Do we know what we think we know? On the importance of replication in instructional communication research

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Recommended Citation

communication boundaries. This study demonstrates how using quantitative and qualitative data provides a deeper understanding of student perceptions of instructors' Twitter use.

Calling for greater use of mixed methods research does not diminish the value of solely quantitative, qualitative, or critical studies. However, instructional communication researchers should consider incorporating both quantitative data and voices of students and educators in changing areas of instructional communication research (e.g., instructional technology). The inclusion of student and educator voices in studies that may otherwise only provide quantitative analysis may provide researchers with a clearer understanding of students' perceptions, which can be crucial when considering future research. Thus, in the next five years, researchers may want to consider ways (e.g., including open-ended questions in surveys, providing surveys to members of focus groups) to incorporate and integrate both qualitative and quantitative data into their studies.

Notes on contributor

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Do we know what we think we know? On the importance of replication in instructional communication research

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Replication is a fundamental principle of social science, enabling researchers to verify the accuracy of empirical findings, clarify the conditions under which phenomena occur, and

further validate the social significance of research (Brandt et al., 2014). A recent, systematic project highlighted the importance of replication (see Open Science Collaboration, 2015). Researchers replicated 100 correlational and experimental studies published in prominent psychology journals. From these replications, only one-third to one-half of the original findings were reproduced, and a large portion of the effect sizes were significantly reduced. Further, with the recent call for replications in *Communication Studies*, the field of communication has been taking note regarding the importance of reproducing our work. The field of instructional communication is evolving. Because of this, we believe it is imperative that instructional communication research from the past is replicated. However, a lack of replication research has been published in instructional communication (e.g., Frisby, Slone, & Bengu, 2017). Without replication, our field runs the risk of generalizing findings and forwarding knowledge claims built on an unstable, unreproducible foundation. As such, over the next five years, *empirical replication* is one of the greatest needs for instructional communication research.

First, numerous instruments have yet to be structurally validated, particularly those developed in the early decades of instructional research. Without confirming these measures, results of previous research should be interpreted with caution, and future research should be wary of unexplored structural issues when utilizing these scales. Several notable studies have made evident progress in "revisiting" (Goodboy & Myers, 2015, p. 133) or "reconsidering" (Schrodt, Witt, & Turman, 2007, p. 308) existing instruments by employing a variety of validity tests, but more are needed. To be able to support what we think we know in light of operational uncertainty, existing instructional communication research needs to be replicated. Second, as noted in the recent forum on millennial students, the current needs, demographics, and roles of our students are changing (Mazer & Hess, 2016). Thus, what we knew about students decades ago may not apply to students today, as their instructional experiences and expectations are likely inherently different (e.g., Frey & Tatum, 2016). To corroborate what we think we know about the current student population, research exploring past generations of students should be replicated. Third, the incorporation of new technology into the classroom context has fundamentally changed the phenomena of instruction. Traditional face-to-face variables and models may not be replicable in an online world; the two classrooms are not the same (Kaufmann, Sellnow, & Frisby, 2016). Instruction in a face-to-face classroom may even be substantially different with the widespread incorporation of pedagogical technology tools (e.g., learning management systems). To extend what we think we know about how technology affects the instructional process, instructional communication studies, especially those published prior to the ubiquitous utilization of technology in the classroom, need to be replicated.

As a field, we believe there is exigency for instructional communication researchers to verify if we truly know what we think we know. Rather than relying on individual instances of significance, instructional communication knowledge could be better substantiated through the cumulation of repeated inquiry. Hess (2015) in his editorial address to the "What Exactly Are We Studying" forum states, "the mission of *Communication Education* is to publish the best research on communication and learning" (p. 491). We agree and believe this can be achieved by conducting quality replications of our work.

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Envisioning instructional communication research as a multi-paradigmatic response to neoliberalism's effect on instruction

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Throughout its history, instructional communication research has played an important role in the discipline of Communication. In tracing its lineage, Myers (2010) explains that instructional communication research has focused on communicative behaviors that instructors use with their students to better understand and facilitate affective and cognitive learning. Thus, it has been instrumental in elucidating the ways in which communication influences the messages instructors and students send in the classroom. Instructional communication research, however, suffers from a somewhat myopic view of instruction. Its traditionally functionalist approach largely ignores the ways in which power and hegemony permeate the walls of the classroom and, concomitantly, tends not to address the potential responses to hegemony that it could facilitate (Fassett & Warren, 2007; Kahl, 2017).