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Sandra Petronio

This commentary sets the stage as the first of several forthcoming articles illustrating the way scholars in communication have pursued translating their research into practice. The translational nature of communication privacy management theory and examples of its application are the main focus of this contribution.

Over the years, many scholars have identified the meaning and function of theory (e.g., Baxter & Babbie, 2004; Kaplan, 1964). However, a point Kaplan (1964) made speaks to the way theory can serve as a vehicle for research translation. He notes that, in essence, theory "is *of* practice, and must stand or fall with its practicality, provided only that the mode and contexts of its application are suitably specified" (p. 296).

   Kaplan's comment sets the ground for understanding the way communication privacy management (CPM) theory was constructed and continues to evolve. The development of CPM has aimed to meet the standard that Kaplan articulated. When a theory is built to be *of* practice, as CPM has been, the theoretical formulations are customized to guide users toward developing translational research. For CPM, the goal is to offer a theoretical perspective that suggests a way to understand the tension between revealing and concealing private information. However, underpinning that goal is the objective of fostering translational research leading to solutions that address critical needs. In other words, the hope is that CPM theory enables us to design research so that findings can help determine how to address a need for change, solve a problem, or create a new system when people are faced with issues such as privacy dilemmas, violations, and trust mistakes. Because translational goals have

Sandra Petronio is a Professor in the Department of Communication Studies at Indiana University-Purdue University, Indianapolis, and Core Faculty in the Indiana University School of Medicine Center for Bioethics. Correspondence to: 5801 Sunset Lane, Indianapolis, IN 46228, USA. Email: petronio@iupui.edu

evolved as a mainstay of CPM, this essay presents the basic principles of the theory and highlights some of the ways in which CPM has been translational.

Principles of Communication Privacy Management

CPM theory is an evidenced-based, applied theory constructed to be translatable into practices. CPM is based on five primary principles formulating how people regulate the disclosure or concealment of private information (Petronio, 2002b).

First, individuals or collectives believe they own their private information. Second, because of their belief in ownership, people feel they have the right to control the flow of private information to others. Third, people use privacy rules to decide whether to open a privacy boundary so they can disclose or keep the boundary closed to conceal the information. Fourth, once individuals reveal, they make others shareholders of the information and presume these co-owners will follow existing privacy rules or negotiate new ones. This process changes the nature of management practices from individually based choices to collective ones. Consequently, if mutually agreed upon privacy rules are developed and adopted, the co-owners of the information are able to coordinate successfully the regulation of the collectively held private information. Fifth, because we do not live in a perfect world, management issues can become turbulent. Turbulence characteristically occurs when there is a disruption in the coordination of privacy rules or when someone's privacy boundary is blatantly violated—for instance, when an identity is stolen. Boundary turbulence often results in mistrust, anger, suspicion, or uncertainty about sharing private information.

These five principles pave the way for us to understand the ingredients necessary to develop translatable systems of practice for privacy management.

Translational Aspects of Communication Privacy Management

Since 1998, there have been many endeavors to illustrate the translational qualities of CPM (Petronio & Durham, in press). Not all have succeeded in addressing every aspect of translation, but the attempts have been a mainstay in applying the theoretical frame of CPM. The chief impetus for making an effort to translate CPM arises out of belief that a theory is only as good as its application. In the process of working toward accomplishing translational research using CPM, we have discovered several important keys to research translation.

Of particular note, to accomplish translations of research, there are guiding pathways that appear to be necessary in the translational process. The first pathway requires researchers to identify problems that could benefit from translational research. The second pathway considers how to understand the fit between need and research application of a target audience. The third pathway represents the utilization of criteria for evidence that fits the needs of translational research endeavors. The fourth pathway is the development of practices representing the translational conversion process. The fifth and final pathway is the delivery system used to communicate the practices derived

from translated research to those who can benefit from the application of findings (Petronio, 1999; 2002a).

Much of the translational work accomplished in the domain of CPM has largely focused on the first three pathways. However, some has pushed through to complete the fourth and fifth paths, such as the CPM study investigating strategies children employed to disclose sexual abuse, published in *JACR* (Petronio, Reeder, Hecht, & Mon't Ros-Mendoza, 1996).

This study on disclosure strategies used by children was designed first by identifying a problem that lent itself to translation and second by considering which kind of evidence was most likely to yield translatable findings. To meet these needs, we initially depended on a quantitative approach, but the results did not appear to address the most critical questions. Since we had collected interview data, we quickly realized that the richest way to learn from these very brave children was to use a qualitative approach. We conducted a thematic analysis using CPM theory as the guiding frame for interpreting these data. The findings of this study were also converted into an accessible check list for teachers and adults to help them recognize the attempts by abused children to disclose their experiences. Since children use a unique logic to disclose, training adults to recognize cues used by abused children seemed critical (Petronio, Flores, & Hecht, 1997). Aside from this approach and other methods of delivery, such as print media, we also talked about the translation of these findings on radio and television shows.

In a number of other studies, the use of CPM positions the findings to be translatable, thereby serving as the basis for application and change. For example, the work on "feeling caught" in stepfamilies illustrates that enmeshed communication boundaries in these families contribute to the children feeling ensnared between their custodial and non-custodial families (Afifi, 2003). Among the many important findings of this study was the discovery that children did not want to be given the main responsibility for managing the flow of information to the other family members. When this happened, issues of loyalty and disloyalty were raised because "disclosure about the circumstances of divorce often forced family members to assume the undesirable roles of mediator and reluctant confidant" (Afifi, 2003, p. 749). Translatable practices are needed to help families address the vast number of landmines that lie in the management of disclosure and privacy post divorce. Afifi has identified a critical place where intervention and delivery systems could help to change the way in which families manage disclosures of private information and reframe these types of communicative roles for both children and the adults to be more productive.

In another example, Allman (1998) depends on CPM to study physicians' disclosures about medical mistakes. Her work highlights the difficulty that physicians confront when they are involved in medical mistakes. She also identifies the need to understand the boundary constraints imposed on these physicians by risk management, legal concerns, and the medical culture. Allman's research clearly identifies a fundamental problem in need of translation. Her research underscores privacy management issues for physicians and will help us find new practices allowing healthcare professionals to cope better with the emotional consequences of

involvement with medical errors. Although additional steps are needed to complete the translation process, using CPM to target this problem helps us to see where changes are needed in practice regarding medical mistakes. Allman advocates finding methods to help physicians learn how to disclose errors in productive ways and lays the groundwork for the discovery of translational practices. The challenge of translation from this research lies in identifying meaningful approaches to train physicians, among other healthcare professionals, to learn the most fruitful ways of disclosing and facing the aftermath of medical mistakes.

Another example explores the application of CPM to understand family privacy dilemmas such as those surfacing from accidental discovery, functioning as a reluctant confidant, or unearthing regrettable information when snooping (Petronio, Jones, & Morr, 2003). In identifying translatable aspects of research on family privacy dilemmas, a fundamental truth grew clear: privacy dilemmas in families cannot be solved. The dynamics are too complex and no right answer can be found that works for the whole family. The translation process, although not yet completely addressed, calls for the development of new practices to teach families ways to manage the fallout of privacy dilemmas, instead of holding out for a solution. Using the framework of CPM, families can learn privacy management skills that help them discern different ways to coordinate privacy boundaries, redefine privacy rules, and make choices about third party disclosures that have a more positive impact on the family as a group.

In our world today, one of the most significant health crises is HIV/AIDS. We only scratched the surface in our book applying CPM to the problem of HIV disclosure (Greene, Derlega, Yep, & Petronio, 2003). However, we learned about several important issues that speak to the translatable dynamics of CPM theory. First, there is a need to remember that when crafting programs to help people increase their willingness to disclose HIV status, a critical key to fostering disclosure rests in knowing how individuals define and treat their private information. Second, a program must take into consideration the criteria that people use to develop privacy rules. Cultural values about privacy are paramount, gender plays a part, motivations are essential, and a risk–benefit calculation is used to reach decisions to disclose or conceal HIV status. In addition, contextual constraints should be taken into account, which means learning when different situations change privacy rules. Third, it is critical to recognize that once disclosure of a person's HIV status occurs, the recipients are viewed as shareholders of the information. This has a significant long-term impact on whether or not people who are HIV positive will disclose again. Making someone a co-owner means that trust is an underlying factor, but trust is fragile in situations where the discloser has made him- or herself especially vulnerable by revealing. Therefore, practices need to be in place that train those who solicit disclosures to understand fully the import of knowing the information, otherwise the practices developed to help will ultimately fail.

There are many other possible translatable practices that can come from the application of CPM to gain an understanding of HIV/AIDS. The most important message, however, is that CPM seems to be a viable way to traverse the complicated landscape of this world-wide problem.

Conclusion

The translation of research into serviceable practices illustrated by discussing CPM theory speaks to a number of larger issues. Most notably, while not all of the projects mentioned executed the five translational pathways, it seems that translational work may be categorized in several ways. First, clearly researchers can both develop studies to be translated and work to translate their own research into usable practices. Second, not all researchers may want to convert their projects into practices that translate their results, or have the skills to do so: however, others may apply the results and translate them into practices for the betterment of everyday life. Third, translation may be accomplished through collaborations between researchers and practitioners. Fourth, there may be instances where training programs utilize or are founded on translational research endeavors. In all, it seems unmistakable that not only is conducting basic research important, but so too is the goal of making the findings applicable for increasing the quality of life, which we have seen evidenced in the use of CPM.

In the commentaries to follow, we will discover other examples of translational work that help us recognize the importance and usefulness of the research our field has to offer.

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