here is the first survey. I hope this finds everyone doing very well and enjoying their travels. I have included the link to the survey below.


Mahalo to everyone for your assistance! I do look forward to learning more about your region :)

~Crystal
Appendix B

Middle Eastern Perceptions Survey #1

1. Introduction

Hello, my name is Crystal Ware and I am a graduate student at the University of Hawaii. I am working on a research project involving Middle Easterner’s perceptions of American sponsored aid programs occurring right now in the Middle East region. This survey involves reporting programs that you have noticed in the Middle East and then answering questions based on your perceptions toward these campaigns. The questionnaire also includes a few basic demographic questions; however, no personal information such as name or specific location will be included with the research results. Participants must be 18 years of age or older to participate.

Completion of the whole process should take no more than 20 minutes. Approximately 50 people will participate in the study. The investigator believes there is little or no risk in participating in this research project. Participating in this research may be of no direct benefit to you. However, data may be compared to data provided by United States officials about campaign objectives and could result in more culturally beneficial programs in the Middle East.

Research data will be confidential to the extent allowed by law. Agencies with research oversight, such as the University of Hawaii Committee on Human Studies, have the authority to review research data. All research records will be stored in a password-protected database or in a locked file drawer in the primary investigator’s office for the duration of the research project. Any research records with information identifying participants will be destroyed upon completion of the project.

Participation in this research project is completely voluntary. You are free to withdraw from participation at any time during the project with no penalty, or loss of benefit to which you would otherwise be entitled. If you have any questions regarding this research project, please contact me (Crystal) at (808) 582-5683 or email at m.e.thesis.project@gmail.com. If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact the UH Committee on Human Studies at (808) 956-5007. Please save or print this page for your records. If you would like to leave the survey at any time, just click “Exit this survey.”

*By clicking ‘next,’ I acknowledge that I have read and understand the above information, and agree to participate in this research project.*

2. Demographics

Aloha. Please answer these first three questions regarding your demographics. These answers will not be analyzed on an individual basis. Instead, the answers will be used only to determine what countries and genders are represented in this study. All these answers will remain confidential meaning NO names will be attached to the information.

1. What is your gender?
   - Female
   - Male
## Middle Eastern Perceptions Survey #1

### 2. What is your country of residence?
- Kuwait
- Israel
- Jordan
- Saudi Arabia
- United Arab Emirates
- Oman
- Lebanon
- Iraq
- Qatar
- Syria
- Bahrain
- Other (please specify)

### 3. Campaign #1

Please answer the following questions regarding a specific aid program that you have encountered that is sponsored and/or funded by the United States. Programs may include, but are not limited to, providing economic aid to businesses in your area, providing books in school classrooms, holding workshops for beginning businesses, or providing assistance to organizations in your area.

*1. Name of the Campaign or Program*

*2. Can you provide a brief description of the program?*

*3. Can you provide the source that made you aware of the program? This would include television, radio, internet, print news, or family, etc. Be as specific as possible.*

### 4. Your perceptions of Campaign #1

Based on the culture that you identify yourself with, and your own perceptions and knowledge of the program noted previously, please answer the following questions. These answers should be entirely your own perceptions of the program.

*1. Have you, or someone you know used this program before?*
- Yes
- No
Middle Eastern Perceptions Survey #1

**2.** Would you, or someone you know, consider using this program for its benefits?  
0 Yes  
0 No  
0 Not sure

**3.** According to the information I know, I think the campaign is

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<th>Not enough information to answer</th>
<th>Completely disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat agree</th>
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<td>providing assistance to my country and its people</td>
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<td>□</td>
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<tr>
<td>providing important information and resources to my country available in my national language</td>
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<td>considerate of my family values</td>
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<td>localized to my community</td>
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<td>not mindful of my own cultural identity</td>
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<td>tailored to my own religious beliefs</td>
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4. Would you like to add anything about this campaign/program that you found interesting or important or would you like to elaborate on your perceptions of this program?

5. Do you have another program that you would like to add?

5. Campaign #2

Please answer the following questions based on another specific program you have encountered.

1. Can you provide the name of the program?

2. Can you provide a description of the program? Please be as specific as possible.
Middle Eastern Perceptions Survey #1

3. Can you provide the type of media that made you aware of the program? This would include television, radio, print, or family. Please be as specific as possible.

6. Perceptions of the Program

Based on the culture that you identify yourself with, and your own perceptions and knowledge of the program, please answer the following question. These answers will be entirely your own perceptions of the program.

1. Have you, or someone you know, used this program before?
   - Yes
   - No

2. Would you, or someone you know, consider using this program for its benefits?
   - Yes
   - No

3. According to the information I know, I think this campaign is

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Not enough information to answer</th>
<th>Completely Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Completely Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>localized to my community</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>providing important information and resources to my country</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
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<tr>
<td>not mindful of my own cultural identity</td>
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<td>□</td>
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<tr>
<td>available in my national language</td>
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<td>□</td>
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<tr>
<td>tailored to my religious beliefs</td>
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<tr>
<td>considerate of family values</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not considerate to the needs of my country</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Would you like to add anything about this program that you found interesting or important or would you like to elaborate on your perceptions of the program?

5. Do you have other aid programs that you would like to include?
   - Yes
   - No

7. Other Campaigns

Please list the other programs that you have encountered that are sponsored or funded by the United States and
Middle Eastern Perceptions Survey #1

Offer your perceptions of these programs.

1. Please list the programs and what you personally thought of these programs.

8.

You have now completed my survey. Thank you for your participation.
Appendix C

Public Relations in the Middle East-Survey 2

1. Introduction

Hello. My name is Crystal Lane and I am a graduate student at the University of Hawaii. I am working on a research project involving Middle Easterner's perceptions of American sponsored aid programs occurring right now in the Middle East region. This survey involves reporting programs that you have noticed in the Middle East and then answering questions based on your perceptions toward these campaigns. The questionnaire also includes a few basic demographic questions; however, no personal information such as name or specific location will be included with the research results. Participants must be 18 years of age or older to participate.

Completion of the whole process should take no more than 15 minutes. Approximately 50 people will participate in the study. The investigator believes there is little or no risk in participating in this research project. Participating in this research may be of no direct benefit to you. However, data may be compared to data provided by United States officials about campaign objectives and could result in more culturally beneficial programs in the Middle East.

Research data will be confidential to the extent allowed by law. Agencies with research oversight, such as the University of Hawaii Committee on Human Studies, have the authority to review research data. All research records will be stored in a password-protected database or in a locked file drawer in the primary investigator's office for the duration of the research project. Any research records with information identifying participants will be destroyed upon completion of the project.

Participation in this research project is completely voluntary. You are free to withdraw from participation at any time during the project with no penalty, or less of benefit to which you would otherwise be entitled. If you have any questions regarding this research project, please contact me (Crystal) at (859) 582-5683 or email at m.e.thesis.project@gmail.com. If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact the IRB Committee on Human Studies at (808) 956-5007. Please save or print this page for your records. If you'd like to leave the survey at any time, just click "Exit this survey."

"By clicking ‘next,’ I acknowledge that I have read and understand the above information, and agree to participate in this research project."

2. Demographics

Aloha. Please answer these two three questions regarding your demographics. These answers will not be analyzed on an individual basis. Instead the answers will be used only to determine what countries and genders are represented in this study. All these answers will remain confidential meaning NO names will be attached to the information.

1. What is your gender?
   - Male
   - Female

2. What is your country of residence?
   - 
   - Other (please specify) __________________________ 

3. Public Relations Campaign

Please read over this case study based on an actual press release issued by an agency regarding a public relations campaign currently in progress in the Middle East.

Health of a Nation - The neglected health care system is rebuilt from the ground up.

Women crowd the health education room at the new clinic, their children staying close and respectful as they wait for the nurse to begin the lesson. A woman (32) walked 2 miles from her home with her son (2). He has a stomach ache, nausea, and diarrhea and he can't sleep.
The clinic is the first of 225 being built by USAID, one of several national and international aid groups renovating and building clinics and hospitals, training nurses and doctors, and providing clean, potable water systems. Aid groups also work with the Ministry of Health to train senior staff and district health officers.

Some vital statistics: Life expectancy is 46; the population is growing at close to 5% a year; the birth rate is one of the highest in the world at 7 to 10 per woman; 165 of every 1,000 children die in their first year and 2 of every 100 women die in childbirth. US Aid programs have rehabilitated 72 health clinics, birth centers, and hospitals.

Funds are being provided to treat 700,000 cases of malaria; vaccinated 4.25 million children against measles and polio, likely preventing some 20,000 deaths; and provided basic health services to more than 2 million people. U.S. civilian and military aid programs are upgrading hospitals. The U.S. also works with CARE to supply 600,000 people with clean drinking water and to dig wells.

* 1. Please identify 1 characteristic from the above campaign that you believe to be important.

* 2. Do you consider this campaign characteristic to be

   - Successful / Important
   - Unsuccessful / Not Necessary

   Please briefly explain why you chose this answer.

* 3. Please identify a second characteristic from the campaign you believe to be important.

* 4. Do you consider this campaign characteristic to be

   - Successful / Important
   - Unsuccessful / Not Important

   Please briefly explain why you chose this answer.

* 5. Please identify a third campaign characteristic from the above campaign that you think is important.

* 6. Do you consider this campaign characteristic to be

   - Successful / Important
   - Unsuccessful / Not Important

   Please briefly explain why you chose this answer.
### Public Relations in the Middle East-Survey 2

**7. Do you have additional campaign characteristics that you consider important and would like to note?**
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

### 4. Additional Campaign Characteristics

Please continue adding campaign characteristics that you find important.

1. **Please identify a fourth campaign characteristic that you consider important.**
   
   2. **Do you consider this campaign characteristic to be**
      - [ ] Successful / Important
      - [ ] Unsuccessful / Not Important
      
      Please briefly explain why you chose this answer:

3. **Please identify a fifth campaign characteristic that you consider important.**

4. **Do you consider this campaign characteristic to be**
   - [ ] Successful / Important
   - [ ] Unsuccessful / Not Important
   
   Please briefly explain why you chose this answer:

### 5. Missing Campaign Characteristics

Now that you have identified characteristics of the previous campaign, can you think of other characteristics that were missing that would have made this campaign more successful, in your opinion?

1. **Please list those missing characteristics here, separated by a comma (,), and offer an explanation if possible why adding these characteristics would make this campaign more successful.**

### 6. Use of Campaign

**1. Based on your responses regarding campaign characteristics, would you use the resources being made available by this campaign?**
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No
- [ ] Not Sure
Public Relations in the Middle East-Survey 2

2. Why?

[Blank]

[Blank]
Appendix D

To understand the types of campaigns created by USAID, a brief explanation is needed. USAID is an independent federal government agency that works to provide international aid. Developed by the United States, this agency reports to the Secretary of State. The mission for USAID is to provide long-term and equitable economic growth while advancing United States foreign policy objectives. The aid program focuses on

- Economic growth, agriculture and trade;
- Global health;
- Democracy, conflict prevention and humanitarian assistance.

Countries that are provided assistance in the Middle Eastern region include Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, West Bank/Gaza and Yemen. Within these countries USAID identifies terrorism, instability, exploding youth populations, high unemployment rates, corruption, poor education facilities, HIV/AIDS, and degradation as barriers to stability and development.

USAID responds to these challenges with innovative programming that emphasizes trade, education, health and democracy to promote country and regional stability and create a more secure, democratic, and prosperous world. Programs also support HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment in 15 Asian countries and promote the adoption of clean and efficient technologies and policies that encourage positive relationships between economic growth and environmental protection. Each country program is guided by a multi-year strategic plan that identifies the sectors in which USAID will work and estimated levels of funding. (USAID, http://www.usaid.gov/locations/asia_near_east)

USAID works closely with private organizations, indigenous organizations, universities, American businesses, international agencies, other governments, and other United States' agencies to establish relationships with over 3,500 American companies and over 300 U.S.-based private voluntary organizations to see the fulfillment of these challenges.
Health of a Nation

Provincial Reconstruction Teams

U.S. reconstruction aid is being delivered through a new concept created for the Afghan crisis: the Provincial Reconstruction Teams. PRTs operate from fortified bases from where soldiers and civilians can deliver aid in relative safety. Some EU PRTs have been set up in Britain, New Zealand, Netherlands, and Germany, etc.; U.S. forces run the rest. Protected by 60 to 80 troops, PRTs work closely with village leaders on projects like schools, clinics, and water systems. Many NGOs pride themselves on being neutral in conflict, saving humanitarian goals without taking sides. However, the armed attacks on aid workers in Afghanistan by Taliban, Al Qaeda and other forces—who oppose all Western-supported projects—has made it essential that USAID and many other aid groups work closely with military units. It's an important innovation that has delivered a lot of aid over the past year.

U.S. Military Doctors Treat 900 Patients in a Day

EU pledges 230 million Euros in Afghan aid for 2003

USAID joins Ramyan PRT

U.S. to provide $60 million to train Afghan police
Results

- Health services for 2 million people in 21 provinces; 60% are women and children.
- CARE, with funding from US and others, supplies 5% of Kabul's water.
- Rehabilitating water systems in Kandahar and Kanduz.

- Vaccinated 4.26 million children against measles, polio, preventing 20,000 deaths.
- Conducted health facility surveys throughout the country, helping Ministry of Health expand basic services for 16.3 million women and children and rebuild 900 rural health centers.
- Upgrading the technical skills of the Ministry of Health. Currently, most health care is still managed by NGOs.

Draft constitution completed

- US provides $50 million for private sector support
- First Afghan women's radio station launched
- USAID announces $100 million interest-free loan
- USAID announces $64 million basic education program
- ICRC worker killed in Kandahar
- Refurbished Rabbia Hall Women's hospital reopens in Kabul
- First computer networking class graduates from Kabul University
Works Cited


Middle East Partnership Initiative. Retrieved February 20, 2007. mepi.state.gov


