

Title:

**Crisis communications on social media in cross-cultural setting: three levels of analysis**

Abstract:

Crisis communications research in general has an acknowledged “blind spot” when it comes to cultural sensitivity and cross-cultural validation of its theories and models. The field is driven largely by crisis management practices and consequently dominated by applied case studies. Additionally to that, the leading theoretical approaches in crisis communication are developed and empirically tested on the data originated from the US. However, considering increasing globalization and heterogeneity across nations, a number of scholars call for validation of the theories across cultures and for developing culture-sensitive approach in the area. Meanwhile, there is a lack of clear understanding of conceptual and operational issues for studying crisis communications cross-culturally. The paper looks at a specific case of crisis communication occurring on social media and aims at exploring the three following levels of analysis: the societal (macro-cultural), the institutional (mezzo-cultural), and the audience level (micro-cultural). Taking the macro-perspective the discussion will go around similarities and differences in the societal infrastructure, access to information, Internet penetration and social media use, as well as media systems. The mezzo-perspective will be drawn upon institutional routines, laws and regulations and social media affordances. Lastly, the audience level will be analyzed and I shall discuss what implications values and norms of individuals and their belonging to different risk cultures might have on crisis communications in social media across cultures. The paper is a part of a larger doctoral project I am currently working on, which addresses a number of transformations taking place in crisis communications on social media in cross-cultural setting.

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