

Public Relations, *I-Ching*, and *Chi (Qi/Ki)* Theory: A New Model from An Old Philosophy

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Abstract: Among the offspring concepts of *I-Ching* is *chi (qi/ki)*. *Chi (qi/ki)* intersects with major East-Asian philosophies to become a ubiquitous and powerful cultural element. The intersection inspires contemporary scholarship in four ways: cosmologically, ontologically, epistemologically, and phenomenologically. This research zeroes in on how some of the epistemological inspirations in *I-Ching* bring forth principles that can counsel external organizational communication, also known as corporate communication or external public relations. To explicate and exemplify the impacts of some *I-Ching* wisdoms, the discussion will employ some *I-Ching* principles as focal points. Specifically, the study will highlight holism, circularity, and harmony as the key ingredients, in comparison with the associated key concepts of public relations principles. The study will also employ some *chi*-affiliated concept such as *shih*, also known as strategic advantage, to construct the new model. [China Media Research. 2009; 5(3):94-101]

Key words: public relations, *I-Ching*, *chi*, *qi*, *ki*, *shih*, strategic advantage, energy flow

As the twenty-first century has ushered in the era of globalization, the importance of communication between the East and the West has dramatically increased. Communication studies relying on the Western orientation has been found inadequate (Miike, 2007). Communication scholars have called for developing global mindset as an approach to enhancing the global communication competence (Chen, 2005). What can the Eastern culture heritage offer to such competence? One of the most impactful ancient philosophies was conceived in *I-Ching*, or *The Book of Change*. Can we extract its wisdom to make contributions to the communication studies and thus globalized communication research? This essay attempts to provide some answers to the question.

Meanwhile, public relations is a discipline fervently devoted to forging global external organizational relationships. Employing wisdoms from this Asian cultural heritage to the study of public relations would provide the discipline of communication studies with new thinking and creative approaches – especially to the studies of globalized organizational and intercultural communication. This study thus attempts to explore the possibility of developing a new model of public relations based on the principles of *I-Ching*.

This essay will first discuss the most widely quoted *I-Ching* tenets that have been introduced into scholarship of social science or management studies. The discussion will be followed by a brief introduction to the newly emerged *chi* theory of communication, which stemmed from *I-Ching* principles. After exploring the fundamentals of public relations, the essay will propose some propositions of a new model of public relations through the *chi* theory of communication. The *I-Ching* principles will be the cornerstone logically laid for the new model.

I-Ching Wisdom and Principles

I-Ching is the fountainhead of important conceptualizations in three major Chinese philosophies -- Taoism, Confucianism, and Buddhism -- in ancient Chinese and Eastern cultures. It inspired numerous theories and concepts both in scholarship and in daily lives. "*I-Ching*," is an abbreviation of the book title "*Zhou I Gu Ching*," which literally means "ancient book of *Zhou I*," with "*zhou*" meaning "circular," "surrounding," "returning," or "revolving" and "*I*" (pronounced as "ee") indicating "change." The change initially referred to *tian* (the "sky" or "heaven") *xiang* (picture)," which is featured by the rotational change of the sun and the moon. Inspired by this natural law of change, the unknown author(s) of *I-Ching* formulated the law of changes in both human or social worlds. Thus "*I-Ching*" is popularly translated into English as "*The Book of Change*."

In the course of more than two thousand years, scholars in various fields and Taoist practitioners have rendered numerous interpretations of *I-Ching* contents and have drawn much wisdom drawn from those interpretations. Among the many principles derived from *I-Ching*, the most popular and the most relevant to this study are *yin-yang* dialectics, the law of change, circularity of *yin-yang* movement, holism, and harmony. They are discussed below.

Yin-yang and Circular Change

The greatest heritage *I-Ching* passes to the philosophy is the cosmological and epistemological perspective of *yin* and *yang*. It is stated in *I-Ching* that "... change and move without residing, circulate and flow to all directions, go to the top and back down inconstantly, and the strong (symbolized by *yang*) and the supple (symbolized by *yin*) rotate." *I-Zhuan*, the

second volume of *I-Ching*, interprets this passage with the *yin-yang* concept. It implies that the strong and the supple act on each other, and change is thus conceived. *Yin* and *yang* indicate two opposite properties of myriad of objects in the universe. And, as indicated by the eight hexagrams, the two properties are rotating, modeling on the law of the moving order of the universe. For example, the summer (*yang*) will be gone, substituted by the winter (*yin*), and then comes back again. An infinite number of things in the universe, including systems in our living organisms or humanities, are constantly moving in this circular track. For example, the powerful tend to corrupt and to be replaced by the powerless. This *yin-yang* typology thus inspires us to view things in two polar opposites and observe how they evolve, rotate, and eventually become their own opposite.

Holism and Harmony

The universe consists of a great wealth of entities, which may be in opposites, contradictions, conflicts, or at least, in contrasts. On a cosmic scale, human beings and the “supreme being” may be two concepts in opposites. Human beings (*ren*) may be against the mother nature or the earth (*di*) in struggling for living. But according to the philosophy of *I-Ching*, ideally all the dialectics or opposites are to be integrated in a harmonious oneness or unity. *Yin* and *yang* are opposites, but they are interdependent with and complementary to each other (Mun, 2000). Such relationship is illustrated in the book *Tao Te Ching*, which records aphorisms of Lao Tzu, who amplified many principles of *I-Ching*, and extolled the unity state almost religiously as shown below:

In olden times, these attained unity:

Haven attained unity,

and thereby became pure.

Earth attained unity,

and thereby became tranquil.

The spirits attained unity,

and thereby became divine.

The valley attained unity,

and thereby became full.

Feudal lords and kings attained unity,

and thereby all was put right.

(Mair, 1990, p. 5)

The unity depicted here is idealistically a harmonious combination of *yin* and *yang* opposites, including human being vs. super being, the nature vs. super being, human being vs. the nature. As Cheng (2004) maintains, the two opposites in one is not only a cosmic system but also a dynamic, complicated, and multiple-level system.

To achieve this unity, human beings need to view internal reflections on personal behavior as an ideal process of self-cultivation. In other words, one's self-cultivation needs to identify with the law of nature, and to ensure subjects matches objects. In a nutshell, the

opposites or contradictions can reach a state of harmony. But how does one reach this state of unity? One major answer is communication. To communicate effectively to reach unity, a statement by Lao Tzu encompasses a simple but heuristic concept: *chi*.

Chi and Change: From *I-Ching* to Public Relations

I-Ching may be the first verbal record which discussed the concept of *yin* and *yang*, but Lao Tzu was one of the early thinkers who promoted this concept. In his widely quoted and cited passage in *Tao Te Ching*, he stated that a myriad of things carry *yin* (on their back) and embrace *yang* (in their bosom) and interplaying the two would achieve harmony. Philosophically, identifying both the *yin-yang* and the *chi* concepts were unprecedented discovery and contribution. Epistemologically recognizing differences is the source of information; without difference, no news can be found. As Bateson (2002, p. 92) maintains, information contains differences that make a difference. *Yin* and *yang* are the maximized difference. Worded differently, difference is a “baby *yin-yang* contrast.” Before information is received, differences need to attract attention. Contrasts attract attention more easily than the mere difference. The greater the contrasts are, the greater the change. The greater the change, the greater the impact or capability that might do a work (moving something or making a change) will be perceived. And the perceived capability, a perceived energy, is *chi*.

The maximized *yin-yang* contrasts, however, produced only one kind of *chi* – the radical *chi*. There is another kind of *chi* which results from the reduced contrast: the congenial *chi*. Taking a practice in public relations for example, when a high tech company stages an event attracting a crowd of ten-thousand people, instead of the normal one hundred, the event, and thus the company and its product, may be bestowed a *chi* by the stark contrast between ten thousand and one hundred. This is a radical *chi*. On the other hand, assume that Bill Gate, the billionaire tycoon, appeared at the event wearing a T-shirt and a smile, holding a hotdog and small talks with visitors, the visitors most likely might feel a warm friendliness. This perceived energy (capable of doing public relations work) from the reduction of contrast in wealth produces a congenial *chi*, as opposed to the radical one. Apparently, both the radical and the congenial *chi* may be desirable for public relations practitioners, depending on the context. (For more detailed elaboration of the *chi* theory of communication, see Chung, 2004, 2008; Chung and Busby, 2002; Isaacson & Chung, 2004.) How this concept of *chi* will facilitate and improve public relations will be discussed in latter sections of this essay.

Public Relations and the *I-Ching* Principles

Like communication, public relations is a process. It is a public aspect of organizational communication.

The “public” includes the internal public (e.g., employees) and the external publics (e.g., the media, the investors, local communities, etc.). This study will focus on the external public relations. The definitions of public relations abounds. The Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) defines public relations as a management function that involves counseling at the highest level and being involved in strategic planning for the organization (Wilcox, Cameron, Ault & Agee, 2003). Rex Harlow, a public relations educator and the original founder of PRSA, reviewed more than 500 definitions, and defined public relations as

“a distinctive management function which helps establish and maintain mutual lines of communication, understanding, acceptance, and cooperation between an organization and its publics, involves the management of problems or issues; helps management keep informed on and responsive to public opinion, defines and emphasizes the responsibility of management to serve the public interest; helps management keep abreast of and effectively utilize change, serving as an early warning system to help anticipate trends; and uses research and sound ethical communication techniques as its principal tools.” (Wilcox, Cameron, Ault, & Agee, 2003, p.3)

Other contemporary public relations scholars define public relations succinctly but partially. Grunig and Hunt define it in as “the management of communication between an organization and its publics” (Wilcox etc., 2003). Cutlip, Center, and Broom (2005) state that “public relations is the management function that identifies, establishes, and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between an

organization and the various publics on whom its success or failure depends. Hendrix & Hayes (2007) treats public relations process as a method for solving problems.

Considering various relatively contemporary definitions of public relations, one can view public relations as a process involving 1) management, 2) communication, 3) relationships, and 4) problems solving. How these ingredients can relate to and benefit from *I-Ching* is seen in the concept of *yin-yang* dialectics in the realm of public relations.

***Yin and Yang* in Public Relations**

There are numerous *yin-yang* relationships in public relations: organizations vs. practitioners; organizations/practitioners vs. publics; management vs. employees; behind the scene jobs (e.g., research, objective setting, evaluation) vs. on-stage jobs (e.g., action, communication, etc.). Even in the practitioners themselves, there are the contradictions between their technician roles vs. manager roles depending on the kind of public relations activities they take on. Reconciling these *yin-yang* dialectics involves many back-and-forth negotiations and persuasions. As Philip Lesly (1973) points out, public relations provides judgment, creativity, and skills in accommodating groups to each other, based on wide and diverse experience. In the perspective of the *chi* theory, *yin* and *yang* need to interplay or to be interplayed in order to achieve the goal – harmony – between *yin* and *yang* (e.g., between the organization and the target public in public relations). Communication plays the major role in the interplay. Yet, as shown in Figure 1, *yin* and *yang* are inter-related and interchangeable.

Figure 1. The *I-Ching* model of public relations process



Note:

1. The ROPE model of process of public relations is incorporated in the *Taichi* diagram. Rope stands for the Research, Objective, Program, and Evaluation.
2. Conducting research, setting objectives, and evaluation of the program are relatively inactive and quiet, thus they are in the dark *yin* of the polar fish. The program is at the communication and public action phase, thus *yang*.

Change in Public relations.

I-Ching suggests that *yin* and *yang* movements result in changes, interplays between *yin* and *yang* foster changes; and the changes not only give life to entities but also bring forth disharmony and harmony. Change is the major theme in *I-Ching*, the *Book of Change*, not merely a book title. Change is also a major theme in public relations. Lesly (1973) made a visionary observation:

Public relations is a bridge to change. It is a means to adjust to new attitudes that have been caused by change. It is a means of stimulating attitudes in order to create change. It helps an organization see the whole of our society together, rather than from one intensified viewpoint.

Lesly's comments clearly indicate the role of communication and public relations in change and harmony of societies. The following section further illustrates such change and harmony.

Holism and harmony in Pub Relations:

According to *I-Ching* principles, when two entities co-exist in an inter-related whole, subjects (*yin*) and objects (*yang*) will be in their best interest if they coordinate and cooperate with PR practitioners and clients, or, even between competitors. A personally observed case well explains this point. I recently attended the wedding of a friend's son in a mid-western city in the United States. He asked a CEO of an international trade company to pick me up from the airport. I later found that the CEO's organization, Company A, is actually a business competitor of my friend's company. However, one of the two companies, when finding itself short of stock, would ask the other to juggle around some supplies to cope with the emergency. Because of the maneuver for emergency support, the two mid-sized companies do not have to maintain a large stock, and they both thus were able to lower their cost to win the competition of other gigantic wholesale companies. In this case, my friend's company (designated as *yin*) and the CEO's company *yang* (symbolized by *yang*) are certainly in two opposing sides of competitions for market share. But their strategic alliance shows their ability to look beyond the competition to capture the big picture of the whole market, a holistic universe for the two businesspersons and their organizations. Such an inter-organizational relationship would not be limited to the two companies. They have to cultivate multilateral relationships to build larger networks in the whole market universe. And one

of the methods is to appeal to the sense of personal commitment. Ten years earlier, before the CEO in this case inherited his position from his predecessor, the predecessor, who was my friend's acquaintance, invited my friend to fellowship with him and the new CEO over a dinner. Amid an extremely cordial atmosphere, the mild type of *chi*, my friend promised to tutor the freshman CEO. Ever since, my friend and the new CEO developed a friend-foe relationship. And, my friend's requesting an airport pick-up could well be one of the ways to foster the amiable *chi* (cordial atmosphere) between them. (Americans who are familiar to the legend of Benjamin Franklin's borrowing books from his foes may be better able to resonate with this example of interpersonal approach to organizational public relations.) This is a testimony that reaching an idealistic harmony, *yin* and *yang* need to interplay or be interplayed to generate *chi*, which is an energy flow enabling relationship to work.

With communication, a congenial type of *chi* (in this case, energy of atmosphere) can facilitate public relations to adhere with *yin* and *yang* counterparts in its dialectics. In other words, because of the need for interdependence or interrelatedness, public relations need to play *yin* and *yang* to achieve harmony. The strategies and tactics of playing *yin* and *yang* will be explained in a latter sector.

Circularity and long-term relationships

Communication process can be viewed in various perspectives in terms of interaction. In the primitive model of communication studies, the linear or mechanistic S-M-C-R model, communication starts from the sender (S), who sends message (M) through a channel (C) to the receiver (R). In the Interactive model, the receiver of the message then feeds back to the sender in a reverse role and order. In the interactive model, the receiver becomes the sender, and the sender the receiver. In the transactional model, first proposed by Dean Barnlund (1970), both the sender and the receiver try to share the same meaning in order to communicate. There is no beginning nor end to the process. The communication partners are both senders and receivers simultaneously. In view of the three models, both the interactive and the transactional models are in a loop or a circular process. As a communication process, public relations proceeds in such a loop. The circularity of the communication process can be illustrated by the popular ROPE model in public relations (Hendrix & Hayes, 2007).

In the COPE model, public relations practitioners conduct research (R), set up objectives (O), according to which programming (P) can be done, and the first lap of the PR process ends with evaluation (E) of the PR project. The evaluation then can provide the second round of the PR process with a feedback. Specifically in the *research* phase, the practitioners identify a client or organization that has a problem or potential problem, which involve one or more publics. In the second phase, the practitioners are involved in setting objectives for exerting influence (e.g., modifying attitudes or behaviors). In the third phase, the practitioners plan and execute a program to accomplish the objectives by using various forms of communication to reach the audience. In the fourth phase, the practitioners use ongoing procedure of program to monitor and adjust. (For details, see Hendrix & Hayes, 2007.) What makes the ROPE process circular is that in the fourth phase, the evaluation stage. Practitioners need to “refer back specifically to the objectives that were set in the second phase of the process and examines the practitioner’s degree of success in achieving them.” (Hendrix & Hayes, 2007, p. 4).

Public Relations is cyclic also because the result of the internal public relations may affect the external public relations, which then affects the internal one. For example, Nugget Market Incorporation in Northern California has not laid off an employee in its 83 years of operation. The company’s successful employee relationship was so successful that it was named by *Fortune* magazine as one of its “top 100 companies to work for” for four consecutive years (*Spirit*, May 2009). The external reputation fostered by the media exposure feeds back to the internal public and can further enhanced its internal public.

Public relations process is circular also because PR issues are cyclic. As Botan (2006) points out, issues “are not absent one moment and then spring into life full-blown the next. Rather, they go through a fairly predictable cycle of development.” (p. 240)

Because public relations is a circular endeavor, it also is a long-term enterprise. With the experiences and the feedback from implementing programs, public relations can then further increase its effectiveness, and its effect can retain over a longer period of time. As Lesley (1973) points out, institutions must function in a human climate. This adds one larger challenge to the public relations, particularly to mobile societies or cultures like those in the U. S. that do not value and cultivate long-term relationships. In this respect, the *chi* theory of communication offers a powerful method of strategic thinking for public relations, which has potential for prescribing a remedial formula, as illustrated below.

Chi, Shih, and PR Strategies and Tactics

Strategy is increasingly gaining its importance in public relations. (One quick indicator is the increasing usage of the word “strategy” in academic articles, book titles, and even scholarly journals). Strategy and strategic thinking are essential parts of the *chi* theory of communication. As discussed in the earlier section, *yin* and *yang* interplay to generate *chi*. *Chi* can enhance power in doing works, including those in communication. Generating *chi* requires *shih*, a term translated into English by Ames (1994) as “strategic advantage.” It is a set up, framework, or embryo which provides the strategic advantage for producing *chi*. Evoking a stark contrast between *yin* and *yang* creates a set-up for generating a radical or intensified *chi*, such as heightened morale, anger, elation etc. For example, telling poverty-stricken (*yin*) groups about the extravagant living style (*yang*) of the rich class arouse anger. The anger is a strong energy capable of inciting a revolutionary war or winning an election. On the other hand, when the difference between the *yin* and *yang* as informed by a message is reduced, the congenial *chi*, or perceived energy, is aroused. For example, when the PR practitioner releases the news about a CEO’s voluntary deduction of salary, which tend to be high (*yang*), the internal and external public, who tend to have lower salaries (*yin*), might feel pleased – a gentle kind of *chi*. The maneuvering of *yin* and *yang*, like sliding a weight indicator on a scale, can generate *chi* by constructing a strategic position, producing a strategic *yin-yang* divide, which is a “*shih*.”

Shih is categorized into four kinds: suck, buck, duck, and construct (Chung & Busby, 2002). They are explained as follows:

To suck *shih* is to ride on external *chi* (the *chi* of other people or organization) to increase one’s own *chi*. This kind of *shih* includes stealing (or borrowing) a famous people’s spotlight to increase one’s own media exposure, to advocate some cause by surfing the tide, to exploit a strong societal value (e.g., patriotism, thriftiness, etc.) when communicating to the public. An example for this strategy would be a tactic of displaying a national flag behind the podium and speaker. In addition to riding on external *chi*, there is “driving” one’s own *chi*. For example, a president of the United States once invited donors to sleep overnight in the white house rooms until the media exposed this practice of rewarding the donors by abusing the prestige attached to the position. This strategy is to increase his influence by “driving” his own *chi* inherent in his political position (a major type of *shih* and a commonly used word in East Asian language).

The second kind of *shih*, buck *shih*, is to challenge the establishment, celebrity, or other strong or powerful figures. The weak fighting the strong most likely will win sympathy, praise, or admiration. The David (*yin*) vs. Goliath (*yang*) advantage goes to the one who is in the

weaker position. This is why a single person can go against big tobacco company, and why Cindy Sheehan was able to challenge Nancy Pelosi in the latter's electoral district in San Francisco and garner many votes in the November 2008 congressional election.

Duck *shih* is the third kind of *shih*. If the opponent is an unconquerable strong power, trend, or value (*yang*), then shunning away may be a wise move for the weak (*yin*) to preserve *chi*. Right after a tragic campus shooting, a scheduled NRA lobby effort and its publicity activities will likely be cancelled. This strategy can reserve energy for future use at a more favorable time.

The fourth *shih* strategy is to construct *shih*. This is to set up a situation or position to create a favorable atmosphere, reception for the speaker or actor to communicate. This strategy ranges from tactics such as tying balloons for a party, recording canned laughter for a comedy, elevating a stage, to creating blockbusters, networking and forging allies before a campaign.

The four strategies -- some can be used at the tactics level -- will boost *chi* to enhance the effectiveness in public relations practices. Although their origins are philosophic, their applications can be strategic and pragmatic.

Toward a *Chi* Model of Public Relations

Based on the *I-Ching* principles of holism, harmony, and circularity, *chi* and gaining strategic advantages (*shih*) for *chi* can facilitate public relations and boost its effectiveness. A new model of public relations thus emerges from the above discussions. The features of this model are shown in the following propositions.

First, public relations needs to pursue changes. The targeted changes are the attitudes of the publics geared toward a greater compatibility with the organizational (or client's) goal. The change targets also include the organizational (or client's) management and employees geared toward a greater compatibility with the public opinions, values, and societal sentiments. The changes can be made or speeded up if the practitioners can expand or close the "attitude divide" by interplaying the *yin* and *yang* elements (or aspects) of the target audience or the message to generate the congenial *chi* or the radical *chi* depending on the needs toward the goal of a PR program.

Second, public relations practitioners are agents of change. When the public relations mission is in its

relative quiet "*yin*" phase, i.e., research (R) and objectives (O), the practitioners' frame of references should be oriented in the publics prompting changes in the "plan research," and "setting objective." During the *yang* (active) phase of program (P) phase, practitioners should yield the spotlight to the organizational leadership, management, or employees. By so doing, the practitioners can be participant observers evaluating (E) the programming from the publics' perspectives. *Yin* and *yang* interplays (e.g., the organization and the public change their attitude) to make changes.

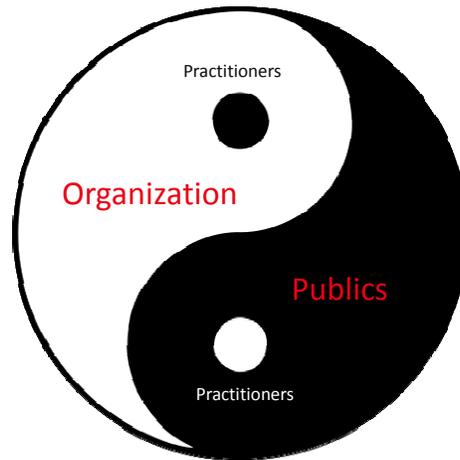
Third, public relations is a long-term enterprise. Just as *yin* and *yang* rotate in their movement, public relations practices proceed from the *yin* (quiet) phase of conducting research, setting objectives to the *yang* (active) program phase, and then back to the *yin* phase of evaluation, which feedbacks to research. If long-term relationships are valued, the cycle can go on even beyond the termination of a PR program. After all, who can easily exclude the possibility of recurrent business relationships?

Fourth, organizations/practitioners and the publics are on an equal and complementary status in the long run regardless of temporary give and take relation, like the two fish in the *Taichi* diagram, embracing each other. Grunig and Hunt's (1984) two-way symmetrical model somewhat captures the essence of this proposition.

Fifth, public relations' overarching goal is to achieve harmony rather than striking a balance. Balancing is political. It implies forthcoming imbalance, as shown in the recurrent and cyclical negotiations, strikes, and settlement, and negotiations between the management and unions. Public relations practitioners' presumption is that give (*yang*) and take (*yin*), strengths (*yang*) and weakness (*yin*), etc. are at most tentative. Any settlement is somewhat tentative, inevitably moving toward imbalance. Their primary goal should be to maintain long-term relationships by embracing a norm of reciprocity with the public. In the perspective of the *chi* theory of communication, practitioners need to interplay *yin* and *yang chi* to develop congenial or radical *chi*-- contingent upon the situation-- to establish long-term relationships.

From the theoretical and the strategic points of view, the *chi* theory provides a framework for public relation practitioners and scholars a new way of thinking based on the old philosophy encompassed in *I-Ching*.

Figure 2. The *I-Ching* model of public relations structure



As illustrated in Figure 1 key propositions of the *I-Ching* model of public relations are as follows:

1. The *yin-yang* contrast between the public and the organization symbolizes their relatively quiet and observing (*yin*) nature of a target public and the relatively vocal, visible, and active (*yang*) quality of the PR practicing organization.

2. Since *yin* and *yang* rotate and switch position, the organization may turn from the active state (*yang*) to inactive state (*yin*), while the public may turn from *yin* (inactive) to *yang* (active).

3. There is *yin* in *yang*, and *yang* in *yin*. The “go-between” mindset of PR practitioners resides in public and the organization at different stage of the PR practice.

4. The boundary between the *yin* and *yang* is fluid, mainly because of the mutual penetration of the practitioners.

5. Because of mutual penetration of *yin* and *yang* of public relations, PR is a holistic enterprise.

6. PR practitioners are change agents

Conclusion

Based on the *I-Ching* principles, this study proposes a new model of public relations through the concepts and strategies of *chi*, the second generation of *I-Ching* philosophy. The model emphasizing change, holism, long-term relationship, and complementary relationships, is a third generation of *I-Ching* wisdom. The strengths of the model are apparent. For example, as Chen and Chung (1994) points out, establishing a long-term relationship requires prevention costs in organizational communication, which is minimum compared to the huge repair costs (e.g., cost of union strikes). Further investigation, however, may find out how cultural and societal differences need to be taken

into consideration for a claim on the superiority of this model. For example, forging long-term relationship may be easy said than done, given the short-term orientation of the economic goal in the capitalist societies, where performances are driven by the volatile stock prices. Even in non-profit organizations, one can expect to encounter hurdles when trying to forge a long-term relationship. For example, in academia, the stock prices are substituted by the number of publication as a means of evaluation. The performances of organizational members are thus evaluated by their next employers in terms of salary offer. Forging long term relationships may be a waste of time and effort for public relations practitioners inside and outside an organization. That said, job mobility has been dropped in recent years in the United States. In addition, the computer-mediated communication has changed the relationship patterns. Social mobility may not be an issue in building relationships. The *I-Ching* model may soon have its way. This model suggests promising opportunities for further research.

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