

## Dance Artists' Faces in Community Spaces: An Evaluation of 2016 Summer Dance Showcase Hawaii Graduate Internship

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**[Abstract]** This article provides the evaluation of the 2016 Summer Dance Showcase Hawaii Graduate Internship, a community-based arts event, which played a vital role in community development, youth development, and the preservation and advancement of heritage, cultural vitality, and diversity. The showcase offered a performance opportunity to local professional artists, college students, and community members. All volunteers rated their experience as very rewarding or rewarding. The majority of patrons identified the aspect of the showcase they enjoyed the most as the variety of dance styles performed, followed by cost being free of charge, location, and then, event being for all ages.

**[Keywords]** dance, community engagement, culture, diversity, performance arts

### Introduction

Community-based arts events and programs play a vital role in community development, youth development and the preservation and advancement of heritage, cultural vitality and diversity. One must acknowledge the importance of utilizing unique and accessible performance spaces, fostering collaborative relationships/partnerships and the overall impact of community engagement in the arts when creating, implementing and evaluating these events and programs. In the briefing paper *How the Arts and Cultural Sector Strengthen Cultural Values and Preserve Heritage and History*, it is stated that “Planners can be important collaborative players who can facilitate connections among community residents, community organizations, artists, and other stakeholders” (Beavers, Hodgson, and Jackson 2011). This illustrates the importance of the role planners of community-based events and programs play in bringing community members together through facilitating opportunities for collaboration. “The involvement of trusted community-based organizations—such as churches, schools, art centers, ethnic associations, and community social service agencies can be key to the advancement and preservation of culture and heritage” (Beavers, Hodgson, and Jackson 2011). I would add community colleges to this list.

Many community colleges are seeking partnerships with local non-profit organizations to implement community-based arts programs on and around their campuses. Kapi’olani Community College (Honolulu, HI) partners with local food suppliers, organic farmers, businesses, musicians, dancers and visual artists to provide one of Honolulu’s largest weekly held farmers market and arts festival on and around the college’s campus on Diamondhead. The College of Lake County’s dance department (Grayslake, IL.) partners with local aerial arts studio Movement Arts Space to offer community members workshops in aerial arts. The dance department also partners with local high school dance departments to give high school students professional performance opportunities through participation in annual dance concerts. “Using venues such as parks, open spaces, and public streetscapes as places for arts and cultural expressions can be an effective way to integrate history and heritage into the everyday lived experience” (Beavers, Hodgson, Jackson 2011). Many community-based dance events are capitalizing on the value of site-specific performances. These performances often incorporate public spaces in an attempt in part to increase the level of community engagement. The 2015 World Dance Alliance Americas conference culminated with two days of site-specific performances in and around the University of Hawaii at Manoa campus where tour guides escorted audience members around the campus (picking up many along the way) as pop up performances took place in a myriad of outdoor spaces.

### **Evaluand Description/Background**

The Summer Dance Showcase Hawaii was implemented as part of a Ball State University Adult/Community Education (ACE) Graduate Internship. The objectives of the internship were to effectively plan a community education program in the arts and to effectively manage a community education program in the arts. The internship program proposal was reviewed and approved prior to implementation by a department academic advisor and overseen and graded by a department internship faculty supervisor. The evaluand for this project is the 2016 Summer Dance Showcase Hawaii. This program was hosted by Kapi'olani Community College at Maile Theatre in Honolulu, HI. The showcase consisted of two performances and a variety of dance workshops. The showcase offered a performance opportunity to local professional artists, college students and community members interested in dance and dance performance. Dance workshops in Ballet, American Tribal Style (ATS) Belly Dancing, Hula, Improvisation and Urban Modern were taught by performers as a part of the showcase. All showcase activities were geared towards all-ages and provided to the community free of charge with the purpose of encouraging community engagement in the art of dance.

### **Evaluation Purpose/Questions**

The purpose of this evaluation will be to use a concurrent mixed methods approach to gain insight about the effectiveness of the Summer Dance Showcase Hawaii by determining if the objectives of the showcase were met and by doing so determine the value of this program to participants, patrons and the community.

Who participated in this program and what was the nature of their participation?

What recruitment tools were utilized to encourage participation in this program?

What art forms were represented through this program?

Based on this evaluation, what improvements can be made to this program?

### **Study Design/Methodology**

The methodology for this evaluation is based on a Concurrent Mixed Methods approach which draws from the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The strengths of quantitative approaches include an accurate operationalization and measurement of a specific construct, the capacity to conduct group comparisons, the capacity to examine the strength of association between variables of interest, and the capacity for model specification and the testing of research hypotheses (Moghaddam, Walker, and Harre, 2003). The strengths of the qualitative approach include the capacity for generating rich detailed accounts of human experiences (emotions, beliefs, and behaviors) and narrative accounts that are examined within the original context in which observations occur (Guba and Lincoln, 1994).

Online participant, patron and volunteer staff surveys were administered via Qualtrics. Contact information was retrieved from Eventbrite.com patron registration (tickets obtained online prior to performance) and participant registration forms completed prior to participation in the showcase. Survey links were provided via email and text message. A peer review of the showcase was conducted by a BFA graduate in dance performance from University of Wisconsin, Madison and former dance studio owner.

### **Partners**

The partners for this evaluation are the Chairs of Dance at the College of Lake County, a community college in Grayslake, Illinois that offers an Associate of Arts degree with a concentration in dance, a Yoga teaching certificate, and various continuing education and professional development opportunities for dance educators and professionals. The department is interested in providing more community-based arts events to increase the visibility of the program in the community and encourage engagement in the art of dance.

### Sample/Participants

The participants for this evaluation were choreographers, workshop instructors, showcase performers, showcase volunteer staff and performance patrons with some falling under multiple categories such as choreographer/performer or choreographer/workshop instructor. The total number of participants surveyed was 73. Of this number there were 9 choreographers, 5 workshop instructors, 18 performers, 6 members of the volunteer staff and 47 patrons.

**Table 1.1**

*Participant Identification*

Type of Participation	Count
Choreographer	9
Workshop Instructor	6
Performer	18
Volunteer Staff	6
Patron	47

Workshop attendees were not included amongst the participants surveyed due to the fact that registration for workshop participation did not request or require contact information. Workshops in ATS Belly Dancing, Ballet, Hula, Improvisation and Urban Modern Dance were open to the community and on a first come first serve basis. Data of the number of attendees for each workshop was collected through an onsite sign in sheet on the day of the workshops that showed a total of 16 attendees however, not all attendees signed in.

### Participant Survey Findings

The participant surveys provided data about participant demographics (age range and gender), type of participation, participation recruitment, enjoyed aspects of participation, desired additions to the showcase and additional comments to offer a qualitative analysis of the participant experience. A total of 20 participant surveys were completed. The majority of individuals who participated in the showcase were in the age ranges of 19-25 years of age (30%) and 31-40 years of age (30%).

**Table 2.1**

*Participant Age Range*

Age Range	Percentage	Count
0-18	0%	0
19-25	30%	6
26-30	15%	3
31-40	30%	6
41-50	15%	3
51-60	5%	1
61+	5%	1

The majority of individuals who participated in the showcase were female (95%).

**Table 2.2***Gender of Participants*

Gender	Percentage	Count
Male	5%	1
Female	95%	19

The participants in the showcase had myriad affiliations with the dance community, some identifying with multiple categories on the survey. The majority of participants identified as professional dancers and choreographers (50%). The next largest group identified as recent college graduates (40%), followed by those identifying as college students (30%) and then those identifying as community members (25%). (Table 2.3)

**Table 2.3***Affiliation with the Dance Community*

Answer	Percentage	Count
College dance student	30%	6
Recent college graduate	40%	8
Professional Dancer/Choreographer	50%	10
Community member	25%	5

There were many ways for individuals to participate in the showcase with many taking on multiple roles. Of those who completed the survey, there were 18 performers (90%), 9 choreographers (45%) and 6 workshop instructors (30%).

**Table 2.4***Nature of Participation in the Showcase*

Answer	Percentage	Count
Performer	90%	18
Choreographer	45%	9
Workshop Instructor	30%	6
Other	0%	0

The majority of participants performed Belly dance (30%) and Contemporary (30%), followed by Modern (25%) and Hula (5%). Additional descriptions of dance styles and participation were provided and included “I choreographed a contemporary modern piece”, “I choreographed a contemporary improvisation piece”, “Tribal Fusion”, “Improvisation”, “Classical Egyptian” and “Egyptian”.

**Table 2.5***Dance Style Performed in the Showcase?*

Answer	Percentage	Count
Belly dance	30%	6
Hula	5%	1
Modern	25%	5
Contemporary	30%	6
Other	50%	10

**Table 2.6***Other Forms of Participation*

I choreographed a contemporary modern piece.	Tribal Fusion	Tribal Fusion	Tribal Fusion	Improvisation
Egyptian	Classical Egyptian	Improvisation	Improvisation	I choreographed a contemporary/improvisation piece.

The majority of participants heard about the opportunity to participate in the showcase from University of Hawaii system faculty (60%), followed by dance company members or choreographer (35%), dance alliance membership i.e., Middle Eastern Dance Artists of Hawaii (20%), fellow members of the dance community (20%) and then SDSH call for performers notification (10%).

**Table 2.7***Source of Information about the Showcase*

Answer	Percentage	Count
Dance company/choreographer	35%	7
Dance Alliance Membership (i.e., MEDAH)	20%	4
SDSH Call for performers notification	10%	2
UH system faculty	60%	12
Fellow members of the dance community	20%	4
Other	0%	0

The majority of participants identified networking with other artists (80%) as the aspect of the showcase they enjoyed the most followed by performing (70%) and collaborating with other artists (60%). Additional comments were offered including “Seeing the variety of performances”, “low key, low pressure, for the love of performing” and “Sharing my culture”.

**Table 2.8***Aspects of the Showcase Reported as Most Enjoyed*

Answer	Percentage	Count
Collaborating with other artists	60%	12
Networking with other artists	80%	16
Performing	70%	14
Other	20%	4

**Table 2.9***Other*

Seeing the variety of performances	That it was low pressure, low key, for the joy of performing and dancing.	Sharing my culture
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The majority of participants identified the aspect they would like to see incorporated into the showcase in the future as live music (64.71%), followed by visual art (17.65%) and an intermission (11.76%). Additional comments offered included “children’s dance...can bring in a lot of family support”, “better sound system”, “More sound” and “more people participating”. See Table 2.10 and 2.11.

**Table 2.10***Suggested Additions to Future Showcase*

Answer	Percentage	Count
Live music	64.71%	11
Visual art	17.65%	3
Intermission	11.76%	2
Other	29.41%	5

**Table 2.11***Other*

Children’s dance	Better Sound System	More Sound	Children’s Dance, it can also bring in a log of family support	More People Participate
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Additional comments were of an appreciative nature about the event.

**Table 2.12***Additional Comments*

I enjoyed participating in a project that is engaging the community in dance that wasn't just geared towards the dance community.	I think it's awesome! Everyone is fantastic!	<i>Love it!</i>	Nice job!	It would be nice to see more togetherness, introduce dances before the show, have a group warmup, etc. Thanks!
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**Patron Survey Findings**

The majority of performance patrons were 31-40 years of age (27.66%), followed by 41-50 years of age (23.40%), 25-30 years of age (19.15%), 19-25 years of age (12.77%), 61 and older (8.51%), 51-60 years of age (4.26%) and then 0-18 years of age (4.26%). (Table 3.1)

**Table 3.1***Patron Age Range*

Answer	Percentage	Count
0=18	4.26%	2
19-25	12.77%	6
25-30	19.15%	9
31-40	27.66%	13
41-50	23.40%	11
51-60	4.26%	2
61 and older	8.51%	4

The majority of performance patrons identified as female (59.57%). (Table 3.2)

**Table 3.2***Gender*

Answer	Percentage	Count
Male	40.43%	19
Female	59.57	28

The majority of patrons said that they heard about the showcase through performer invite (48.94%) followed by newspaper (21.28%), online media outlets (14.89%), street team flyers (14.89%). Additional comments were provided including "MEDAH."

**Table 3.3***Source of Information about the Showcase*

Answer	Percentage	Count
Social Media (Facebook, Instagram, twitter)	0%	0
Newspaper	21.28%	10
Online media outlets	14.89%	7
Street team flyer	14.89%	7
Performer invite	48.94%	23
Other	2.13%	1

**Table 3.4***Other*


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 MEDAH (Middle Eastern Dance Artists of Hawaii)
 

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The majority of patrons identified the aspect of the showcase they enjoyed the most as the variety of dance styles performed (87.23%), followed by attendance of the showcase being free of charge (42.55%), location (42.55%), and then that the showcase was an all-ages community event (36.17%). Additional comments that were provided included “Belly Dance”, “Each artist tried their best to interpret the dance”, “Convergence Dance Theater performance”, “Upbeat dances/performances and great choreography”, “Scene 4. Excellent performance, absolutely hilarious, witty, charming...super choreography. Would love to see more. Enjoyed #3 Tribal belly dance,” “The light, lovely, cheerful performance by the two girls in the light blue and purple top sports bras: belly dancers-beautiful costumes, alluring, captivating dancers. Actually, I loved all the dancers!”, and “The modern pieces.”.

**Table 3.5***Aspects of the Showcase Reported as Most Enjoyed*

Answer	Percentage	Count
All ages community event	36.17%	17
Free of charge	42.55%	20
Location	42.55%	20
Variety of dance styles performed	87.23%	41
Other	31.91%	15

**Table 3.6***Other*

Belly Dance	Belly dance	Belly dance	Each artist tried their best to interpret the dance.	Convergence Dance Theater performance
Upbeat dances/performances and great choreography	“Scene 4.” Excellent performance, absolutely hilarious, witty, charming...super choreography would love to see more. Enjoyed #3 Tribal belly dance.	The light, lovely, cheerful performance by the two girls in the light blue and purple top sports bras; belly dancers-beautiful costumes, alluring, captivating dancers. Actually, I loved all the dancers!	The modern pieces	Belly dance

The majority of patrons identified the addition they would like to see in the showcase in the future as live music (78.72%) followed by visual art (42.55%). Additional comments that were provided included “Dance for kids,” “Children’s dance,” “Even more cultural variety and larger audience...I like sharing dance with everyone,” “Would like a short intro to the dance piece to explain it,” “More of the community. We have such diverse community in Hawaii it’s a shame to see only belly dancing and modern,” “Nothing, it was awesome!,” “Would like to have more performance at Maile Theater,” “More Tribal style dance,” and “Different types of dance.”

**Table 3.7***Suggested Additions to Future Showcase \*

Answer	Percentage	Count
Live music	78.72%	37
Visual art	42.55%	20
An intermission	0%	0
Other	21.28%	10

**Table 3.8***Other*

Dance for kids	Dance for kids	Children's' dance	Even more cultural variety and larger audience...I like sharing dance with everyone	Would like a short intro to the dance piece to explain it
More of the community. We have such diverse community in Hawaii it's a shame to see only belly dancing and modern	Nothing, it was awesome!	Would like to have more performance at Maile Theatre	More tribal style dance	Different types of dance

Additional comments included:

- Community needs more events like this
- Great community event!
- I think each piece needs to be set up and explained quickly (or in the brochure) to help us understand it
- Enjoyed all presentations! Many thanks! All great choreography and dancing!
- Thank you so very much for providing this awesome event.

### **Volunteer Recruitment/Retention Survey Findings**

The majority of volunteers were 31-40 years of age (33.33%) and 41-50 years of age (33.33%), followed by 26 to 30 years of age (16.67%) and 61 and older (16.67%).

**Table 4.1***Volunteer Age Range*

Answer	Percentage	Count
0-18	0%	0
19-25	0%	0
26-30	16.67%	1
31-40	33.33%	2
41-50	33.33%	2
51-60	0%	0
61 and older	16.67%	1

The majority of volunteers identified as female (66.67%), followed by male (33.33%).

**Table 4.2***Gender*

Answer	Percentage	Count
Male	33.33%	2
Female	66.67%	4

The majority of volunteers identified the nature of their volunteer position as Theater set up/clean up (50%), followed by Lighting Designer (33.33%), Light board operator (33.33%), Photographer (33.33%), Advertising/Street Team (33.33%), Sound operator (16.67%), and Videographer (16.67%).

**Table 4.3***Volunteer Positions*

Answer	Percentage	Count
Theater set up/clean up	50%	3
Lighting Designer	33.33%	2
Light board operator	33.33%	2
Sound operator	16.67%	1
Photographer	33.33%	2
Videographer	16.67%	1
Advertising/Street Team	33.33%	2
Other	0%	0

The majority of volunteers stated that they were recruited through professional contacts (83.33%), followed by through personal contacts (33.33%). See Table 4.4.

**Table 4.4***Manner of Recruitment to the Summer Dance Showcase Hawaii Volunteer Program*

Answer	Percentage	Count
Through professional contacts	83.33%	5
Through personal contacts	33.33%	2
Other	0%	0

The majority of volunteers rated their experience as very rewarding (50%) and rewarding (50%).

**Table 4.5**  
*Level of Satisfaction*

Answer	Percentage	Count
Very Rewarding	50%	3
Rewarding	50%	3
Indifferent	0%	0
Unrewarding	0%	0
Very Unrewarding	0%	0

The majority of volunteers rated their interest in returning to participate in the Summer Dance Showcase Hawaii as very interested (66.67%), followed by interested (33.33%).

**Table 4.6**  
*Level of Interest for Future Engagement*

Answer	Percentage	Count
Not Interested	0%	0
Slightly Interested	0%	0
Interested	33.33%	2
Very Interested	66.67%	4

### **Evaluation of Internship Accomplishments**

An evaluation of the *Summer Dance Showcase Hawaii* designed and implemented by the author was provided by the Graduate Director and faculty in the Adult/Community Education program. Students are afforded the opportunity to complete an internship to apply the skills and knowledge acquired in the classroom to professional practice in collaboration with a business, government entity, or community organization. Lamaiya submitted an ambitious proposal to plan, develop, implement, and evaluate a community dance showcase in collaboration with a community college in Honolulu, Hawaii. What is even more remarkable is that she was able to achieve all of her objectives within the course of the Summer semester. Community planning and mobilization is cumbersome, unpredictable, and requires flexibility and adaptability. She communicated with numerous colleges in Honolulu, via email and telephone. She was able to recruit volunteers to participate and assist in the implementation of the Summer Dance Showcase.

Lamaiya exhibited extraordinary program management skills. She recruited performers and workshop instructors. She marketed the event using social media, word of mouth, and community outlets for promotion. She provided training for volunteers on serving as the technical crew. She secured a location at a community college that provided a professional ambiance for an event that was tailored for and free to the community. She executed the event. She developed and distributed surveys for feedback.

She created an event that was perceived by the community and dance professionals as high quality and needed in the city. She has had numerous inquiries to replicate the event in this upcoming summer. She has indicated that her project has interest from administrators in her place of employment and may be implemented there, in the future. Lamaiya's efforts and outcome were exemplary. (R. Cain, personal communication, April 20, 2017)

### Peer Review

“Based on the survey findings and information presented, the *2016 Summer Dance Showcase Hawaii* appears to have been a well-organized, successful, and beneficial community event. It is obvious from the comments offered by the participants, volunteers, and patrons that the event was well received, and the constructive feedback given in some of the responses points towards the success of the program in that participants seem to want to see additional programs like this one in the future that might contain the suggestions they offered. The many methods of communication that were used to disseminate information about the showcase appear to have drawn a diverse range of participants thus furthering the success of the program in sharing and promoting many styles of dance within the community.” (C. Holmes, personal communication, April 17, 2017)

### Summary

According to data collected, the following trends were found. The majority of participants who completed the survey were female and were between the ages of 31 and 40 however, the majority of participants who performed in the showcase were either between the ages of 19-25 or 31-40, while the majority of patrons were between the ages of 31- 40 and the majority of the volunteer staff were between the ages of 31-50. This illustrates a trend of multi-generational participants interested in engaging in the art of dance. The majority of the participants performed modern dance (contemporary, improvisation) and belly dance (Classic Egyptian, Egyptian, Tribal Fusion). The majority of performers heard about the opportunity to perform in the showcase via UH System faculty members, the majority of patrons heard about the showcase through performer invite and the majority of volunteers were recruited through professional contacts. This trend illustrates the usefulness of word-of-mouth communication with community-based programs. Qualitative data collected showed an enjoyed interest in the variety of dance styles performed with a desire to incorporate dance for children into the program. The same data showed that while some participants enjoyed the sharing of cultures, others desired to see more of a variety of cultural dances represented. There was an overwhelming interest in incorporating live music into future events. Many expressed their appreciation for a community-based dance event and a desire to see more events of this nature.

### Recommendations

1. Based on findings, I recommend that if dance for children is an element that one wants to incorporate, negotiations with institutions about liability for children must take place. This showcase did not incorporate children performing due to liability regulations of Kapi’olani Community College that stated all performers must be 18 years of age or older.
2. Based on findings from members of the dance community in Honolulu, scheduling for performances should take into consideration other community-based arts events so as to avoid scheduling conflicts for performers and patrons.
3. Based on findings it was recommended that identification and implementation of more recruitment tools (i.e., social media) be used in order to reach more segments of the community for participation.
4. Based on findings it is recommended that pre-performance cross-disciplinary networking take place to incorporate other art forms (i.e., live music, visual art).
5. Based on findings it is recommended that incentives be offered to secure a larger volunteer staff.

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## Appendix

### Summer Dance Showcase Hawaii Participant Survey

1. Gender
  - A. Male B. Female
2. Age
  - A. 0-18 B. 19-25 C. 26-30 D. 31-40 E. 41-50 F. 51-60 G. 61 and older
3. What is your affiliation with the dance community? Check all that apply.
  - A. College dance student B. Recent College Graduate C. Professional dancer/choreographer D. Community Member
4. What was the nature of your participation in the showcase? Check all that apply
  - A. Performer B. Choreographer C. Workshop Instructor
5. What dance style did you perform in the showcase? Check all that apply.
  - A. Belly Dance B. Hula C. Modern D. Other
6. How did you hear about the showcase? Check all that apply.
  - A. From dance company/choreographer B. dance alliance membership (i.e. MEDAH) C. SDSHawaii Call for performers notification D. UH system faculty E. Fellow members of the dance community F. Other
7. What aspects of the showcase did you enjoy the most?
  - A. Collaborating with other artists B. Networking with other artists C. Performing D. Other
8. What additions would you like to see incorporated into the showcase in the future?
  - A. Live Music B. Visual Art C. An Intermission D. Other
9. Additional Comments

**Summer Dance Showcase Hawaii Patron Survey**

1. Gender
  - A. Male B. Female
2. Age
  - A. 0-18 B. 19-25 C. 26-30 D. 31-40 E. 41-50 F. 51-60 G. 61 and older
3. How did you hear about the showcase? Check all that apply.
  - A. Social Media (Facebook, Instagram, twitter) B. Newspaper C. Online Media Outlet D. Street Team Flyers E. Performer Invite F. Other
4. What aspects of the showcase did you enjoy the most? Check all that apply.
  - A. All Ages Community Event B. Free of Charge C. Location D. Variety of Dance Styles Performed E. Other
5. What additions would you like to see incorporated into the showcase in the future? Check all that apply.
  - A. Live Music B. Visual Art C. An Intermission D. Other
6. Additional Comments

**Summer Dance Showcase Hawaii Volunteer Recruitment/Retention Survey**

1. Gender
  - A. Male B. Female
2. Age
  - A. 0-18 B. 19-25 C. 26-30 D. 31-40 E. 41-50 F. 51-60 G. 61 and older
3. What was the nature of your volunteer position? Check all that apply.
  - A. Theater set up/clean up B. Lighting Designer C. Light board operator. D. Sound operator E. Photographer F. Videographer G. Advertising Street Team H. Other
4. How were you recruited to participate in the Summer Dance Showcase Hawaii volunteer program? Check all that apply.
  - A. Through professional contacts B. through personal contacts C. Other
5. Please rate how rewarding this experience was for you.
  - A. Very Rewarding B. Rewarding C. Indifferent D. Unrewarding E. Very Unrewarding
6. Please rate your interest in returning to participate in the Summer Dance Showcase Hawaii volunteer program.
  - A. Not interested B. slightly interested C. interested D. very interested
7. Additional Comments