Crisis Communication through Text Message and on Social Media
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**Literature Review**
- Many academic institutions use social media websites, such as Facebook, as a way to keep their stakeholders (students, parents, alumni, trustees, etc.) informed on current happenings.
- This is especially true for emergency communication
- Campus alerts are no longer limited to voice calls and email
- Facebook and text message are now likely mediums because they are frequent channels of communication.
- 73% of people 18 years or older online use social media, with Facebook being the principal social networking site. (Duggan & Smith, 2013)
- Pew Research Center found that 95% of adults 18 to 29 years old used the text message feature on their cell phones. (Smith, 2011)
- Credibility is essential in crisis communication because it will affect how seriously the audience perceives the alert, how it is spread and to whom.
- Lachlan, Spence, Edwards, Reno, and Edwards (2013) argue that if someone repeatedly seeks out particular sources (or mediums) for information, they will grow to trust them.
- Similarly, Lowrey (2004) maintained that constant use of text messaging has resulted in a familiarity that would make it useful during an emergency situation and a favorable channel of communication during a crisis or disaster.

**Hypotheses**

**H1:** The medium or channel used, text message or Facebook, will affect which the first person contacted per medium for each alert type.

**H2:** There was also a significant difference in the perception of severity of the alert.

**Method**
- **Survey**
- **Available sampling**
- **112 students (54 males and 58 females)**
- **Average age: 24**

**Results**

**Table:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alert Type</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Scenario A</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active Shooter</td>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.43</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tornado Warning</td>
<td>Text Message</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active Shooter</td>
<td>Text Message</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>4.78</td>
<td>.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tornado Warning</td>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Percentages per Scenario of the first person to be notified**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Scenario A</th>
<th>Scenario B</th>
<th>Scenario C</th>
<th>Scenario D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Someone Near</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Conclusion & Implications**

**Conclusion**

- There are mechanisms in place that alter the reception of the same message across different mediums.
- Face to Face communication is still an important aspect of crisis communication because in all scenarios more participants would inform the person sitting near them first.
- More research is necessary to understand why more parents or more friends are contacted at different rates for the same alert type in a different medium.

**Implications**

- More attention should be allotted to this area of study to improve crisis communication through multiple mediums.

**References**


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