

# **Crossing the Pacific: Assessing the moral levels of decision-making patterns in Japan and the United States**

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## **Abstract**

*The current state of knowledge about ethical decision making processes is explored from a historical perspective while employing modern theories and research. While there is research that focuses on historical and current moral and ethical issues, this journal's purpose is to provide a holistic perspective of existing research, theory and examination using a moral judgement theory based on psychologist Lawrence Kohlberg's research applied to a select industry; Public Relations. Public relations insight to trust-building and relationship building with various audiences contributes to an organization's authenticity, which over time has required the use of two-way communications. The blend of communication methods and the advancements in the digital age has required increased involvement from public relations in order to restore public confidence in the current marketplace. As a precursor to ethical decision making, this study employed the Defining Issues Test (DIT-2) to gather data on the moral development patterns of public relations practitioners in Japan and the United States. The DIT-2 N2-Score results presented in this journal show that moral development levels vary based on gender, age and education, and this plays a role in the differences seen between managers and non-managers in this study.*

**Key words:** public relations, brands, social media, morals, ethics, two-way communication

## **1. Introduction**

Change is happening all around the world at a very fast pace with both positive and negative consequences; it can't be stopped. This change is happening through the actions of humans for either virtuous or corrupt purposes. All of these individuals participate in one way or another in their economic, social and political activities and through rapid

communications is bringing about direct change at a rapid pace both locally and globally. To enable an organization to more efficiently achieve its communication goals in the shortest time possible, public relations can assist in internal and external efforts to achieve the desired outcomes.

The word “Public” in Public Relations is used to signify the general public that constitutes of a variety of target audiences (Inoue, 2006). The target audience will depend on the objectives that are set by an organization based on what they want to achieve. Thus, the target audience will consist of not only the general public, but also specific stakeholders. These specific stakeholders can consist of employees, local communities, general consumers, distributors, clients and the international community. Because there are so many target audiences with changing needs and perceptions, it is necessary to understand that the audience will shift in attitude over time. This gradual shift means an organization that is trying to communicate its goals to its target audiences will need to listen to the general public and reshape its communication strategy.

For a public relations consultant representing an organization that is located in either domestic or overseas territory, they will have access to a large route of communications through both the client they represent and through media relations that contains various information outlets. Even though there are targeted audiences, there are persons that are not recognized or belong to those audiences. It's not that they aren't recognized, they're beyond the developed communication program and its unknown to what extent the communications program will have an effect on that audience and at what point the unrelated audience will either join the targeted audience, or the unrelated audience becomes a new audience requiring a new communications plan.

Even though using social media outlets to target a specific audience, persons not involved will indirectly receive the message. This can create a complex communication strategy because they still indirectly have influence in some way towards the information sender and the audiences they engage with, thus becoming a stakeholder themselves. Just as ways of delivering media information changes, so do the publics that consume it. No public will remain the same in interests or static groups. They will gradually change as their external environment around them changes. New groups will form, creating new audiences and thus creating new target audiences. By using the two-way symmetrical communication strategy, this changing environment is why it's important to monitor the public's reaction to a brands communication effort and evolve the communication strategy.

Monitoring the target public can include research in various forms such as targeting age ranges and genders. Information needs to be constantly collected and evaluated to determine the direction target audiences are going. However, monitoring and trying to determine the direction of an audience is difficult because as one audience behavior changes, so do others, creating a chain reaction.

## ***2. Japan and Public Relations***

Compared to the rest of the western world, Japan has a unique culture and social system that has developed into a modern industrial state since the Meiji Restoration. After Japan's 1990's economic bubble collapsed, it was clear that there were areas within the political and economic structure that were dysfunctional. This promoted a movement to address the issue by pursuing a new social system, but with limited success (Amyx, 2013). Viewed from an international standpoint, Japan is having a relative difficult time maintaining its stature as a leading global economic power.

When looking at and comparing the most successful companies around the world, Japan's ranking is limited. Each year, Interbrand, a consultant company located in the United States, publishes a ranking list of the top 100 Best Global Brands. The evaluations are based on '*financial analysis*' (overall financial return to organization's investors), '*role of brand analysis*' (the portion of profit related to the brand), and '*brand strength*' (the profit the brand will generate in the future and the ability of the brand to create loyalty). In 2013, Toyota was ranked at number 10 and Honda at number 20. In 2015, Toyota climbed to number 6 and Honda moved up one spot to number 19. Of the top 100, Canon, Nissan, Sony and Panasonic are on the list for a total of 6 Japanese companies. Public relations specialist Takashi Inoue looks at the lack of Japanese companies in the top global positions as having a lack of public relations skills along with self-correction, ethics and two-way communication with the various publics. Japanese companies must adopt an approach of checking entire public relations lifecycles and asking where mistakes have been made in overseas public relations strategies, is there a way to create a more effective public relations program, and a way to rapidly correct those points (Inoue, 2006).

## ***3. Ideologies and Moral Judgements***

Moral judgement cannot be reduced to cultural ideology or vice versa. But when each construct is measured separately, then combined, the product predicts powerfully to moral thinking (Rest, Thoma, Getz, Narvaez (1999). Moral research studies conducted by

researchers James Rest and colleagues identified that individual development in moral judgement provides insight in to different existing theories that studies rationality of belief and justification. These theories of moral development shows change over time in: A) an individual's development and change in social and moral thought processes and B) the process of socialization that develops an individual's cultural ideology. Moral theorists remain relatively unsure about which of the cognitive developmental theories supersedes one another, centering on moral judgement and autonomy.

'Moral thinking' refers to peoples' judgements about right and wrong and the rationale behind such thinking (Rest, et al., 1999). This thinking process can be divided in to two parts:

*Moral Judgement:* The individual views on issues such as religious practice in schools and other public areas, abortion, sexual orientations, and women's position in society.

*Cultural Ideology:* This ideology focuses on the shared group cultural values and the individuals' values and norms based on their relationship with groups they associate with.

Studies that focus on moral thinking and ideology can typically examine issues related to rights of individuals, religion in schools, and other public issues. These are issues that surface in societies all around the world and drive the differences in individual thought processes. James Rest and colleagues (1999) find that both *moral judgement* and *cultural ideology* act in parallel and this simultaneous and reciprocal interaction develops an individual's moral thinking ability.

Cultural ideology has a certain influence on social phenomena and the social environment that an individual interacts with. Therefore, these ideologies have an impact on group culture and social life activities. Individual cognitive development provides a base for certain ideological categories in areas such as rationality of belief and justification for actions. In turn, cultural ideology affects the course of moral judgement (Rest, et al., 1999).

### **3.1 Two-Way Communication**

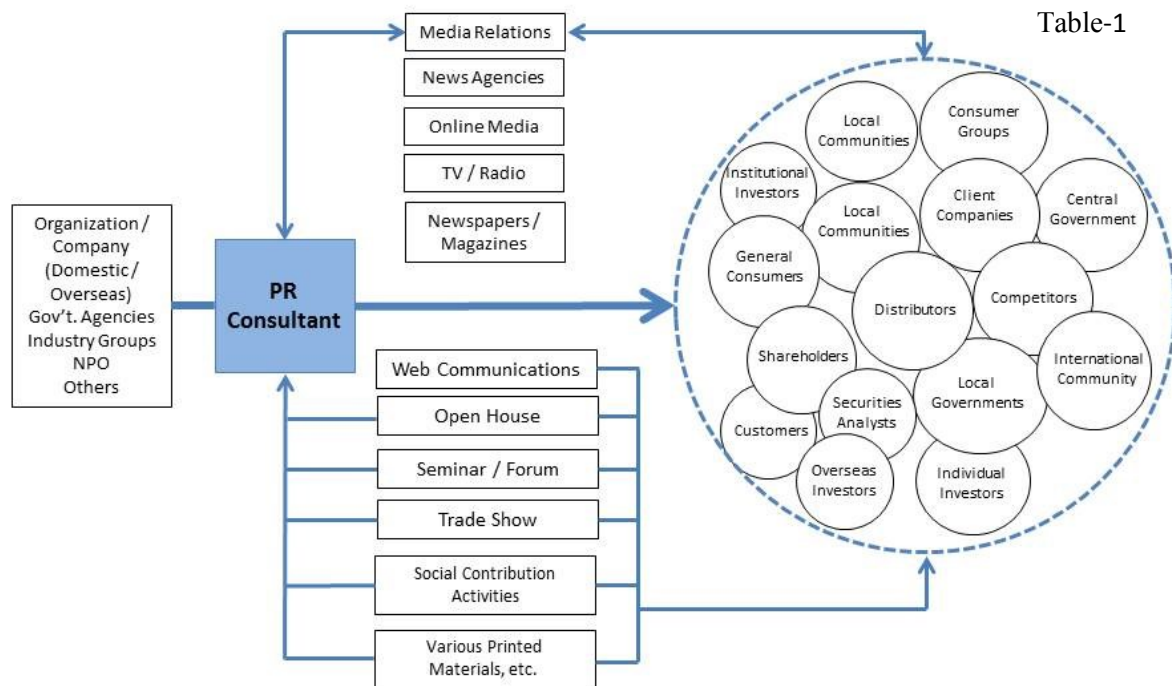
When communicating to a target audience, communication goals should include the use of two-way symmetrical communications and a sense of ethics (Inoue, 2006). Monitoring the change in public attitude is necessary for nurturing trust and favorability that is meaningful to not only the interest of the public but also related stakeholders. This is especially important for international organizations that face fierce competition where a fast response is necessary to remain on good terms in another market and industry.

The increase of online information has accelerated the need to make faster decisions and requires new methods for businesses to conduct effective communications, which requires the use of new tools that often results in simultaneous communications. With such a diverse amount of information available in real-time, traditional models of communication that are ‘up-down’ direction or flat ‘one-way’ become harder to use and effectively communicate between two targets.

An example of such communication issues can be found between employees and the company they work for. Employees, at times, may find information about their company’s activities not from in-house communication channels, but by news releases from the media. This can be a common method of information retrieval from western companies and can often be the fastest route for information about the company and its details rather than from in-house communications. As for Japanese companies, sometimes important news events about the company are held at press events and the employees are often the last to learn about the details, causing some loss of trust.

There are a couple ways to increase communication and trust between two audiences: establish the opportunity for leaders of a company and employees to exchange opinions face-to-face, and the other is to hold focus groups with a large audience. As for company leader and employee exchanges, this communication can be as simple as conversations over lunch. The other method is a ‘free-discussion’ style focus group with selected participants where ideas can be exchanged and an opportunity to understand actual conditions facing the company.

Shown in Table-1 is an example of the relations an organization can have with its publics. Through the interactions with ‘media relations’, a variety of target audiences can become the ‘main target’. For example, when a university wants to communicate a message to the local public, an example target audience can be ‘community relations’ who would involve the local citizens, local transportation agencies (bus, rail) and local shopping districts. The university and the representing public relations agency have the opportunity to create a message and communications plan that would reach an audience that will surpass the local public but to the surrounding communities.



Source: "Public Relations", 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, Takashi Inoue, Chapter 1

When disclosing information to the public, the information shouldn't flow in only one direction, in this case, from the university to the local public. An example of establishing two-way communication can be creating an email account to accept public comment and complaints in order to understand local opinion. Other ways are holding town meetings to have real-time discussion. Two-way communication isn't only limited to internet based communication and local meetings, an organization can invite members of the local community to take a tour of the campus and learn about its operations, thus deepening relations and understandings between the two audiences.

James Grunig's Four Models of Public Relation

Table-2

MODEL NAME	TYPE OF COMMUNICATION	CHARACTERISTICS
PRESS AGENT/PUBLICITY	One-Way Communication	Uses persuasion and manipulation to influence audiences to behave as the organization desires.
PUBLIC INFORMATION MODEL	One-Way Communication	Uses press releases and other one-way communication techniques to distribute organizational information. The public relations practitioner is often referred to as the in-house journalist
TWO-WAY ASYMMETRICAL MODEL	Two-Way Communication (imbalanced)	Uses persuasion and manipulation to influence audiences to behave as the organization desires. Does not use research to find out how stakeholders feel about the organization.
TWO-WAY SYMMETRICAL MODEL	Two-Way Communication	Uses communication to negotiate with the public, resolve conflict and promote mutual understanding and respect between the organization and its stakeholders

Grunig, James E. "Organizations, Environments, and Models of Public Relations."

*James E. Grunig identified four models of public relations practices:*

Public relations researcher James Grunig classified the evolution of public relations in the United States in to four models. (Table-2)

- 1) Press Agent / Publicity model (around 1850s) is a one-way communication pattern that had the objective to publicize an organization and its products and services. It was a propaganda style communication effort to hold the organization which the organization would control the information and try to control the public it was targeting. Information being sent out from this model wouldn't always be factual.
- 2) Public Information model (1900 and later) was a stage of public relations championed by public relations theorist Ivy Lee (Harlow, 1976). This model is a one-way communication strategy used by government and non-profit organizations to work in best effort to deliver information to the public that was as close to being accurate and factual as possible. This method employed a journalist in-house that was not part of a media outlet, but was used to disseminate information to the public.
- 3) The two-way asymmetrical model is a technique used to persuade the public to accept a view being delivered by an organization or company (Murphy, 1991). Edward Bernays was a leading proponent of this method and it entailed to finding out what the publics' views were of an organization and then determining how to change that viewpoint.
- 4) From the 1960's and forward is the use of symmetrical two-way communication. This model attempts to reach all target audiences in a way that is agreeable to both sides in communication relations. This model attempts to reach a stage of mutual understanding between the organization and the publics it communicates with (*Grunig 1983*).

By implementing symmetrical two-way communication and ethics within the public relations practice, strategic decision-making can help manage the behavior of the organization. The effective use of communications can serve as a bridging activity that can build relationships with stakeholders rather than just sending non-specific messages that are designed to buffer the organization from its stakeholders. Therefore the use of two-way symmetrical communications can provide the public a voice that management can use to make decision and therefore create a conversation with meaning between the public and management.

By cultivating a two-way symmetrical relationship through strategic management between an organization and the public could produce increased benefits for not only the organization but also society. A positive relationship can lead to increased reputation from

the public, reduced costs in time and money by maintaining favorable relationships, and reduced risks due to the constant engagement on both sides of the communication spectrum. By cultivating relationships through successful symmetrical communication, mutual communication networks can expand and dialogue can continue. The use of asymmetrical communications could cause dispute and avoidance due to the one-way direction it promotes.

### 3.2 Building a Brand

This is a short section about organization brand identity and brand attributes. Because the research of this paper is about public relations, ethical behavior and communications, the brand the public relations firm represents is at the center. Promoting a brand and defining its image to the public often takes a lot of researching the consumer (i.e. target audiences).

The building of a brand differs between traditional media such as newspapers, magazines and television. The digital landscape of the Internet today has changed the way businesses interact with their customers and thus, having to update their communication strategy and develop content that targets a specific audience. Because it's the Internet, nearly everyone with an Internet connection can access the company's content. The 'identity' the brand develops is one based on the collective attitudes of the consumers; the behavior and reactions the consumer has towards the company's products and/or services.



Looking at Table-3, a company should create a communication program that delivers a message to its target audience effectively. Creating content for local audiences but by engaging public relations practitioners and creating a communication campaign with additional expertise and access to different media platforms can create an opportunity to establish two-way communication and understand the audience's view. The brand objectives can be established, marketing strategy identified and the messaging platform created. Through these efforts, the brand can help their target audience meet their need through either being an enabler (retailer/service) or as a content provider. How much the brand achieves its



desired response from the target audience will represent its value. The greater the value, the more it has met the desired goal, but could create a challenge to the brand itself as it has to constantly research the changing market conditions and how its target audience perceives the brand over time.

#### **4. Ethics**

As the world becomes a global village and businesses start collaborating with each other in business-to-business environments and start operating in foreign markets, there is a need to abide by the new rules of the global economy and to practice fair and transparent business practices. There is a need for businesses to transform their style to survive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century which has placed them closer to the consumer than ever before. American businesses have flexible management practices and operations style that allows them to adapt to shifting consumer and business needs while Japanese-style management is still relatively preserved and still operates in its old ways (Amyx, 2013). This questionable Japanese-style business management consists of ‘Dango’ (だんご) price-fixing exchanges, ‘Seijikenkin’ (せいじけんきん) questionable political donations and ‘Settai’ (せつたい) questionable socializing with high-ranking officials which may include bribery (Amyx, 2013).

All around the world are businesses that are confronted with issues that demand greater integrity and social responsibility to their publics and international relations. The demand has become even more important with the emerging and ongoing corporate scandals that take place. The more recent examples of these types of scandals are Mitsubishi Motors reporting of its fuel economy rating for its vehicles and Volkswagen’s misreporting of its vehicle emissions tests. Both of these examples have resulted in brand damage, loss of trust by consumers and financial losses. The relationship that corporations and society have is a relationship built on mutual benefit. Corporations that cause some level of social harm and disruption undermine the relationship they have built with their publics. Thus, moral boundaries need to be respected and in the case of a scandal, have to be rebuilt.

##### **4.1 Ethics Stemming from Interpersonal Dynamics**

A difference that can be seen between America and Japan is in the work environment. The Japanese are known for their dedication to work with massive overtime and working on their days off, which can be otherwise known as *Karoshi* (かろし), death from overwork. In some business industries, particularly in banking, public servants didn’t seek economic wealth and rewards as much as they sought for *Prestige* (めいよ) (Amyx, 2013). Joining in

the quest for prestige was the building of communication and relationship building with higher-level officials that would involve golfing, drinks and after hour dining, usually paid for by a company. This was known as ‘*Settai*’ (せったい) . This is a shared experience within the population that would build expectations and would continue over time.

Unlike in America, Japan has a senior-junior (*senpai-kohai* - 先輩-後輩) relationship in both school and work. It is a mentor system that exists at all levels of education, business, sports and social organizations. It’s a system that’s integrated in the Japanese seniority-based society. In the United States, this can be translated as *senior* and *junior* rankings and can be considered as a mentor/protégé role. However, those terms are used more widely and can be used in many different situations. American work culture can vary based on the industry and employee/work culture. This isn’t to say that the interpersonal dynamics from the Japanese system don’t exist in America, because they do as well.

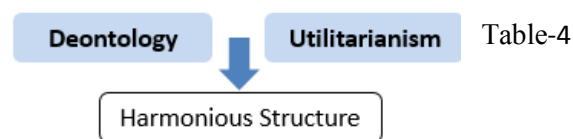
#### **4.2 Business Ethics Education**

There is general awareness about the necessity of business ethics. In 2005, Keio University in Japan conducted research on universities in Japan and what the overall status and interest was of using and implementing classes based on business ethics. Mitsuhiro’s (2013) research revealed that only 9.3% of Japanese universities offered business ethics related courses; a percentage that lagged behind the United States. However limited, the average class size was about 115 students with a few classes around 600 students.

Business ethics is a popular subject among the students, however Japanese universities were not emphasizing the subject of ethics and the classes were electives. When this research was released, the research community responded favorably to students supporting business ethics education and participating in the courses. Ethics scholars that were interviewed in Mitsuhiro’s research agreed that while being a student was the time to tackle ethical dilemmas before entering the business world. When scholars were asked about why there was a lack of business ethics classes being offered, the responses were mixed with: no room in the curriculum and shortage of qualified teachers. However, the Japanese education system does not emphasize humanistic management education where ethics would be categorized. The education system would need to be addressed in order to see a possible difference in workplace interactions.

### 4.3 Harmonious Ethics

People will often think about the consequences of their actions and choose the best option that will lead to the best outcome. One such theory is Utilitarianism that claims that the best outcome is the only consideration that can be made; the decision that produces the most good is the best choice than anything lower. This moral theory conflicts with Deontology where the person will approach an issue with common sense morality (McNaughton, Rawling, 2007). There are two approaches to ethical decision making that combines two moral judgement theories that can ultimately create a harmonious state: Deontology and Utilitarianism.

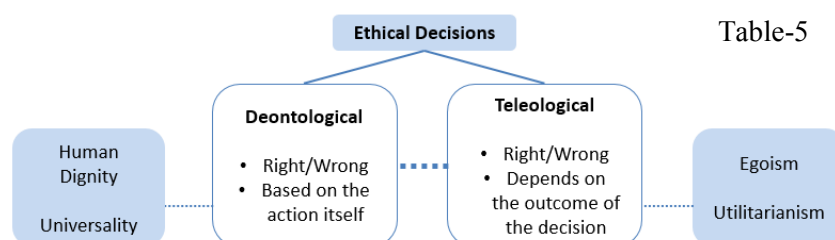


**Deontology:** Morality is a matter of duty. The ethical position which places adherence to rules of goodwill and the true guideline for making decisions. The morality of an action depends on the intrinsic nature of the action (e.g. harming others is wrong regardless of the consequences) (Conway, Gawronski, 2013).

- The principle or motivation is important
- The action can only be right or wrong if the morals for taking that action are known.
- The action can only be right if everyone else can follow the same underlying principle. Would the action be viewed by others as suitable or moral?

**Utilitarianism:** The consequentialist theory. Implies that the morality of an action is determined by its consequences (e.g. harming others is acceptable if it increases the well-being of a greater number of people) (Conway, Gawronski, 2013). Utilitarianism ethical behavior is creating maximum good for the maximum population while minimizing evil actions that may affect others.

- The decision being right or wrong depends on the consequences of that decision.
- If the outcome is right, then the action itself is irrelevant.
- Applies to society as a whole and not just the individual. Highly subjective.



There are several types of utilitarianism that can be defined, but it basically implies that no moral act or rule is right or wrong (e.g. the act of stealing or “keeping your promise”). The overall nominal good via pleasure and/or happiness and satisfaction is derived from the consequences of doing the act or following a particular rule (Smart, Williams, 1973). An example of this is if punishing an innocent person to the maximum consequences, it fulfills the justification that there was no right or wrong in the decision. However, it remains unclear how much people operate based on utilitarian or deontological perspectives. Within an organizational context, there is limited research to determine if individuals adopt moral philosophies and if there is impact on their ethical decision making process.

Ethical decision making is theorized that some of the greater influences come from environmental issues such as noneconomic, various economic and cultural factors (Bartels, 1967). Examples of the cultural factors are encompassed in laws and regulations, religious beliefs, societal beliefs, customs and national identity. Public relations professions would analyze their communication strategy decisions as either unethical or ethical based on societies beliefs. There are different experiences in regards to social institutions such as family, government and associated leisure groups that play a part in an individual’s development of social and ethical perceptions. These factors play a large part on an individual’s behavioral expectations and influence on ethical sensitivity.

An analysis conducted by Cullen and Victor (1987) produced seven dimensions of ethical climate in different business environments: efficiency, instrumentalism, social responsibility, self-interest, personal morality and rules and codes.

Ethical Criteria	Locus of Analysis			Table-6	
	Individual	Local	Cosmopolitan		
	Egoism	Self-Interest	Company Profit		Efficiency
	Benevolence	Friendship	Team Interest		Social Responsibility
	Principle	Personal Morality	Company Rules and Procedures		Law and Professional Codes

Victor B., Cullen J. B. (1987), A Theory and Measure of Ethical Climate in Organizations

Victor B., Cullen J. B. (1987), A Theory and Measure of Ethical Climate in Organizations

An example of Cullen and Victor’s research in use was conducted by researchers Venezia and Hung (2010) to measure the ethical climate dimensions of private and public sector Asian accountants. While not related to the public relations field, the study showed an example of the difference between public and private personnel and their surrounding environments. The private sector ethical climate focused more on efficiency and personal morality while the public sector relied more upon rules, codes, social responsibility and self-interest.

Current research about the adoption and use of moral philosophies when it comes to their impact in the ethical decision making process is limited and lacking research and critical review. It remains relatively unclear about how and when an individual uses either deontological or utilitarian perspectives in their decision making process. Becker and Fritzsche (1984) conducted a study of marketing managers and found that their responses and decisions modeled the utilitarian approach to decision making. In contrast, from a study conducted by Wheeler and Brady (1996) who studied the ethical decision making patterns of employees found that their moral philosophies were more in line with deontology. From this research example, the moral decision making process between employees and managers can differ. From the evidence provided by researchers on the subject of moral philosophies, implementing an ethics program within an organization may be more difficult and have limited use if social interactions are a part of the development of ethical decision making.

#### ***4.4 Explaining Ethics through Moral Development***

Psychologist Jean Piaget (1965) investigated the measurement of individual ethics and the concept of moral development across professions when he observed a group of boys playing marbles. Through this observation, Piaget observed moral growth; the learned ability to reason that is rooted within individual moral principles. The observed patterns were determined that the actions made were not for outside reward, but for individual benefit. Psychology researchers later on developed and added on to Piaget's research and extended the findings on the moral development process. One of the researchers was Lawrence Kohlberg (1969) and his explanation of moral development which led to his six stages of moral development.

### ***5. Research Method and Process***

The main part of this research is to collect quantitative data on public relations practitioners based on their age, professional background and education. The goal is to generate data and information that could lead to additional research and insight between two socially and culturally different countries.

#### ***5.1 The Defining Issues Test, Version 2***

This is a brief description of the instrument used to gauge Public Relations professionals' moral reasoning. The DIT-2 description provides background information about the instrument and explains how it is scored.

The Defining Issues Test (DIT-2) is a test of moral reasoning based on Lawrence Kohlberg's research on the stages of moral development during a person's growth from adolescence to adulthood. The DIT test was originally created in 1979 by James Rest and later revised to be shorter and added data checks in 1999. The DIT-2 contains several stories about social problems such as should a starving man steal food for his family from someone who is hoarding most of the food in the village. After reading each story, 12 multiple choice items are listed representing different issues that might be raised from the story that was read. For example, from the story described above, the items ask: "Does the rich man deserve to be robbed for being so greedy? Would stealing bring about more total good for everybody concerned or wouldn't it?" The respondents need to do three things:

- Read the 12 items and rate them on their importance about making a decision about the social problem. On a 5-point Likert scale, the respondent selects a decision from 'Great Importance' to 'No Importance'.
- Make an action choice if the food should be stolen or not
- After answering the 12 items, rank the most important four items

Of the dilemmas provided in the survey, there is no 'right' or 'wrong' answer for the respondent to select. The following is the list of stages of development from lowest to highest:

**Stage 1** – An individual recognizes the difference between punishment and obedience. Whichever action leads to punishment is wrong.

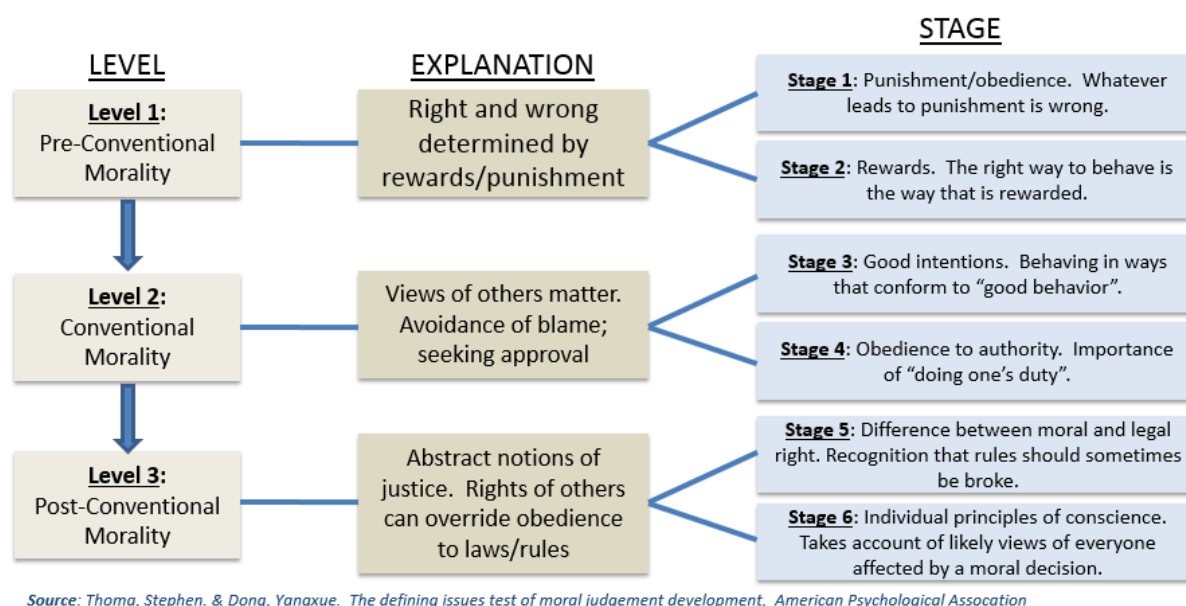
**Stage 2** – The individual focuses more on the potential advantages they may get from rewards. The right way to behave is the way that is rewarded.

**Stage 3** – Stage three is mixed with considerations of good or bad intentions in a situation; the importance of maintaining relationships form.

**Stage 4** – The individual recognizes the legal system and the need to maintain it and a formal organizational structure; the importance of 'doing one's duty'.

**Stage 5** - In this stage, the individual is aware of basic human rights and the need to protect them. Here, there is the difference between moral and legal right and the recognition that sometimes rules should be broken.

**Stage 6** – The highest level of moral conscious, the individual takes in to account the likely views of everyone affected by a moral decision; the rights of others can override obedience to laws and/or rules (Thoma, Stephen, Dong, 2014).



The DIT-2 test uses the following scales to grade the responses:

**N2 Score** – The N2 score is based on acquiring a more sophisticated level of mor Table-7

The score reflects how much the respondent will reject a question in the test due to its simplicity or biased nature. The N2 score is adjusted to be the same scale as the P-Score during calculation (Rest, Thoma, Narvaez, and Bebeau, 1997).

**P-Score** – Like the N2 Score, the P-score represents the level of which the respondent uses a higher moral order when reasoning. The P-score items are what appeals to the respondent's moral ideals and theoretical framework for resolving complex moral issues such as:

- Upholding laws and due process
- Safeguarding basic human rights
- Organizing social arrangements based on appealing ideals

P-score data is ranked from 0 to 95 with 95 having the highest achievement in moral reasoning. Studies have placed senior high-school students in the 30's, college students in the 40's, and Masters to PHd individuals in 50's and higher. These same averages apply to the N2 score (Rest, Thoma, Narvaez, and Bebeau, 1997).

**Personal Interest Score** – The Personal Interest score is used to test an individual's least sophisticated reasoning ability. This score tests the appeal of:

- Good or evil intentions of the involved parties
- The fairness of exchanges between two parties

- The advantages of the story actor and maintaining approval
- Maintaining good relationships or risk fraying them

**Maintaining Norms Score** – This score measures the mid-level reasoning ability with the focus on:

- Maintaining existing roles and respect for the legal system
- Maintaining a formal organizational structure

There are additional indices labeled as Experimental that measures additional moral judgement abilities:

**Religious Orthodoxy Score** – This score comes from the cancer dilemma story in the DIT-2 test and asks the question “Should only God decide when a person’s life should end?” This question has been found to correlate strongly with scores related to religious orthodoxy measures.

**Humanitarian Liberalism Score** – This score is related to the humanitarian liberal perspective on moral dilemmas. This score may be related to individuals in fields such as political science and philosophy.

**Number of Cannot Decide** – This is the decisiveness score of a respondent having difficulty answering an item on the test. A high score means the participant had difficulty deciding and can indicate a high level of developmental shifts. This score is the “Can’t decide” rank item (Narvaez, Rest, Thoma, 1999).

## **5.2 Respondents**

Respondents to the DIT survey are instructed to read a short story about a dilemma the story character faces and answer and rank twelve statements according to each one’s perceived importance. The ranking are on a 5-point Likert scale ranking “Great”, “Much”, “Little” and “None”. Based on the scores obtained from the survey, a P-index is used to gauge the level of moral development; the importance the respondent assigned to a decision that is rooted within the moral principles devised by Kohlberg.

To ensure data integrity of the survey, the DIT survey has consistency checks that expect a respondents answers to statements indicating “most important” to “fourth most important” to mirror their answers to other Likert scale answers of “Great”, “Much” or “Some” dilemma scales. If there are inconsistencies on these questions, the answer is flagged and removed.



### **5.3 Procedure**

A convenience sample was conducted of public relations professionals in the United States and in Japan. The data collection and response rate was monitored closely through using an online survey platform called Qualtrics. Due to the difference in the total amount of public relations professionals in each country, as expected, response rates were gathered at an extremely fast rate in the United States compared to Japan. To keep the collection results as close as possible to keep an even analysis, the survey for the United States population was closed before the Japan survey. A decision was made to attempt to collect at least 25 ‘good’ responses from each country. The ‘good’ means all of the bad or unreliable data is removed from the results. The numbers appear small, however most DIT tests consist of between 50 to 100 participants.

Respondents were solicited through either organization-wide solicitation, direct email solicitation and referrals from ‘word-of-mouth’ from already contacted respondents. Approximately 15 respondents related to academic institutions and specialize in public relations research/instruction was contacted by direct email solicitation. Each respondent during solicitation was asked to forward the email invitation to colleagues related to public relations and to individuals who work in the public relations industry. This solicitation was sent to contacts in both the United States and Japan. Two main organizations were solicited: Public Relations Society of America (PSRA) and The Public Relations Society of Japan (PRSJ). While online organizations would seem like a great source to tap in to, there was a limit to the amount of organizations that were contacted chiefly due to the amount of public relations practitioners in each country; there is a larger population in the United States.

The overall hope was to acquire more responses compared to what was initially hoped for. With the advent of mobile technology and home/workplace computers, the online distribution of the DIT was the preferred method; however, the amount of time to complete the survey would be a deterrent for many participants donating their time to the research.

For this survey, the options to keep the link anonymous from the web (non-cacheable by search engines) and preventing the survey respondent from using the ‘back button’ to re-answer previous questions was prohibited. The ability to restart the survey and let the respondent continue where they left off was kept for this survey in the hopes that it would maintain respondent interest. The survey would prevent a respondent from continuing the test if a question was not answered, thus ensuring there was an answer for each question.

While measuring ethnicity would add some value to the results, this question was left off the survey due to Japan's sensitivity towards subjects about ethnicity and identification.

The collected data was exported to Excel spreadsheet format and reviewed for incomplete data. Logged respondents (tracked via IP address) that did not complete the survey were removed from the data. This dropped the total respondents who started the test in English from 104 to 37 and for the Japanese survey, from 63 to 29.

The next procedure was to check respondent data using the DIT method to see if there were any questionable answers the respondent replied to. As written in the DIT-2 section above, the DIT test checks the final four answers to see where they line up with the previous questions the respondent answered to regarding the story they read. If the answers do not pass the examination, the results would be removed. The final data cleaning resulted in 22 United States responses and 16 Japan responses. A push was made to even the amount of respondents and additional solicitation to Japanese PR professionals was carried out. After receiving additional responses and checking the data, a finally tally of 22 Japanese respondents was captured.

## 6. Results

The results from The United States were 35% male and 65% were female. From Japan, 88% were male and 12% were female. The age range for United States was 25 to 66 with a mean of 47.7 years old. The age range for Japan was from 20 to 54 with a mean of 34.8 years old. A notable contrast between the two countries surveyed is the gender makeup where male respondents dominated in Japan and female respondents dominated for the United States. As for education, in the United States, 45% possessed a Master's / Professional / Ph.d / Ed.D degree, 23% with a 4-year college degree and 32% with lower than a 4-year college degree. For Japan, 41% possessed a Master's/ Professional / Ph.d / Ed.D, 59% with a bachelor's degree and 0% with lower than a bachelor's degree. From this data so far, the U.S. has a higher average in age and the education results are nearly similar.

Education Type	US	Japan	Table-8
Masters+	45%	41%	
4-Yr College	23%	59%	
Less than 4-Yr	32%	0%	

As for PR experience, the respondent answers varied with the U.S. having the most PR experience compared to Japan. The survey asked respondents to select a rank of how many years of Public Relations experience they have. The ranking was coded as follows:

1 = Less than 1 Year
2 = 1-5 Years
3 = 6-10 Years
4 = 10-15 Years
5 = 15-20 Years
6 = 20+ Years

Table-9

Based on the survey results, the U.S. has the most PR professionals with 10+ years of experience a person. The Japanese respondents were less than one year, to 1-5 years, where the majority of Japanese respondents were.

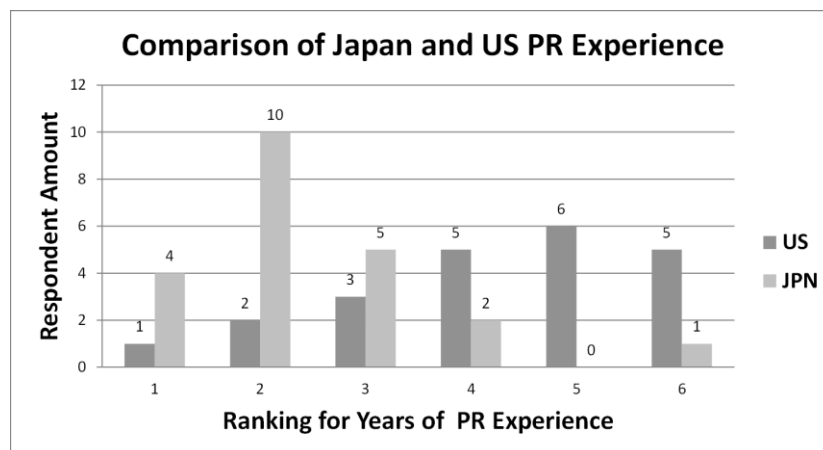


Table-10

Japan has a grand mean of 2.41 while the U.S. has a grand mean of 4.27. While the respondent total was very low compared to other studies, this survey showed how ‘young’ the Japan PR industry is compared to the U.S.

## 6.1 Research Question Results

The N2-Score derived from the DIT-2 test was used as the determining factor for levels of moral judgement in these research questions. The N2-Score rates Lawrence Kohlberg’s moral development stages 5 and 6 and ranks the scores against stages moral development stages 2 and 3, thus providing greater clarity for simplistic and/or biased solutions when analyzing data. The P-Score wasn’t used as a determining score because it focuses on the sum of stages 5 and 6.

**Research Question 1:** What is the mean level of moral development among Japanese and American public relations professionals?

Using the N2-Score, the U.S. has a mean score of 24.82. Japan has a mean score of 22.23. At first observation, the U.S. has a higher moral development rate.

#### Descriptive Statistics: United States

Stage23	Stage4	Pscore	N2score
Min. : 2.00	Min. : 0.00	Min. :12.00	Min. : 9.32
1st Qu.:18.00	1st Qu.:22.50	1st Qu.:18.00	1st Qu.:16.54
Median :29.00	Median :37.00	Median :23.00	Median :21.59
Mean :26.55	Mean :36.73	Mean :27.18	Mean :24.82
3rd Qu.:34.00	3rd Qu.:52.00	3rd Qu.:33.50	3rd Qu.:30.95
Max. :54.00	Max. :68.00	Max. :64.00	Max. :60.79

#### Descriptive Statistics: Japan

Stage23	Stage4	Pscore	N2score
Min. :16.00	Min. : 4.00	Min. : 0.0	Min. : 5.86
1st Qu.:25.50	1st Qu.:18.50	1st Qu.:16.5	1st Qu.:13.31
Median :36.00	Median :28.00	Median :21.0	Median :18.45
Mean :32.55	Mean :29.36	Mean :22.0	Mean :22.23
3rd Qu.:39.50	3rd Qu.:41.50	3rd Qu.:32.5	3rd Qu.:29.09
Max. :52.00	Max. :54.00	Max. :44.0	Max. :43.89

#### N2-Score comparison by country:

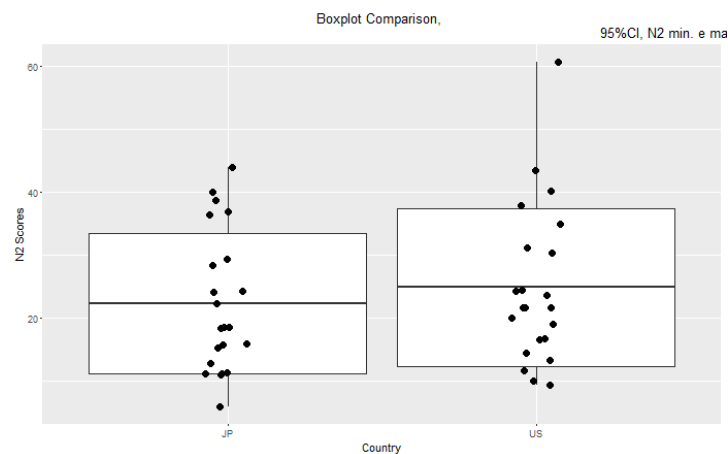


Table-11

Based on the *DIT Score Norms by Education Level* (Kohlberg, 1969), both countries are in the high school range of moral development (20-30 range) with several respondents reaching college level (40's). The general conclusion of this data would place the mean level of each country closer to moral schema stages 2, 3 and 4.

A two-way ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) test was conducted to include other variables in the analysis such as age and education. As seen in Table-12 (below), the variation in results based on N2-Score and Education levels shows the bulk of the results after Education point 9, the 4year College mark. From that point on, there are respondent groups at different mean levels of N2 scores.

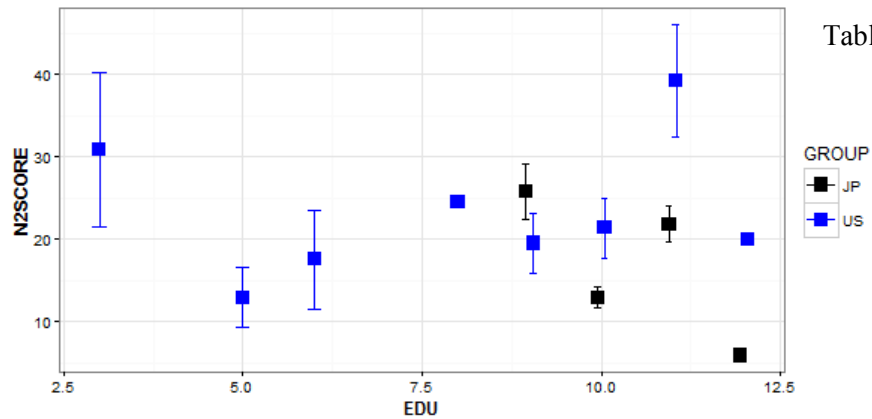


Table-12

Additional analysis was conducted by grouping respondents based on their education level and their age. By doing this, it provided further insight in to the overall mean comparison between each country and to see who at what education level obtained the higher N2 scores.

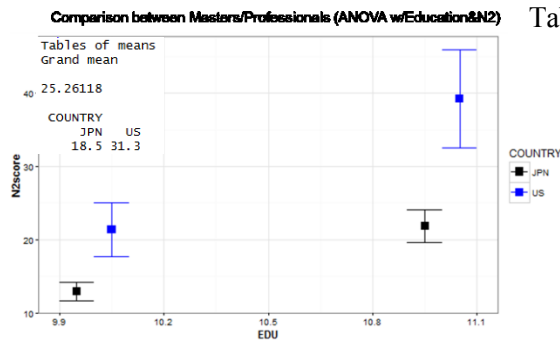
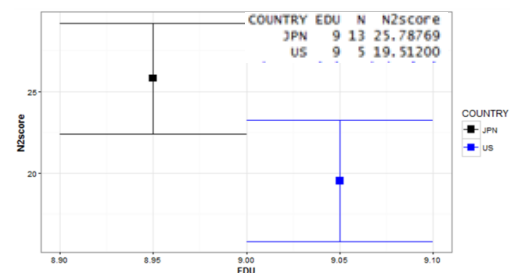
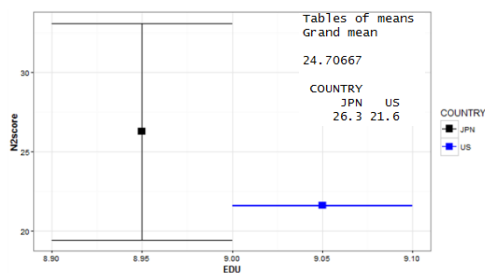


Table-13

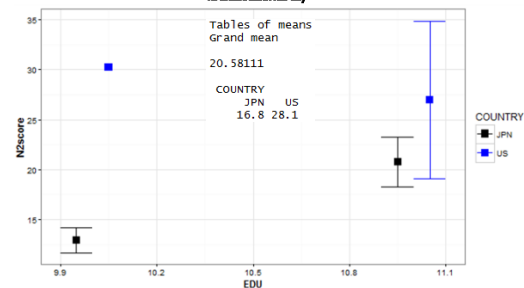
Interaction plot for a 2-way ANOVA. Square points represent means for groups, and error bars indicate standard errors of the mean. Comparison between 4year College Degree holders (All-Ages)



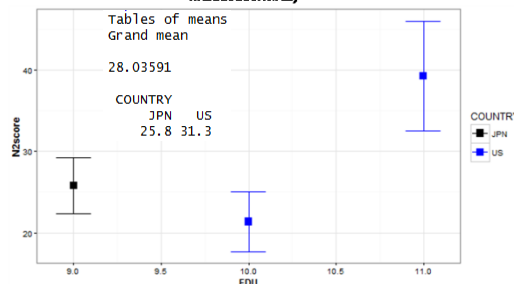
Comparison between 4yr College in 40's (ANOVA w/Education&N2)



Comparison between Masters/Professionals ages 20-40 (ANOVA w/Education&N2)



Comparison U.S. Masters+ and JPN 4.yr College (ANOVA w/Education&N2)



By doing this variable analysis, the results showed that there were significant differences in education and N2 scores, as originally expected. However, the data and graphs

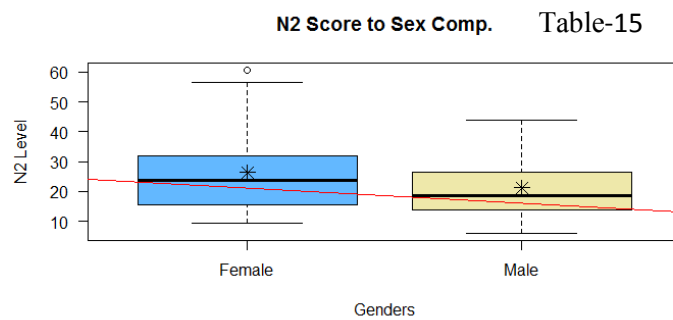
highlights just where those differences are and by how much. The overall conclusion and result is that it is quite mixed between education obtainment and N2 scores; Japan scored higher in the analysis of 4-year college degree holders for all ages and when comparing 4-year college degree holders in the 40-year age range. The U.S. scored higher in the analysis between those that hold Master level education and higher, and in the comparison of Master level education for age ranges 20 to 40. Seeing that the education obtainment numbers were almost opposite between those that hold a Masters education and higher (U.S.) and 4-year college degrees (Japan), while almost having identical respondents to analyze, an additional analysis was held and it found the U.S. scored higher. By analyzing respondents' variables as shown in the tables above, it provides some insight in to the overall mean score when comparing the two countries and finding out at what levels an individual operates at.

However, just because a respondent doesn't score high on the N2-Score report doesn't exactly mean that they would be unethical or lack morals, it may mean they score higher in the earlier Moral Schemas shown earlier in this journal. Table 14, below, shows the Japanese respondent data for the Moral Schema development stages. Stages 2, 3 and 4 are considered more than 5 and 6. That's the interesting part about breaking down these numbers and analyzing the individuals that work within these industries.

Personal Interest (Stage 2/3)	Maintain Norms (Stage 4)	Post Conventional (P Score)	N2 Score (N2 Score)	Table-14
42.00	40.00	8.00	12.68	
40.00	42.00	2.00	5.86	
34.00	28.00	18.00	15.88	
32.00	28.00	20.00	15.21	
40.00	46.00	2.00	10.87	
24.00	34.00	22.00	18.44	
36.00	18.00	28.00	28.41	
36.00	4.00	20.00	24.19	
36.00	20.00	26.00	22.21	

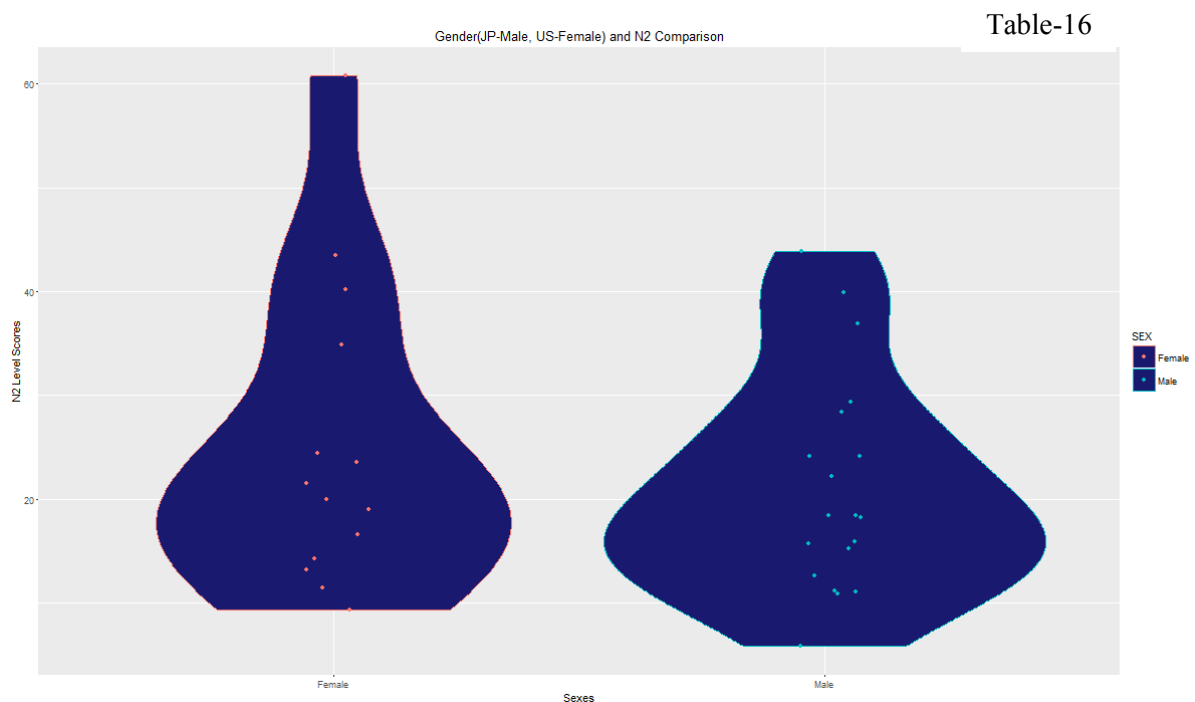
**Research Question 2:** Is there significant difference in the moral development between Japanese males and American females in public relations? (*Question based on the outcome of the respondent data and seeing the dominant gender*)

ANOVA tests showed a P-Value higher than .05, a score of .36 indicating that there is significant difference, and thus no relationship, between countries and genders in moral development.



For the mean level of moral development, U.S. females had a score of 25.2 and Japan males had a score of 21.2. Based only on the results from this research survey, U.S. females have a higher level of moral development.

Table-16 presents an additional view of where the bulk of respondents lie in N2-Score development. The bulges in the graph indicate large pockets of respondent data.



**Research Question 3:** Are there any significant associations or differences in moral development based on rank (manager/non-manager) between Japanese and American public relations?

Survey respondents were asked what rank (employment level) they classify themselves as; Management or Non-Management.

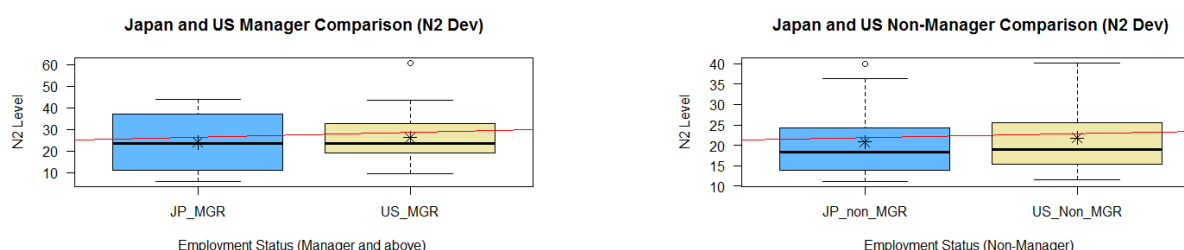
Data was ranked as: 1 = Management 2 = Non-Manager

An ANOVA test gave a P-Value of .68, far larger than .05 indicating that N2-Scores between Managers and Non-Managers are not statistically significant, thus, no relation in moral development levels.

Manager Comparison		Non-Manager Comparison	
Grand mean		Grand mean	
25.3132		21.17368	
RANK		RANK	
JP_MGR	US_MGR	JP_non_MGR	US_Non_MGR
23.9	26.2	20.8	21.8

U.S. managers show a higher N2-Score at 26.2 compared to Japan at 23.9. Non-Managers for both countries show near-similarities in N2-score developments.

Table-17



### Additional Research Questions:

The DIT-2 survey presents additional data that can be reviewed and analyzed such as age, education and political affiliation that can be used to create additional questions. These additional questions could be used to determine why certain answers might exist or provide a starting point for additional research.

**Question 1** – What is the mean political affiliation of U.S. Females compared to Japanese Males? (Question stems from Research Question 2)

Grand mean		
2.606061		
SEX		
Female	Male	
2.86	2.42	

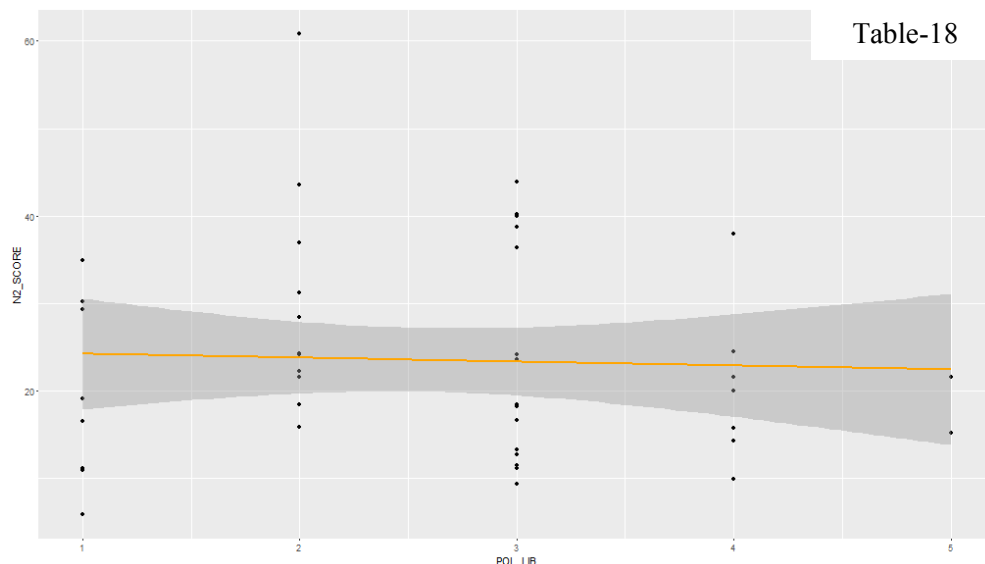
Political affiliation was ranked from 1 to 5; 1 being the most 'Liberal' and 5 being the most 'Conservative'. Previous DIT-2 research (Narvaez, Getz, Rest, Thoma, 1999), (Rest, Thoma, Narvaez, Bebeau 1997), has presented a case, while not confirmed, the higher an individual is ranked towards Conservative, moral judgement scores would be lower. Due to the limited survey size for this research, there is not enough information to draw a conclusion but to look at the differences. U.S. females have a political mean of 2.86 and Japan Males



have a mean of 2.42. This result roughly places both groups in the middle of the political spectrum with little difference.

**Question 2 – Is there a relation between N2-Scores and Political Liberation?**

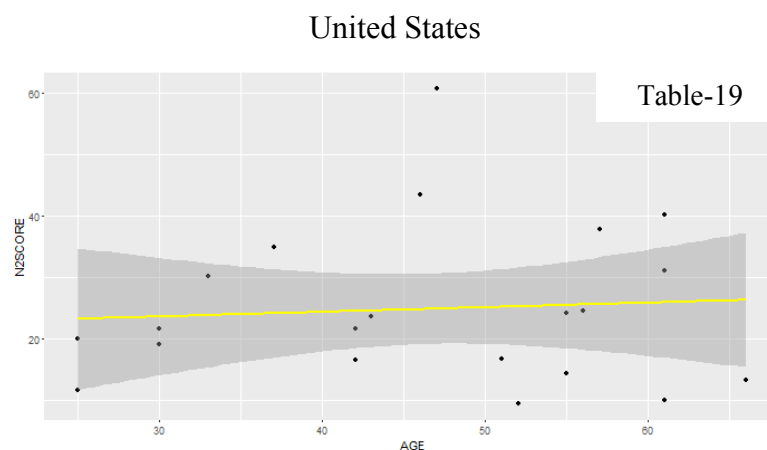
This builds from Question 1 and look at all of the N2-Scores from the respondents and how the respondents ranked themselves politically.

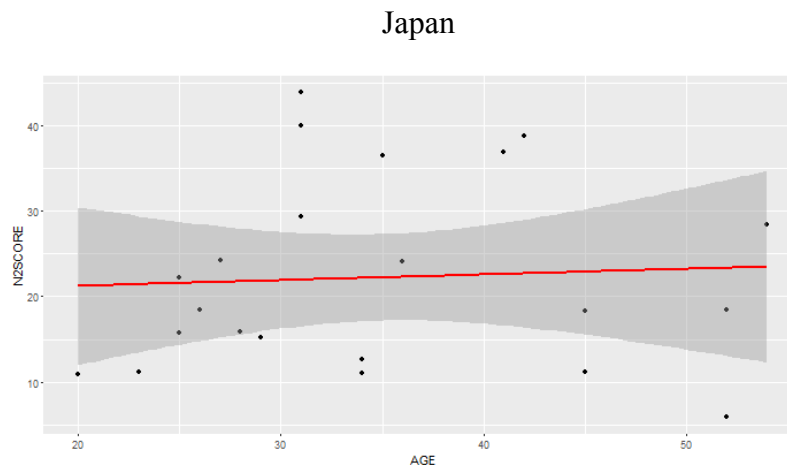


The regression line indicates there is no relationship between political affiliation and N2-Scores, for this survey. However, larger studies may find a link, or not, between these two.

**Question 3 - Is there a relationship between N2-Scores and Age?**

Part of a person's moral development comes with age and experiences. This question looks at a country's N2-Score and the age of the respondents to see if there is a relationship.





The data from these two graphs show a slight, positive relationship between Age and N2-Scores. I.e.: Higher the age, the more developed the N2-Score.

## 6.2 Data Discussion and Conclusion

As this comparison between two countries hasn't been performed before in public relations, differences were expected in the results, but this shows the importance of quantitative research. As expected between two culturally different countries, the United States being individualistic in nature and Japan on the collective side, both with different social structures, produced both significant associations, yet differences in ethical considerations. These ethical considerations are not directly related to moral decision making and development, but the content from this research mirrors that of Lawrence Kohlberg's research and theories.

Some similarities between the two countries were the relationship of educational attainment and the N2-Scores for Non-Managers from the DIT ethical scenario questions. The results for both shows there is a preference towards societal gains rather than individual goals. The differences in N2-Scores highlights the differences of PR practitioners in the different agencies they represent, but also the country. Yet, due to the limitations on the survey output, no 'real' ethical decision maker can be determined between Japan and the United States.

The seniority ranking provides insight to whom makes the ethical decisions and the N2-Score rankings for this group produced association between moral development, education and their time in the profession. As the N2-Score changes from those that are in non-senior positions to those that are in senior positions may indicate more of a concern for extending business contracts and profit, which can then be related to ethics. Issues related to ethics in seniority positions and being tasked with difficult day-to-day decisions may not

apply to public relations researchers and academics that are not faced with these situations. The discrepancy in some of these scores may be contributed to the difference in societal needs and creating a higher ethical need for consideration for others. However, it is the duty of academics and researchers in public relations to train and prepare for the future generations of public relations practitioners. This may shift the ethical judgements over time.

Despite the interesting findings from the ANOVA tests and data, which shows the differences between countries (however small); no concrete conclusions will be drawn from the data. The models used in analyzing the data misses potential confounding variables such as: a respondents family life/social interaction each respondent grew up in, academic status at school and work environment.

The ANOVA results for the analysis of Manager ranked positions shows there may be a preference towards societal gains rather than individual goals. As the N2-Score changes from those that are in non-senior positions to those that are in senior positions, may indicate more of a concern for extending business contracts and profit, which can then be related to ethics. What's interesting is the N2 change for Managers where the US climbs and Japan fluctuates. Aside from this data, the amount of 'industry experience' recorded shows a possible difference in the way PR professionals would handle a crisis situation. This brings about an interesting question, if a crisis was to occur, who would be the one to handle it?

Overall data shows U.S. PR practitioners have a higher moral development rate than Japan. As for job duty, U.S. managers have a higher moral development score, while Non-Managers for both countries are relatively similar. The higher N2-Score would place the U.S. more firmly in Moral Stage 4, Maintaining Norms, while Japan edges closer to Moral Stage 3, Personal Interest Scheme, but still being close enough to be considered in Moral Stage 4. This research has shown who individuals are down to the 'moral level', that's the foundation to build 'ethics' on. Further research could provide insight to who could be the most ethical communicator based on researched variables (education, age, country, gender, etc.)

### **6.3 Study Limitation**

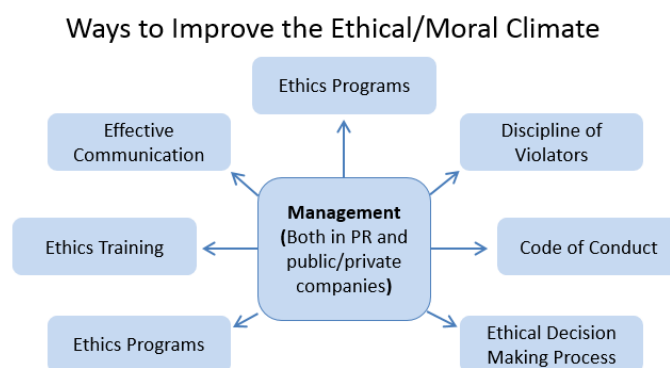
This study should be viewed with caution before considering it a benchmark between the two countries and for the public relations industry. Additional questions could be added to the survey to expand on the amount of information collected and additional attempts, along with time, can be made to collect a larger population of respondents.

In today's Internet and media environment, it is difficult to maintain the attention of an audience, especially for a relatively long survey. Every day demands were most likely the cause of the high rate of drop-outs when conducting the survey. Also, the most important moral stages identified by Lawrence Kohlberg may not have translated to the respondents and what they thought was most important. These differences of opinion, or recognition, would affect the N2-Score and thus effecting the moral development stages such as Stage 5 and Stage 6 – the highest in moral reasoning levels.

Thus, being a self-reported study, there is no way to perfectly analyze all the concepts and practices in use. Besides the correlations and differences identified in comparing the N2-Score data, this information does not indicate that is the way the survey respondent functions while on the job. Being an exploratory study and the surveyed audience was from convenience sample and not a probability sample, the variability in these statistics cannot be truly estimated.

## 7. *Improving the ethical environment*

From the amount of research reviewed and the list of published journals available about ethical research, there has been great progress in the development of theories and production of information. However, ethical research in public relations remains limited, leaving the closest field to it, marketing, and the primary research resource to go to for identifying the differences between public and private, and ethical and unethical behaviors.



As globalization continues, corporations and governments continue to explore ways to introduce themselves to a new market and one of those ways to do that is to contact a public relations organization and introduce themselves through various press outlets. This requires the cooperation of multiple public relations firms: a public relations firm representing the local client, who then contacts a foreign public relations firm to establish relations and represent their client in a new market. The reliance on narrow moral paradigms and theories fails to explain the importance of public relations ethics and their importance to society.

Public relations ethics and social responsibility may seem to overlap but are different due to the issues they address and focus on. Public relations focus on individual and group issues that pertain to their own organization. As individuals, the organizational culture and social relationships play a part in the decision making process. Ethical decisions are embedded in most decision making processes. When it comes to social responsibility, the decision making process is much broader process and can have an impact on all stakeholders, society and foreign markets.

Organizations will specify the norms and behavioral expectations for what is acceptable and unacceptable. This is especially true in public relations when an organization decides on the clients they will represent and work with. The culture of the public relations organization will dictate the complexity of the ethical decisions it will make because it will impede and make it almost impossible for an individual to make a correct decision based on personal interest and beliefs. Stakeholder engagement in public relations can serve as a way to create value for not only the public relations organization but also the represented brand because it improves the relation for each organization for not only during the current interactions but also in the future.

Research conducted by Ferrell and Crittenden (2013) in to marketing ethics brought in insight such as institutional theory that considers values, norms, rules and belief systems as a way to provide an advantage because institutions can be considered as being above individual levels. Institutions can provide structure regulations, conventions and norms to fill in the gaps that may be missing on an individual level. Institutional theory would support the view that institutions are important in supporting an ethical organizational culture whereas stakeholder theory draws on elements of institutional theory that may impact a firm's norms, values and beliefs (Ferrell and Crittenden (2013)).

### ***7.1 Addressing Ethical Issues and Education***

Over the last couple of decades, many organizations have been formed to solve the shortage and promotion of ethics education. Two such organizations in Japan are the Japan Society of Business Ethics (JABES) and The Public Relations Society of Japan (PRSJ). Both organizations provide a place where individuals can be updated on the latest in ethics information and a place where they can be trained.

The Japan Society of Business Ethics is one such organization that has grown from 30 members in 1993 to 480 as of December of 2009 (Mitsuhiro, 2013). JABES goal is to promote and encourage the practice of business ethics. Within the organization, they have

separated their awareness and educational goals in to seven categories: 1) Managerial Philosophy, 2) Corporate Conduct, 3) Auditing, 4) Positivistic Research, 5) Corporate Social Responsibility, 6) Business Ethics Education, and 7) Executive Leadership. Through these groups, the organization wishes to bridge the divide between academia and business practitioners.

In The United States, a notable organization is the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA). PRSA contains numerous training programs for public relations professionals that are available through conferences and online with on-demand courses. The PRSA maintains a Member Code of Ethics that PRSA community members should abide by and practice. The codes are designed to be useful and provide guidance as members carry out their ethical responsibilities in their day-to-day work.

## **8. *Summary***

There is a lot of work that goes in to public relations and managing reputation is one of the important tasks. There is thinking that the reputation management of an organization can have an interpretive approach to managing reputation and communication methods. The end reputation is what the multiple publics say about an organization. This can be either a good or bad reputation which will determine the final relationship. Thus, to maintain good reputation, both two-way symmetrical communication and ethics need to be implemented so management of both the PR and represented organization can behave appropriately and cultivate a positive relationship with their publics.

Recent research in to public relations ethics and communication appears to be making progress but remains relatively compartmentalized and focused within one particular sector. As the global village continues to grow and more businesses are seeking to inject their brand and influence in new and expanding markets, future research should expand on the comparison of different cultures so the gap of misunderstanding can be understood and bridged. The complexity of societal influences will ultimately determine the ethical and unethical behaviors of an individual but will also present a view of the ethics of an industry.

There are various component models available today that ethics researchers' have developed to gauge an individual's moral, ethical, philosophical and beliefs. Few tools have been developed to test an organization's ethical footprint outside of an individual's actions. There has been little research to understand these two entities themselves but especially within a global context and country comparison. For the ethical research of individuals, an organization and within a global context proves to be a double-edged sword for research due

to the amount of quality resources available. We need a better understanding of how ethical decision making occurs within specific business fields and how their roles are interpreted and compared globally.

As equally important, understanding communication patterns and how professions respond to the public. As the research in this paper attempted to show, research in to public relations ethics and communications should include how organizations and groups attempt to manage, address and develop ethical cultures within themselves but also within their own organizations and in training. There is significant opportunity to analyze and evaluate different business fields, globally, to advance the research in to public relations ethics and communication.

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## APPENDIX : PROJECT MATERIALS

### Request for respondent participation

Hello,

My name is Daniel Jones and I am currently a graduate student at Akita International University. My field of study is in global communications and my academic research is comparing the ethical and moral decision making patterns of Japanese and American Public Relations professionals. I am conducting an online survey to collect the data I need for my research (details below). I am trying to receive as many responses as I can from both Japanese and American PR professionals.

What is the theme of the research?

- Primary goal is to test the ethical decision making process between two untested populations (Public Relations Professionals)
- By collecting quantitative data on ethical decision making processes, the analysis allows for additional communication research between PR professionals and their audiences based on ethical judgments.

What are some of the research questions?

- What is the mean level of moral development among Japanese and American public relations professionals?
- Are there any significant correlations between Japan and the United States in moral development in different fields?

Ethical decision making and moral reasoning is being explored as an emerging business issue. The study of ethical decision making of Public Relations professionals between Japan and the United States has not been conducted before.

The survey is called the Defining Issues Test (DIT) and is based on psychologist Lawrence Kohlberg's research. When completing the DIT survey, please remember there is no right or wrong answer. The survey is designed to determine if your decision aligns with your rationale for making it. The survey will take between 18-30 minutes and will be open for the month of September. Your input is extremely valuable. Your responses will remain completely anonymous. I can only see the collected data.

Here are the survey links. Please share this email and/or the survey links with your colleagues or any other individual related to the PR profession. The survey can be taken on either PC or mobile devices.

Japanese Language: [https://qtrial2016q3az1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV\\_ddtm7vCjuw8Y0EB](https://qtrial2016q3az1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_ddtm7vCjuw8Y0EB)

English Language: [https://qtrial2016q2.az1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV\\_6lgXI7ZhvPANzyl](https://qtrial2016q2.az1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_6lgXI7ZhvPANzyl)

Please contact Daniel Jones at email address [I1500020@gl.aiu.ac.jp](mailto:I1500020@gl.aiu.ac.jp) if you have any questions or would like to see the results of the survey and final research report. Thank you for helping me with my research.

Kind Regards,

Daniel Jones  
Akita International University

## Consent form: English

### Consent to be a Research Subject

(Can be printed)

#### Introduction

This research study is being conducted by Daniel Jones from Akita International University in order to test the moral judgement differences between two untested populations – Public Relations Professionals from Japan and the United States. Among other examples, the study will see if there are any significant correlations between Japan and the United States in moral development.

#### Procedures

This is an online multiple-choice questionnaire. The procedure will include answering demographic questions and a moral decision questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of 5 main questions. Each main question has several follow-up questions. There are a total of 48 questions. The whole process will take between 18 to 30 minutes.

#### Risks/Discomforts

These questionnaires have been administered in previous research – administered by other researchers with different topics- to which no problems or complaints have been reported. However, potential discomforts may include uneasiness when answering questions because of its personal nature.

#### Benefits

Your contribution will benefit both American and Japanese society by improving the quantity and quality of moral research available. The study will aid future moral research and assessment as well as communication research.

#### Confidentiality

As a participant in this study it is important that you know that all identifying information about your responses on the questionnaire will be kept confidential. No identifying information about your participation or responses will be reported or revealed to anyone.

#### Participation

Participation in this study is voluntary. You are free to discontinue your participation at any time prior to completion without any repercussions.

#### Questions about the research

If you have any questions regarding this study, you may contact Daniel Jones via email at [I1500020@gl.aiu.ac.jp](mailto:I1500020@gl.aiu.ac.jp)

#### Questions about your rights as a research participant

As a participant in this research study, you have the following rights: 1) Freedom from any pressure to participate; 2) the right to refuse to participate at any time; 3) the right to be told of the results of the study.

I have read, understood, and received a copy of the above consent and desire of my own free will and violation to participate in this study.

---

Name (Please Print)

---

Signature of Participant

---

Date (mm/dd/yy)

## Consent form: Japanese

### リサーチ参加への同意書

印刷することができます

#### 1. 研究の目的

この研究は、国際教養大学のダニエル・ジョーンズによる日本とアメリカ合衆国間における広報の専門家達の道徳的判断の違いをテストする事を目的としています。又、日本とアメリカ合衆国との間における道徳の発達がこの調査目的との有意な相関関係があるかどうかを検証します。

#### 2. 研究の手順

これは、オンラインの多肢選択アンケートです。アンケートにはと道徳的な判断に関する質問が含まれます。アンケートは、主に5つの質問、それぞれの主な質問には、いくつかのフォローアップの質問、計48の質問で構成されています。全ての回答を行うのにおよそ18-30分程度かかると予想されます。

#### 3. 研究におけるリスク

同様の質問が過去のリサーチにも使用されていますが、さまざまな分野における他の研究者によって管理されている為、これまで問題や苦情の報告はありません。しかし、質問に対して個人的な意見を述べることに伴う不安等を感じる可能性はあると考えられます。

#### 4. メリット

アンケートへの協力により、道徳に関する研究の質と量を改善することでより良いアメリカと日本の社会へ繋がります。この研究は将来の道徳、調査又コミュニケーション研究の糧となります。

#### 5. プライバシーの保護と守秘義務

研究に使用される質問の回答はプライバシーの保護と守秘義務の為、チームメンバー以外に報告されたり閲覧されたりすることはありません。全ての書類データは鍵のかかった引き出しに、全ての電子ファイルデータは本研究者だけが知っているパスワードによって保護されます。

#### 6. 研究への参加

このリサーチへの参加は義務ではありません。都合によりリサーチへの参加を中断する必要がある場合は、本研究者にご連絡ください。参加の中断によるリサーチへの影響はありません。

#### 7. リサーチに関する質問

このリサーチに関して質問等がある場合は、ダニエル・ジョーンズに[11500020@gl.aiu.ac.jp](mailto:11500020@gl.aiu.ac.jp)で電子メールを介してお問い合わせください。

#### 8. リサーチ参加者としての権利に関する質問

このリサーチの参加者には、1) 参加へのプレッシャーからの自由、2) リサーチ中の何時でも参加を拒否することができる権利、3) リサーチの結果について知る権利

私は、上記内容を読み理解した上で、自分の意志でこのリサーチに参加することに同意します。

\_\_\_\_\_  
名前 (楷書)

\_\_\_\_\_  
サイン

\_\_\_\_\_  
日付 (mm/dd/yy)