



A World in Crisis: The Role of Public Relations

BledCom 2018

25th International Public
Relations Research Symposium

July 5 - 7, 2018 | Bled, Slovenia

Organized by:



University of Ljubljana
Faculty of Social Sciences

A World in Crisis: The Role of Public Relations

Book of Abstracts of the 25th International Public Relations
Research Symposium BledCom

July 5 - 7, 2018 | Bled, Slovenia

EDITORS: Dejan Verčič, Ana Tkalac Verčič and Krishnamurthy Sriramesh



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Ana Tkalac Verčič
Krishnamurthy Sriramesh

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Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Welcome!

Dobrodošli!

Swagatam!

It is our pleasure to warmly welcome you to the silver anniversary of International Public Relations Research Symposium, BledCom. **BledCom is 25!** What began as an annual gathering of scholars and practitioners in public relations and related disciplines to discuss contemporary communication and management problems has blossomed into what it is today. As the oldest conference in our field that is not affiliated with a professional or academic association, we have come much farther than we had expected in 1994! We think we have an exciting, and packed, program over the next three days, thanks to your involvement. We hope you will enjoy contributing to this symposium in multiple ways: making presentations; listening to presentations, interacting with colleagues and friends from almost 30 countries and five continents, and engaging in wide ranging conversations about the field we have chosen for our career.

But please do not let your visit to Bled be consumed with work. We remind you to exploit picturesque Bled to relax and have some fun as well.

Finally, we do hope you will come back next year... and the next... and the next... to engage in scholarship and fun.

Scholarship and fun is what we want BledCom to be for you.

Thank you!

Lep pozdrav!

Namaste!



Dejan VERČIČ, *University of Ljubljana (Slovenia)*

He is professor, head of Department of Communication and head of Centre for Marketing and Public Relations at the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. He received his PhD in social psychology in 2000 from the London School of Economics and Political Science. He is a former Fulbright scholar. He has published over 200 articles and book chapters and 12 books. He is a member of the European Communication Monitor research team, a fellow of the Chartered Institute of Public Relations (UK), a honorary member of the Croatian Public Relations Association, and a past president and a current member of the European Public Relations Education and Research Association. In 2016 he was awarded the Pathfinder Award, the highest academic honour bestowed by the Institute for Public Relations (IPR) in New York.



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Professor and University Faculty Scholar, Purdue University, USA, is recognized for his scholarship on global public relations, corporate social responsibility, and culture and public relations. He has advocated the need to reduce ethnocentricity in the public relations body of knowledge and practice in 7 books, over 75 articles and book chapters and over 100 conference presentations around the world. His rich teaching experiences include teaching at 10 universities in four continents. He has won several awards for teaching and research at different universities. In 2004 he was awarded the prestigious Pathfinder Award from the Institute for Public Relations (USA) for “original scholarly research contributing to the public relations body of knowledge.”



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She (www.anaadi.net) is a Professor of Public Relations and Corporate Communications at Quadriga University of Applied Sciences in Berlin, Chair of the Digital Communication Awards, and part of the core research team of the Asia-Pacific Communication Monitor. She is also part of the organising committee of MediAsia. She is the editor of the upcoming *Protest Public Relations: Communicating dissent and activism* (Taylor & Francis) and the co-editor of *#rezist – Romania's 2017 anti-corruption protests: causes, development and implications* (www.romanianprotests.info with Darren G. Lilleker) and *Corporate Social Responsibility in the Digital Age* (2015, Emerald with Georgiana G. Grigore and Alin Stancu). Originally from Romania, Dr. Adi obtained her PhD from the University of the West of Scotland. Prior to her studies in the UK, Dr. Adi has graduated from institutions in Romania and the United States, the latter as a Fulbright Scholar. Her research, teaching and consultancy focus on issues related to CSR and PR, looking in particular at storytelling and measurement. Social media contacts: Twitter [@ana_ad](https://twitter.com/ana_ad) | LinkedIn <https://de.linkedin.com/in/anaadi>



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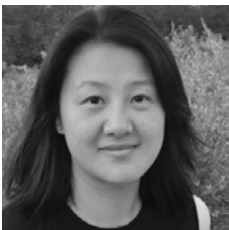
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He is an assistant professor at the Faculty of Journalism, Information and Book Studies, the University of Warsaw, Poland (full-time since 2014, previously straddled business career and part-time teaching). He is also a seasoned public relations practitioner, with vast experience as an advisor to major Polish and international corporations, public institutions and NGOs. He has authored articles, chapters and a book on public relations, communication strategies, awareness campaigns, crisis communication, social media, PR theory, sales and persuasion (in Polish and English), and was a Fulbright scholar at the University of Maryland, College Park (U.S.A.).



Münevver Çağın BEKTAŞ, *Near East University (Cyprus)*

She is Associate Professor in Public Relations and Journalism, acting as the head of departments of Journalism and Public Relations between the years 1997 – 2000. She was the Vice-Rector in European University of Lefke (EUL) between the years 2010-2012. She published "Corporate Communication" in 2009 and her second book, "Interpersonal Communication; Theories and Practice" will be published in September 2018. She has several articles presented in international conferences on Public Relations, Media, Political Communication, Reputation Management, Media Literacy, Social Policies and International Peace and Communication. She is the member of EUPRERA. She is also specialist on personal development programs; especially on 'leadership', 'communication skills', and 'emotional intelligence'.



Guenter BENTELE, *University of Leipzig (Germany)*

He is a professor emeritus for Public Relations at the University of Leipzig, Germany. 1994 -2014 chair for public relations at the University of Leipzig. 1989 – 1994 associate professor for Communication Science and Journalism at the University of Bamberg, Germany. 1974 first academic degree; 1974-1989 assistant and assistant professor at the Free University of Berlin. 1982 doctoral dissertation, 1989 Habilitation. Guest professor at 8 European and two American Universities. 1995 -1998 president of the German Association for Communication and Media Studies, 2004 president of EUPRERA. Author and co-author of 21 books, Editor and co-editor of 28 more books. Author and Co-author of more than 340 scientific articles (public relations, communication theory, journalism and semiotics). In 2004: award as the “PR personality 2004” from the German Association for Public Relations; in 2007 German award “professor of the year”, 2016 honored as “Distinguished Scholar” by EUPRERA.



Shannon A. BOWEN, *University of South Carolina (U.S.A.)*

She (Ph.D., Maryland, 2000) is a Professor (full) at the University of South Carolina, USA. Her research focuses on ethical decision making within the highest levels of organizations. Dr. Bowen teaches and researches ethics across organizations. Her research includes leadership, organizational culture, values, artificial intelligence, and the influence of change on organizational ethics. Bowen is a regular columnist for PRWeek, joint-editor of Ethical Space: The International Journal of Communication Ethics. sits on the Board of Trustees of the Arthur W. Page Society, the PR News Measurement Hall of Fame, and has won numerous awards for her research.



Ben BOYD, *Edelman (U.S.A.)*

Boyd has worked in the communications industry for over two decades. With Edelman, Ben oversees the Canadian and Latin American regions, as well as the global Practices and Sectors, which help to drive innovation and provide clients with deep industry expertise. Ben is also responsible for the firm's signature intellectual property (IP) studies, Earned Brand and the Edelman Trust Barometer, and the use of IP as a driver of insights to inform the firm's strategy and client programming. Throughout his career Ben has managed a diverse portfolio of clients across industries, including serving as the global client relationship strategist on Edelman's work with GE, one of the firm's largest accounts. He continues to work as a senior strategist with a vast amount of clients, including Citi, Heineken, Novelis, Samsung and The Home Depot, to name a few.



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Carolina Andrea CARBONE, *Universidad de Belgrano (Argentina)*

She is a professor, researcher, and director of the Public and Institutional Relations undergraduate program at the Universidad de Belgrano, Argentina, where she is also a PhD student in Political Science. Besides, she is a lecturer at the Universidad Nacional de Lomas de Zamora, the Universidad Abierta Interamericana, and the Universidad J. F. Kennedy, all in Argentina, and she is a guest lecturer at Universidad San Martín de Porres (Lima, Perú). A member of the

Argentinian Public Relations Professional Council, President of the Education Committee, Carolina is also a co-author of the chapter "Public Relations in Argentina: 100 Years of Continuous Growth," published in *Latin American and Caribbean Perspectives on the Development of Public Relations: Other Voices* (2014) as well as the chapter "Financial Communication and Investor Relations: A Latin American Approach" published in *The Handbook of Financial Communication and Investor Relations* (2017).



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She has extensive professional experience in communications, strategic analysis and public relations. Her research focus on strategic communication and the impact of media in society, which leads her to work on public relations, media content analysis, journalistic practices and ethics, risk and crisis communication, cultural industries and audiences of culture. She has authored and co-authored several book chapters and papers in national and international publications.



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During 18 years of public relations work, she created and implemented numerous communication strategies, and special expertise is financial PR, crisis communications, communication in M&A and change management. She held more than 200 media training and coaching of public appearance as well as thematic lectures, such as strategic communication, financial PR and investor relations, media analyzes and evaluations, end all other related. She was a member of the HUOJ Supervisory Board and the winner of the PRO PR Award for promotion and

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She (Ph.D., University of Kent, UK) is an Assistant Professor in Marketing at School of Business, Hang Seng Management College, Hong Kong. She has been working in the education sector for several years with teaching, research and administrative roles. Her research interests include marketing communications, culture and consumer psychology. Her work has been published in the *International Marketing Review*, *International Journal of Advertising*, *Journal of*

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Research Reports, *Journal of Communication Management*, *Information, Communication & Society* and *Chinese Journal of Communication*. Regina is also the research fellow of the Behavioral Insights Research Center of the Institute for Public Relations (U.S.A.).

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An-Sofie CLAEYS, *KU Leuven (Belgium)*

She (PhD, Ghent University & Royal Military Academy, 2012) is Assistant Professor at the Institute for Media Studies at KU Leuven in Belgium. Her research interests include public relations and crisis communication. Her research on the role of content, timing and nonverbal behaviour in crisis communication has been published in *Journal of Communication*, *Public Relations Review*, *Journal of Public Relations Research*, *Journal of Applied Communication Research* and *Journal of Business Research*.



Andrew D. COOK, *Public Relations Student Society of America (U.S.A.)*

Immediate past president, Public Relations Student Society of America, where he travelled around the United States and parts of South America helping to strengthen chapters. Current member of PRSA Global Affairs Committee. Formerly national vice president of advocacy, PRS-SA. Interned with the United Nations Foundation in Washington, D.C., in 2017. Recent communications graduate of Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, where he served as public

relations specialist for the Ballard Center for Self-Reliance in the Marriott School of Business. Fluent in the Spanish language.



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He worked for more than 15 years on many projects in public relations and marketing communications before becoming a professor of communication at the Université de Sherbrooke, where he teaches public relations and marketing communications. His research interests focus mainly on two axes. The first axis revolves around the analysis of communications strategies and the methodology for a communications audit. The second axis is concerned with the study of the professional practices used in the communications industry, in which he co-led

the first comprehensive survey of the practices generally followed in Canada. Professor David is the co-founder of the International Network on the Professionalization of the Communicator, which brings together professional researchers and university scholars from France, Belgium, Canada and Morocco.



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She is a PhD student at the Institute for Media Studies at KU Leuven in Belgium. Her research focuses on nonverbal aspects of crisis communication, and has been published in *Communication Research*, *Public Relations Review*, and *Journal of Nonverbal Behavior*.



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Ganga S Dhanesh is an Assistant Professor in the College of Communication and Media Sciences, Zayed University, United Arab Emirates. She has had experience in corporate and non-profit organizations and has published in the areas of corporate social responsibility and internal relations in books and journals such as *Public Relations Review*, *Journal of Public Relations Research*, *Management Communication Quarterly*, *Public Relations Inquiry* and the *Journal of Communication Management*.



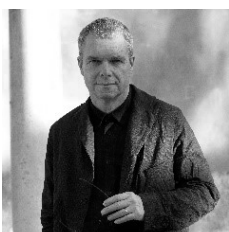
Caroline DIEHL, *INSEAD (UK)*

She (MBE) is Executive Chair and Founder of Together, the UK television channel that inspires audiences to make positive change in their lives and communities. She recently set up the Social Founders Network, and was Founder Chief Executive of the Media Trust until 2017. Caroline is an Entrepreneur in Residence at INSEAD, a Director of the broadcasters' Creative Diversity Network, an EY Entrepreneur of the Year, and winner of the Cannes Chimera and PRCA Charity Communications Awards. She is an avid consumer of arts and culture, proud mother of 2 sons, and ran the London Marathon in 2016.



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She completed her PhD at the University of Waikato, New Zealand and is an assistant professor at the University of Fraser Valley, Canada. Her research interests include investor relations, financial communication, crowdfunding, democratization of finance, and equality. Mai Anh started her career as a journalist and worked as PR manager for multi-nationals before moving to university teaching and corporate training (specialising in communication). She has a Masters of Arts in Communication Management from University of Technology Sydney, and Master of Business (Marketing) from University of Western Sydney (Australia). Mai Anh is an active communication consultant and researcher in PR relations and higher education, with publications in *Public Relations Review*.



Andrej DRAPAL, *Consensus (Slovenia)*

He puts together extremely various studies and professional engagements from the past to present. He was active as publisher and editor in student times. He was widely publicized author of critical essays in culture, arts and civic affairs. He was theatre and film producer. He was cofounder of first and still largest and most respected public relations and marketing agency, Pristop. He founded first professional lobby association in Slovenia. He founded Chamber of professional services of Slovenia. He was member or president of various boards among them president of National Gallery board for 2 mandates and is member of Ljubljana festival program board. He served as consultant for more than 200 Slovenian and international companies. He is member of Manager's As-



sociation of Slovenia and Slovenian Director's Association. From 1998 on he started to develop his own branding and marketing model, Standard Branding Model©. He developed more than 40 brands and business models on the basis of this model since now. Brand I Feel Slovenia is perhaps the most visible result that was developed from this model. His method combines practical philosophy with neuroscience, evolutionary theory, theory of complex systems and liberal economy for advancement of homonism. Andrej Drapal is author of Brandlife (Amazon 2016), How Things Emerge (2008), web resource page www.andrejdrapal.com, and passionate twitter user @andrejdrapal, @adDrapl.



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Sandra DUHE, *Southern Methodist University (USA)*



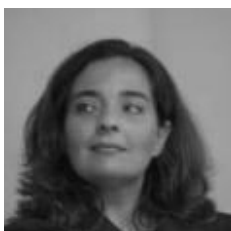
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She works as a post-doctoral researcher and project manager at the Department of Strategic Communication at Leipzig University, Germany. She graduated from Leipzig University with a PhD on the relationship between marketing and PR. Her current research analyses the changing role of corporate communication in the digital transformation. She specialized on the fields of strategic communication, PR theory, interdisciplinary research, and critical communication studies.



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She is a Professor of Public Relations Research at the University of Vienna, Austria. She holds a doctorate degree in Business Administration from the University of St. Gallen (Switzerland) where she also finished her post-doctoral thesis (habilitation). Prior to her academic career, Sabine worked as a PR manager in a multinational chemical company in Germany. In the 1990ies she studied Psychology at the University of Mannheim (Germany) and at the University of Western Ontario (Canada). Sabine's research focuses on the effects of negative publicity and crisis communication, CSR communication, consumer-company communication in social media, and employee communication.



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Has got a master and a PhD in Communications Sciences from Universidade Nova de Lisboa. She is a Coordinator Professor of Pragmatics and PR at the Media and Communications College in Lisbon where she is a faculty member since 1992. She has been director of both the undergraduate and the master program in PR / Corporate Communications, as well as being the Scientific Board President between 2011 and 2014 she is now the coordinator of the PR and Organisational Communications field at ESCS. She has been working, pro bono, as an advisor in Strategic Communication for different non governmental organisations.



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Carolina FALCÃO, *UFAM & Federal Justice of Amazonas (Brasil)*

Born and raised in Manaus, Brazil, Carolina Falcão is a 23-year-old finalist of the Public Relations Class at the Federal University of Amazonas (UFAM). Through her years at the University, she was a trainee on the Communications Department of the State University of Amazonas (UEA), translating the scientific magazine from UEA's School of Technology. After that, Carolina was a social media trainee on an advertising agency called Maice. Now, she currently works as an intern at the Communications Department of the Federal Justice of Amazonas, executing activities of institutional communication, ceremonial and press office. Carolina received her English language qualification when she was 17 years old in 2012 from Cultura Inglesa Language School, where also she worked as a teacher from 2014 to 2015. Carolina currently works as a private English tutor in her free time.



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Craig S. FLEISHER, *Aurora WDC (U.S.A.)*

He is the chief learning officer at Aurora WDC, a 20+ year old intelligence-focused professional service firm out of Madison, Wisconsin, USA. Having first come to BledCom in 1995, he is a former endowed university research chair, business school dean, international and national association president, Professor and scholarly journal editor, he is an IABC life member and most recently its Foundation's Vice-Chair. Craig has authored more than 150 scholarly papers. He is author/editor of 14 books, including several foundational handbooks such as The

SAGE Handbook of International Corporate and Public Affairs (w/P. Harris, 2017), Business and Competitive Analysis (2007, Pearson), and Assessing, Managing and Measuring Public Affairs Performance (1997, Public Affairs Council), ranking among the top-cited Google Scholars in several communication fields. A frequent keynote speaker whose innovative ideas and research-driven methods are part of professional certification exams and regularly validated in dialogues and applications with accomplished executives at industry and association meetings, as well as quoted in prominent business media, he has worked globally with scores of think tanks, associations, public agencies and blue-chip brands including 3M, Alcan, BHP, CIBC, ExxonMobil, GE, GM, IBM, J&J, Levi-Strauss, Merck, Philips, P&G, and the Toronto Stock Exchange, among others.

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Maria is an Internal Social Media consultant at Evolve. She has a masters' degree in journalism, but has always been fascinated with web communities. Maria helps her clients manage the internal strategic dialogues. She provides workshops in which she trains employees to use internal social media for strategic dialogues, and advices on matters of community management.

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Andrea GEVERS, *Ask Afrika (South Africa)*

She started Ask Afrika in 1995. She was motivated by the desire to prove it possible to be simultaneously successful and ethical. To Andrea, business plays a pivotal role in a changing society and she wants the change to be more uplifting than it has been on the whole over the last century. It took dedication to build the company to what it is today - a research and marketing organization that operates in Sub-Saharan Africa for both local and global companies. Ask Afrika is the largest independent South African market research company with international flair that guarantees local relevance and globally benchmarked expertise to its clients. Ask Afrika has fieldwork capabilities in 95% of Sub-Saharan Africa. Andrea is registered with SAMRA and as a research psychologist, with the Health Professions Council of South Africa. She successfully completed the YPO-WPO Presidents' Program at Harvard Business School, Boston USA (2015, 2016, 2017).



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Peter HAAN, *Evolve (The Netherlands)*

He has been working in the world of online communication for almost 20 years. In 2011 he started Evolve: an agency that specializes in connecting employees via internal social media with the aim to improve organizational processes and internal communication. Peter works at Evolve as director and strategist for government and business and teaches various communication courses.

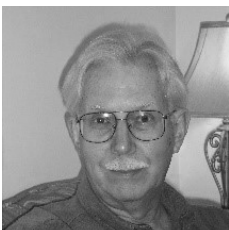


Sarah HALL, *SarahHallConsulting & CIPR (UK)*

She is a pioneer of best practice in the PR industry. The holder of the CIPR's Sir Stephen Tallents medal 2014 for exceptional achievement in public relations practice, she has an established reputation as an ethics tsar and diversity and inclusivity champion. She is a strong advocate of accountable leadership and women in business and believes in helping young talent break through. Sarah is the CIPR's President for 2018 and a regular speaker at industry events. She was the first North East practitioner to become chartered, a status that recognises the highest standard of knowledge, expertise and ethical practice within the PR industry and is a benchmark of professional excellence and integrity. The founder and editor of #FuturePROof, a series of books and community aimed at reasserting the role of public relations as a management function, Sarah co-edited a white paper with Ketchum CEO Stephen Waddington characterising the public relations agency business and another exploring the mental wellbeing of the public relations profession. She spearheaded and has led the CIPR's gender policy work from 2014 onwards and this year launched a joint initiative between the CIPR, PRCA and Career Ready to improve social mobility within the industry.



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Robert HEATH, *The University of Texas in Austin (USA)*



Iina HELLSTEN, *University of Amsterdam (The Netherlands)*

Iina Hellsten is an associate professor in corporate communication at the Amsterdam School of Communication Research, ASCoR, the University of Amsterdam. She has expertise in network approach to communication sciences, social avalanches, and automated methods for semantic analysis.



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Sherry J. HOLLADAY, *Texas A&M University (U.S.A.)*



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Qing Huang is a postdoctoral researcher at College of Media and International Culture, Zhejiang University, China. She earned her PhD in Communication from The Chinese University of Hong Kong. Her research interests include risk communication, information processing, and digital media in everyday life. Her work has been published in *Chinese Journal of Communication*, *Telematics and Informatics*, *Public Relations Review*, and *International Journal of Communication*.



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Flora Hung-Baesecke teaches at Massey University, New Zealand. She is the Vice Chair of the Public Relations Division in International Communication Association and on the editorial boards of *Journal of Public Relations Research*, *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, *Public Relations Journal*, and *Communication Research Reports*. Flora is the 2015 – 2018 Arthur W. Page Legacy Scholar and publishes in international refereed journals. She is Secretary General for Overseas Affairs in Public Relations Society of China and is on the advisory board of International Public Relations Research Conference. Her research interests include organization-public relationships, CSR, social media, strategic communication, and crisis management.



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He is an associate professor at Kyoto Sangyo University, Japan. He is an executive director of Japan Society for Corporate Communication Studies (JSCCS) and Japan Academy of Advertising. He is also active in Academy of Management, American Academy of Advertising, and International Communication Association, among others. He has published many articles on organizational management and human resource development in public relations and advertising. The public relations textbook that he has co-authored has received the Educational Contribution Award from JSCCS.



Takashi INOUE, *Inoue Public Relations, Inc. (Japan)*



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She is an assistant professor in Corporate Communication at the Department of Communication Science and the Amsterdam School of Communication Research (ASCoR) of the University of Amsterdam. In her research, she focuses on strategic communication of public sector organizations, mediatization, and the construction of public debates.



Julia JAHANSOOZI, *Royal Roads University (Canada)*

She is as Associate Professor and Programme Head for the MA in Intercultural and International Communication within the School of Communication and Culture at Royal Roads University, Victoria, BC, Canada. Prior to working at Royal Roads Julia worked at the University of Stirling (2008 - 2008) and the University of Central Lancashire (2001 - 2008) developing a number of double degree and joint degree international public relations programmes. Prior to her academic career Julia worked in public relations practice in both Canada and the UK in both consultancy and in-house roles within the private and non-profit sectors. Julia received both her PhD and MSc in Public Relations from the University of Stirling and completed her BSc in Psychology and Political Science at the University of Victoria, Canada. In 2009 she was awarded the Günter-Thiele-Award for Excellent Doctoral & Postdoctoral Theses. Her areas of research include organization-public relationships and international public relations. She sits on the advisory editorial boards of *Journal of Communication Management*, the *Journal of Public Relations Research*, and the *Journal of Public Communication*.



Jan JAMŠEK, *SŠDMS & University of Ljubljana (Slovenia)*

Jan Jamšek is a marketing and public relations student at the University of Ljubljana and a board member at the student section of the Slovenian Marketing Association. Besides studying, he is also active in marketing and advertising and has experience with organizing numerous events and conferences. His latest work involved leading a 30-member team of this year's student marketing conference Fanfara, which attracts more than 350 students and marketing enthusiasts to listen to international marketing specialists. Currently working at Marketing Magazine as a marketing assistant, Jan's dream is to have his own advertising and PR agency, to lead an inspired and forward looking team of people.

Julliette JANSZ, *Hanze U. of Applied Sciences (The Netherlands)*



Petra-Marija JELČIĆ, *IMC & Quadriga University of Applied Sciences (Croatia)*

She is a senior public relations consultant at Agency IMC in Zagreb, Croatia, where she has been working since 2006. After graduating Business Economy at Faculty of Economics and Business in Zagreb, she started her carrier at TBWA\ZAGREB marketing agency, a member of international TBWA network. In 2015 she won an EACD scholarship for an International MBA in Communication & Leadership at Quadriga University of Applied Sciences, which she successfully completed in 2017. She consults some of the biggest Croatian companies as well as international companies that have their offices in Croatia.



Inger JENSEN, *Roskilde University (Denmark)*

Msc. in Psychology and Associate Professor emeritus in Social Psychology and Sociology at Department of Social Sciences and Business at Roskilde University. Her research focus is on the societal processes that define legitimacy of organizational activities and on institutionalization of managing CSR. She has authored several texts on corporate responsibility and legitimacy, is author and editor of "The Balanced Company" (Gower), and she has recently authored contributions to methodological and epistemological reflections on supervising masters students and is contributor to International Encyclopedia of Strategic Communication. She has chaired EUPRERA PhD seminar for several years and is honorary member of EUPRERA. She has management experience as Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Roskilde University and as member or head of several organizational boards.



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She is Associate Professor and Assistant Department Head of Advertising and Public Relations, as well as Associate Director of the Center for Health and Risk Communication, at the Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Georgia, U.S.A. Her research focuses on the role of emotions and social media in crisis communication. She has authored over 60 journal articles and 20 book chapters. She is the co-editor of the book, Social Media and Crisis Communication (Routledge, 2017). She received the AEJMC's Kriehbaum Under-40 Award in 2014 and is an elected member of the Arthur W. Page Society.

Winni JOHANSEN, *Aarhus University (Denmark)*



Damir JUGO, *Edward Bernays University College (Croatia)*

He (Ph. D.) is the Dean of Edward Bernays University College in Zagreb (Croatia) and an Assistant Professor teaching strategic and crisis communication courses. He is an adjunct professor at the University of Dubrovnik and the University of Mostar and the editor-in-chief of Communication Management Review. Besides public relations and communications research that focuses on strategic and crisis communication, he is an experienced professional in public relations practice and a partner in Millenium PR, the largest Croatian communication consultancy. He holds a M.Sc. in strategic communication and a Ph.D. in crisis communications, has published research papers in various international journals and is the author of two books: Public Relations Strategy (2012) and Crisis Communication Management (2017).



Marc JUNGBLUT, *Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich (Germany)*

He is a doctoral student at Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich. From 2014-2016, he was a team member of the INFOCORE Project (www.INFOCORE.eu). The EU-funded project analyzed the role of media in violent conflicts. Marc Jungblut was a visiting scholar at the Cline Center for Advanced Social Research at the University of Illinois between September and October 2017. Marc Jungblut is a member of the Cline Center's research team in the ResTeCo project

(Responsible Terrorism Coverage) funded by a digging into data grant. His main research interests are political communication, war and violent conflicts, news production processes, strategic communication and quantitative methodology.



Monika KALIN GOLOB, *University of Ljubljana (Slovenia)*

She was born in Ljubljana, Slovenia. From 1986 she studied Slovenian language and literature (as major) and comparative literature (as minor) at the Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana. She successfully defended her doctoral thesis on history of journalistic discourse and style in Slovenian dailies in 1998. Her research fields are Language Culture, Stylistics of Journalism, PR and Advertising, Language Planning and Language Policy. She was a post-doctoral fellow on the invitation by the Bavarian government in Munich, an invited professor on the Faculty of

Arts, Department of Czech language, Karlova Universita, Prague, and invited professor on the Faculty of Arts, Zagreb, Croatia. She works at the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana since 1992, since 2009 as a full professor. She was the Head of the Department of Communication Studies, Vice-dean at Faculty of Social Sciences, and since 2017 the Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences.



Jeong-Nam KIM, *University of Oklahoma (U.S.A.)*

He is the Gaylord Family Endowed Chair in Public Relations and Strategic Communication at the Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication, at the University of Oklahoma. Kim investigates public behavior and its implications for social dynamics from a communication perspective. He founded the Debiasing and Lay Informatics (DaLI) lab, and is currently working to conceptualize the communicative-cognitive interface of lay publics in personal and social problems. His work identifies both opportunities and challenges generated by lay publics

and how their communicative actions either contribute to or detract from a civil society.



Katie (Haejung) KIM, *University of Oklahoma (U.S.A.)*

She is a Ph.D. student in Gaylord College, University of Oklahoma. Her research aim embraces relationship management, with a specific interest in political public relations and employee-organization communication.



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Kim, ABD, is a doctoral student in the School of Media and Journalism at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, USA. Her research interests include public relations, corporate social responsibility (CSR) communication, crisis communication, and health communication. Her dissertation focuses on developing and evaluating CSR messages. She has work experience at the public relations and health communications consulting firm Enzaim Health in South Korea.



Sungsu KIM, *University of Georgia (U.S.A.)*

He is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Advertising and Public Relations in Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Georgia, USA. His research includes public relations, crisis communication, health communication, campaign message effects, and social media interaction. His research has appeared in *Health Communication*, *American Journal of Health Behavior*, *Atlantic Journal of Communication*, and *Journal of Communication and Religion*. His works have been recognized at international and national conferences, including International Communication Association (ICA), National Communication Association (NCA), and International Public Relations Research Conference (IPRRC).

ferences, including International Communication Association (ICA), National Communication Association (NCA), and International Public Relations Research Conference (IPRRC).



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Özgür KÖSEOĞLU, *Ege University (Turkey)*

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Larissa KRAINER, *University of Klagenfurt (Austria)*

Ao. Univ.-Prof. Larissa Krainer: Mag. (Philosophy), Dr. (Philosophy/Communication Studies), Habilitation (2001 Mediaethics, all University of Klagenfurt, Austria), Associated Professor at the Department of Media and Communication Science, University of Klagenfurt. From 2002 on she developed “intervention research” – an inter- and transdisciplinary method. Her research interests comprise media ethics, the cultural dimension of sustainability, the challenges of doing science communication through media and methodological aspects concerning inter-

and transdisciplinary methods. She has published more than 180 articles many of them concerning communication studies, sustainability or intervention research and edited several books and journals.



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Ilia KRUSTEV, *A Data Pro (Bulgaria)*



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Latif is a Ph.D. student in the Department of Communication at George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia. She also serves on the faculty at the Department of Organizational Sciences and Communication, George Washington University, Washington, D.C. Her current research focuses on health communication in diaspora communities and issues of reputation management and its counteragent, character assassination. Her past research has focused on international public relations and the U.S. public diplomacy particularly the role it plays in countering violent

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Ryszard ŁAWNICZAK, *Military University of Technology (Poland)*

He (Ph.D.) is full professor at Military University of Technology (Warsaw), and until the end of 2012 the Head of the Department of Economic Journalism and Public Relations. University of Economics, Poznan, (Poland). He was visiting professor at University of Melbourne (1991) and California State University, Fresno (1984, 1991). He also served as the economic advisor to the President of Republic of Poland (1997 – 2005), and consultant to the Polish Premier (1994-1997). His research interest includes international public relations, foreign economic policies

and comparative economics. He coined the concept of transitional public relations and promotes the econo-centric approach in public relations.



Yeunjae LEE, *Purdue University (USA)*

She is a Ph.D. candidate in Brian Lamb School of Communication, Purdue University. Her research focus embraces relationship management and public behaviors, with a specific interest in employee communication and internal issue management.



Tanya LE ROUX, *Bournemouth University, UK*

Before stepping into academia, Tanya worked as a communication professional in South Africa and the UK. She lectured strategic communication management for 13 years in South Africa before joining Bournemouth University, UK. Tanya strongly believes in combining academic work and practical experience, locally and internationally, in order to benefit both academia and professional practice. She shares her knowledge through international journal articles, book chapters, and conference presentations. Tanya serves on the global evaluators' panel for the IABC Gold Quill Awards. Her research is focused on strategic corporate communication management, and the application thereof within disaster risk reduction.



Fraser LIKELY, *Likely Communication Strategies (Canada)*



Brooke LIU, *University of Maryland (U.S.A.)*

Her research investigates how government messages, media, and interpersonal communication motivate people to successfully respond to and recover from disasters. Recently, her research focuses on the potentially unique roles that social and mobile media play in building community resilience along with factors such as demographics, emotions, hazard knowledge, religiosity, and risk perception. Liu is an Associate Professor of Communication at the University of Maryland. She also leads the Risk Communication & Resilience Research Program at the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), a U.S. Department of Homeland Security Center of Excellence.



Nikolina LJEPAVA, *American University in the Emirates (UAE)*

She is MBA Program Director and Assistant Professor of Marketing at the American University in the Emirates, Dubai. She has more than ten years of international industry and consulting experience in North America, Europe and Asia, in the areas of marketing research, evaluation and online communications. She holds PhD from the University of Belgrade, two Master's degrees: in E-business from the University of Belgrade, and Social Data Analysis, from the University of Windsor, and degree in Psychology from the University of Windsor. Dr. Nikolina's research interests are related to the behavioral studies, cyber-psychology, digital marketing and research methods.



Alessandro LOVARI, *University of Cagliari (Italy)*

He (Ph.D.), is as Assistant Professor of Cultural and Communicative Processes at the University of Cagliari (Italy). He has been a visiting research scholar at Purdue University, University of Cincinnati and University of South Carolina (US). His research interests are public sector communication, public relations, and health communication. He also studies the impact of social media on companies and citizens' behaviors. He's a member of the scientific committee of the Italian Association of Public and Institutional Communication, and member of the technical committee of the European Project "Creative". His works are published in several books and international journals.



Vilma LUOMA-AHO, *University of Jyväskylä (Finland)*



Deniz MADEN, *Ege University (Turkey)*

She completed her PhD in Public Relations at Ege University, Turkey in 2014. After completing her doctoral degree, she carried her research for a year as a visiting post-doc at the Management Department of Bologna University. Her research interests include communication and creative industries in particular fashion and communication strategies on social media such as digital influence. Currently, she is working as an assistant professor at the department of Public Relations at Ege University.



Barbora MARONKOVA, *NATO Information and Documentation Centre Kyiv (Ukraine)*

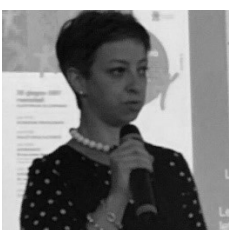
She joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Public Diplomacy Division in Brussels, Belgium in 2006 as program coordinator to oversee projects that aim to raise awareness and promote NATO in a number of NATO member states. As of September 2010, she worked as programme manager for the Western Balkans where she designed, planned and implemented public diplomacy campaigns. In this capacity, she advised several candidate countries

on their national public awareness campaigns on NATO membership. From January to December 2016, she worked for NATO's Press and Media office. As of 1st March 2017, she holds the position of Director of NATO Information and Documentation Centre in Kyiv, Ukraine. A graduate of the University of Economics of Bratislava, Slovak Republic, Barbora is also holds a Public Affairs diploma from the Chartered Institute for Public Relations in the UK. She served as a non-resident Research Fellow with the Centre on Public Diplomacy, University of Southern California and is frequent contributor to the CPD Blog.



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He is a Vice-President for Research and Advancement at the American University in the Emirates, Dubai. Previously, Professor Mateev taught at the American University in Bulgaria and University of Maine. He holds two doctoral degrees – PhD in Industrial Management and Doctor of Economic Sciences in Finance, from the University of National and World Economy, Sofia. He also specialized at Harvard Business School, where he focused on case-based writing and teaching. Professor Mateev published four textbooks and a number of papers in the areas of corporate finance and risk management, international financial management, M&A markets and foreign direct investment.



Letizia MATERASSI, *University of Florence (Italy)*

She is a sociologist in cultural and communicative processes. Since 2017 she is researcher at the University of Florence (Italy), at the Social and Political Sciences Department, where she graduated in 2002 and since then she is member of the research unit on communication, public relations and cultural changes. In 2010 Letizia completed her doctoral studies, deepening the role of ICT's communities of practice in the Italian governments. Her current research interests particularly focus on social and digital changes and their impact on Public Adminis-

trations, on the organizational change management and the relationships between citizens and institutions.



James A. MCCANN, *Purdue University (USA)*

Virginia MCKENDRY, *Royal Roads University (Canada)*



David MCKIE, *University of Waikato (New Zealand)*

Professor David McKie teaches Strategic Communication and Transformational Leadership and has co-authored 6 books, written over 40 book chapters, published over 65 refereed journal articles, and also does research/training on: Action learning; creativity and innovation, emotional intelligence, and futures. For Waikato Management School, he teaches MBA Leadership classes and runs corporate training programmes. Passionate about delivering education with outcomes, David has supervised 14 PhDs to successful completion. As CEO of

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Gabriela MERA, *Today's Business (U.S.A.)*

She is an Account Manager at Today's Business, a digital marketing agency in Pine Brook, NJ. Prior to her full-time role, she was a graduate student at William Paterson University of New Jersey, pursuing her MA in Strategic and Corporate Communication. Her research focus was geared towards online real-time communication. Mera plans to continue to enhance her career in digital marketing with a strict focus on elevating the experience for her clients' audience during on-site events.



Zdeslav MILAS, *Edward Bernays University College (Croatia)*

He (M.Sc.) is the Vice Dean of Edward Bernays University College in Zagreb (Croatia) providing administrative oversight for all undergraduate and graduate programmes, and is a senior lecturer for public relations and corporate communication courses. He is a doctoral student at the Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek and is currently preparing a doctoral dissertation in the field of corporate communications. He is also the head of the Department for Public Relations and a member of the Administrative and Professional Council. Zdeslav

Milas has over 20 years of working experience in various organizations. He is the President of the Croatian Academic Union and Vice President of Education Association operating under the Croatian Employers Association (CEA). He is a member of the Croatian Public Relations Association (CPRA), the European Public Relations Education and Research Association (EUPRERA) and Matrix Croatica (MC). He has published research papers in various international journals and is the author of the first book on corporate communication in Croatian: Introduction to Corporate Communications - Theoretical Approaches and Organisational Models (2011).



Sema MISCI KIP, *Izmir University of Economics (Turkey)*

She is working as Associate Professor at Izmir University of Economics, and chairing the department of Public Relations and Advertising. She teaches courses on marketing communications, advertising, and media planning. Her research interests include marketing communications, advertising, social media, and websites. She has published in *Public Relations Review*, *International Journal of Information Management*, *Global Media Journal*, and *Journal of Marketing Communications*. She worked at Initiative Media (1999-2003) and Universal McCann (2003) for

the advertising and media planning strategies of national and international brands. She has been teaching at Izmir University of Economics since 2003.

Ivana MONNARD (*Switzerland*)

Angeles MORENO, *University Rey Juan Carlos (Spain)*



Danny MOSS, *University of Chester (UK)*

He (PhD) is Professor of Corporate & Public Affairs at the University of Chester Business School where he is Programme Leader for the Chester Business Master's and Co-Director of the International Centre for Corporate & Public Affairs Research. He has played a leading role in establishing Master's level education in public relations in the UK at the University of Stirling and then at Manchester Metropolitan University. He was one of the co-founders of the Bled Symposium and co-founder and co-editor of the *Journal of Public Affairs*, and has authored

and edited over 80 books, journal articles and conference papers.



Judy MOTION, *University of New South Wales (Australia)*

Motion is Professor of Communication in the Environmental Humanities group at the University of New South Wales, Sydney Australia. Judy's most recent research focuses on public discourse and sense making in relation to environmental issues. Past research has included discourse and identity in organisational change, power and resistance in the implementation of new technologies and the influence of public relations on policy formation. Her latest publication, 'Social media and public relations: Fake friends and powerful public', co-authored with Robert Heath and Shirley Leitch was awarded the PRIDE outstanding book award in 2016.

Toni MUZI FALCONI, *Methodos (Italy)*



Paula NOBRE, *ESCS IPL (Portugal)*

She holds a master in Communication and Information Technologies. She has been a lecturer in Public Relations for 25 years now at School of Communication and Media Studies (ESCS) in Lisbon's Polytechnic (IPL). At ESCS she was recently part of the team that coordinates the Public Relations and Corporate Communication undergraduate and has been a member of several scientific and pedagogical bodies at ESCS. She is also one of the founding members of SOPCOM (Portuguese Association for Communication Sciences) and of EUPRERA and has

participated in initiatives to promote the Public Relations field and profession.



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He is an Assistant Professor at the Communication Division at Pepperdine University (U.S.A.). His research interests include digital culture, new/social media and audience engagement. He has several research publications and awards regarding his work on various aspects of new media, public relations and journalism. He received his M.A. from the Missouri School of Journalism and Ph.D. from University of Maryland. Before devoting himself to academia, he worked at Samsung Electronics.



Baruck OPIYO, *Eastern Mediterranean University (Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus)*

He received Ph.D. in Mass Communication and MA in Journalism from the University of Iowa, and undergraduate training from Panjab University, Chandigarh, India. He has practiced news agency and print media journalism in four countries, and currently teaches Public Relations & Advertising courses in the Faculty of Communication & Media Studies at Eastern Mediterranean University on the island of Cyprus. Baruck is a Scientific Committee member of MED-

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Maximiliano ORTNER, *Universidad de Belgrano (Argentina)*

He is a professor and researcher at Universidad de Belgrano. He also counsels several companies and organizations in matters of communications and relationship management. He is a lecturer for several other Universities in Argentina. As a published author he contributed with chapters in books mainly in the PR area authoring a book about Relationships and communication. His professional background also includes positions as senior Vice President in corporate communications and Head of Marketing in reknown companies such as BBVA and

other banking and financial companies.



Tracey O'SULLIVAN, *University of Ottawa (Canada)*

Dr. Tracey O'Sullivan is an Associate Professor in the Interdisciplinary School of Health Sciences, Faculty of Health Sciences, at the University of Ottawa. She obtained her MA from the University of Victoria and her PhD from Queen's University. Her research program focuses on community resilience and upstream strategies to support populations at high-risk during disasters, using an asset-based approach. From 2012-2017 Dr. O'Sullivan held an Early Researcher Award from the Ontario Ministry of Research and Innovation. She is the chair of The

EnRiCH International Collaboration, a multidisciplinary network of academic and community partners focused on community engagement, health promotion and disaster risk reduction.

Frank OVAITT, *Institute for Public Relations (USA)*



Jennifer S. OWLETT, *William Paterson University (U.S.A.)*

She is an Assistant Professor of Communication at William Paterson University (U.S.A.). She received her Ph.D. from the Brian Lamb School of Communication at Purdue University. Her research largely focuses on the ways in which couples and families use communicative coping and supportive communication during times of stress. Previous projects have tended to include a focus on how military partners use resources (e.g., social media) to gain support. Her work has appeared in several outlets including the *Journal of Family Communication*.



Ivan PAKOZDI, *Edward Bernays University College (Croatia)*

He (M.A.) is Executive Director for Development and lecturer at Edward Bernays University College in Zagreb, and is currently a doctoral student in the communication science interdisciplinary study programme at the Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek. He obtained a degree in Journalism from the Faculty of Political Science in Zagreb. He is a member of Communications and Public Relations Committee at the Croatian Council of Universities and University Colleges of Applied Sciences. He has 10 years of working experience as a PR consultant at Millenium PR, the largest Croatian communication consultancy. He was a member of the first generation of graduates from Matrix Croatica's Communication Sciences School.



Sónia PEDRO SEBASTIÃO, *ISCSP, University of Lisbon (Portugal)*

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She currently serves as the Associate Dean of the College of Communication and Media Sciences at Zayed University in the United Arab Emirates. Her academic expertise focuses on public relations, strategic communication, internal communication, CSR, organizational diversity, and global virtual teams. Her works appear in *Public Relations Review*, *Journal of Middle East Media*, *Middle East Journal of Culture and Communication*, and *Public Relations Journal*. She serves on the board of the GlobCom Institute and is an active member of the Middle East

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Mirela POLIĆ, *IMC (Croatia)*

She is a PhD candidate at the Faculty of Humanity and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb. After she had obtained master degree in public relations and political communication at the Faculty of Political Sciences (University of Zagreb), Mirela began her career in public relations as a PR advisor at agency IMC. Working for clients from different sectors, she designed and implemented numerous communication strategies public relations campaigns. Combining her practical and theoretical knowledge, Mirela contributes to the development of academic public relations studies by bringing the new ideas as well as conducting scientific researches.



Melani PRINSLOO, *Infusion (South Africa)*

She is currently the director and owner of Infusion – a research and business platform. Their clients include a range of private and public institutions including Standard Bank, FNB, Momentum, Sanlam, Metropolitan, Shoprite, Vodacom, MicroSoft, MultiChoice, Media 24, Department of Science and Technology, Department of Basic Education, SAP and more. While doing bespoke research one of their key projects aims to address the shortage of reliable, detailed information on under-developed yet, developing markets. The information is used to guide decision-making, whether that be of business players, social players or governments but more than that the information is used to guide (and further investigate) self-directed development in under-developed areas. As part of making information more available to more stakeholders and communities, Melani also heads up The Centre for Democratising Information (CDI) as well as Infusion Retail. As a lecturer, Mélani mostly teaches on various courses relating to marketing and customer/stakeholder relationship management at various institutions in South Africa where annually also working at business schools in Europe.



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PhD in Communication Sciences from ISCTE-IUL, has got a Degree and a Master in Public Relations and Corporate Communication from the Media and Communications College in Lisbon. She has worked as a communication manager in different organizations from the public and private sector in Portugal. Trainer, consultant and researcher in the area of strategic communication and Public Relations. Specialist in strategic communication and Internal Communication. Professor at the Media and Communications College in Lisbon.



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Kevin is the CEO, and founding director, of London based strategic PR consultancy, Pembroke and Rye. Over two decades in leading consultancies, he has worked with global market leaders and challengers in financial and professional services, FMCG, technology and energy. He specialises in strategic planning, delivering powerful narratives, developing thought leadership platforms and board level executive coaching. He is a visiting fellow in the business school at the University of Greenwich, a fellow of the Chartered Institute of Public Relations and the RSA.

His academic interests include new business pitching, NGO and Corporate partnerships, creativity and integrated communications.



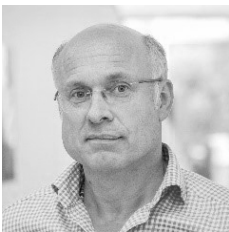
Bryan H. REBER, *University of Georgia (U.S.A.)*

He earned a Ph.D. in journalism from the University of Missouri, Columbia (2001). He is Department Head of Advertising and Public Relations and the C. Richard Yarbrough Professor of Crisis Communication Leadership at the University of Georgia, Athens, USA. His research focuses on public relations and crisis communication. He has published more than 50 journal articles, book chapters and encyclopedia entries on public relations topics and is the author of best-selling textbooks. Dr. Reber is a member of the Arthur W. Page Society and is on the board of directors of the Plank Center for Leadership in Public Relations.



Ronél RENSBURG, *University of Pretoria (South Africa)*

She is a professor in the Communication Management Division at the University of Pretoria. She is a founding member and current coordinator of the Centre for Communication and Reputation Management (CCRM). She is a past President of the Public Relations Institute of Southern Africa (PRISA), previous board member of the Global Alliance for Public Relations and Communication Management (GA), a member of inter alia the International Communication Association (ICA), International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) and the Southern African Communication Association (SACOMM). She holds a B-rating from the National Research Foundation (NRF) since 2013. She has been guest editor for the International Journal of Public Affairs (2011) and Public Relations Review (2014) and serves on the editorial boards of five accredited journals in the field of public relations and communication management. She is currently editing two books for subject specialists in the areas of corporate communication and reputation management and revising a publication on grassroots public relations in South Africa. She received the Fellowship of PRISA in 2016.



Hans RUIJGERS, *KWR Watercycle Research Institute (The Netherlands)*

He is communications manager at KWR Watercycle Research Institute in the Netherlands. He is responsible for brand management and corporate communications. As a creative strategist, he advises KWR's management team about corporate identity, public relations, and the organisation-wide switch to digital collaboration. Previous comms employments: Polytechnic Zwolle, Utrecht University, communications agency DST. Following a Master's in Public Relations & Mass Communications, he started his career in 1990 at the Dutch natural gas company Gasunie. Hans is a member of EACD. As an early adopter and 'out of the box' thinker he enjoys sharing his experience and knowledge with professionals and students. Twitter @hansruijgers.



Harri RUOSLAHTI, *Laurea University of Applied Sciences (Finland)*

He is a Senior Lecturer at Laurea University of Applied Sciences (Espoo, Finland), dividing his time between teaching, and research and innovation projects. He has a Master of Arts in Communication from Pepperdine University (California, USA); and is currently studying co-creation in multi-stakeholder settings at the University of Jyväskylä (Finland). Harri is the founder of Ahkera Smart Tech, a Finnish company offering innovative fully automated baggage and air cargo handling solutions, which are based on his experience in the ground handling industry. Harri has worked in executive development, and in sales. Harri began his career in the Finnish Coast Guard.



Christopher RUPPEL, *University of Vienna (Austria)*

He is a research scholar and doctoral candidate at the University of Vienna's Department of Communication. Prior to this appointment he worked as a research scholar at Johannes Gutenberg-University Mainz, Germany where he also finished his master's degree in communication with a minor in economics. His research interests comprise corporate branding, consumer (dis)identification as well as corporate social responsibility.



Sergei A. SAMOILENKO, *George Mason University (U.S.A.)*

He is a public relations instructor in the Department of Communication at George Mason University. He is the past president of the Eurasian Communication Association of North America (<https://eurasianresearchers.com/>). His professional service is focused on bridging academic and professional communities in the areas of crisis communication, public relations and Eurasian studies. He developed and held numerous workshops and webinars on strategic communication in the US and internationally. Sergei's new research focuses on issues in character assassination and reputation management in public relations. For additional information contact the author at sergeisamoilenko@gmail.com or visit his page at <https://gmu.academia.edu/SergeiSamoilenko>.



Karen SANDERS, *St Mary's University (UK)*



Gábor SARLÓS, *RMIT (Vietnam)*

He is a senior lecturer in Public Relations, and Discipline Lead, Communication at RMIT Vietnam. Previously he held similar positions in Wolverhampton and in Worcester (UK) and in Budapest (Hungary). He has an MSc in Economics from Corvinus University and PhD in Sociology from Eötvös Loránd University of Sciences, Budapest (Thesis: Risk and Benefit Perceptions in Communication Narratives of Nuclear Energy in Hungary). His professional career covers development and execution of full range communication campaigns and of communication strategies. His prime interest is in the development of sustainability communication models viable from both academic and professional perspectives.

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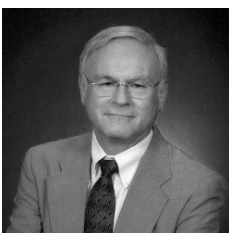
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Professor and University Faculty Scholar, Purdue University, USA, is recognized for his scholarship on global public relations, corporate social responsibility, and culture and public relations. He has advocated the need to reduce ethnocentricity in the public relations body of knowledge and practice in 7 books, over 75 articles and book chapters and over 100 conference presentations around the world. His rich teaching experiences include teaching at 10 universities in four continents. He has won several awards for teaching and research at different universities. In 2004 he was awarded the prestigious Pathfinder Award from the Institute for Public Relations (U.S.A.) for "original scholarly research contributing to the public relations body of knowledge."



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He is a Professor and Director of the Public Relations Program in the School of Communication at the University of Miami, Coral Gables, Florida. Stacks has written more than 200 scholarly articles, chapters and papers. Stacks was elected as a Eastern Communication Association "Distinguished Research Fellow" and "Distinguished Teaching Fellow" and was inducted into the Institute for Public Relations first "Research Fellows" class. Stacks has authored or co-authored eight books on communication topics, to include the award winning *Primer of Public Relations Research*, the National Communication Association's PRIDE award and was named the Measurement Standard's "measurement tool" for 2003. He was inducted into the PRNews Measurement Hall of Fame in 2012. Stacks is currently the editor of *Communication Research Reports*.



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He is an independent consultant and researcher in the areas of media intelligence and public communication. Previously he led strategic business development at LexisNexis Business Insight Solutions (BIS). Prior to joining LexisNexis, he was group director and global analytics lead at W2O Group, and managing director at Report International (now CARMA). Originally from Germany, Thomas has been living and working in London since 2000, and enjoys traveling and learning about the world, both for business, and pleasure. Forever a digital Neanderthal among digital natives, he is keenly aware that adequate solutions to business communication problems demand fluency in the three languages of humans, machines, and business. Thomas hosts the SmallDataForum podcast, together with Neville Hobson and Sam Knowles. He is also the co-chair of the Institute for Public Relations Measurement Commission, editorial advisory board member of the Public Relations Journal, and a jury member of the Digital Communication Awards, hosted by Quadriga University Berlin. Social media contacts: Twitter @thomasstoeckle1 | LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/in/thomasstoeckle/>

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He worked in corporate, financial and technology public relations for 15 years, including a spell at London-based Citigate Dewe Rogerson which acquired an agency he founded in 1997. He then served as director of marketing and communications at Investia, a City brokerage and investment fund software business and its JPMorgan FundsHub joint venture. He joined London Metropolitan Business School (LMBS) in 2006 as a senior lecturer. In October 2013, he joined University of the Arts London as a senior lecturer in marketing and communications. Gareth Thompson has a BSc from the University of London (University College London), MBA from University of Cambridge (Trinity Hall,) and a PGCert (Postgraduate Certificate).



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Margalit TOLEDANO, *University of Waikato (New Zealand)*

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Selin TÜRKEL, *Izmir University of Economics (Turkey)*

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Relations Review, Industrial Marketing Management, Journal of Marketing Communications, International Journal of Information Management, and Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management. She is the co-editor of Integrated Communication in Post-Modern Era with Prof. Dr. Philip J. Kitchen. She also has published many chapters in different international books. She teaches courses on Principles of Public Relations, Marketing Communications, Communication Campaign Design, Senior Project, and Brand Management. Her research interests include integrated marketing communications, brand communications, corporate communication, and social media implementations. Before her academic career, she worked at several national and international companies as a marketing communication specialist and product manager for 12 years.



Chiara VALENTINI, *Aarhus University (Denmark)*



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Dewald's research are motivated by a desire to reduce the possible impacts of natural hazards on communities most at-risk. He has been project leader for international disaster risk reduction projects funded by multi-year research and project grants from national and international donors. He has co-authored over 100 publications. Dewald is the programme manager for post-graduate studies focussing on Disaster Risk Studies, and the Research Theme leader on "Socio-ecological Resilience". Dewald is the founder and Editor in Chief of *Jamba: Journal of Disaster*

Risk Studies and played a significant role in the establishment of the Southern Africa Society for Disaster Reduction.



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Professor emerita in Communication Science at the University of Amsterdam Betteke van Ruler retired as full professor in September 2010. She is a leading scholar in corporate communication and public relations. She received the honorary title of Officer in the Order of Orange Nassau by Her Majesty Queen Beatrix of The Netherlands for her groundbreaking work in bridging the gap between academic theory and practice. Van Ruler is published in

Public Relations Review, Journal of Communication Management, Journal of Public Relations Research, and in many international scientific and professional journals and books. She is founder of the Van Ruler Academy and was Chair of the Public Relations Division of ICA and President of EUPRERA, the European Public Relations Education Research Association.

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He is an Assistant Professor at the Amsterdam School of Communication Research. He is interested in the way in which organizational members communicate and behave strategically towards internal as well as external stakeholders. In particular, he studies the motives for, and consequences of employees' work-related social-media use. In addition, he is interested in crisis communication, as well as the role of employees in corporate branding.



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He is Associate Professor Corporate Communication at the Amsterdam School of Communication Research (ASCoR) and teaches at the College and Graduate School of Communication, both at the University of Amsterdam in The Netherlands. His research involves studies in corporate communication and public relations, especially regarding business in the news media, crisis communication dynamics between organizations and the media and mutual relationships between the media and the stock market. Since 2008 Piet participates in the European Communication Monitor (ECM), an annual survey among European communication managers on trends and key issues in the PR-profession. International publications appeared amongst others in Public Relations Review, Public Understanding of Science and PR Inquiry. Piet teaches seminars as Corporate Communication in Hypermodern Times and Philosophy of Science and Methodology.



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She is research associate and PhD candidate at the Department of Strategic Communication at the University of Leipzig, Germany. She is specialized in corporate communication, evaluation, measurement, and comparative communications. Her doctoral dissertation examines the state of the art of comparative research in communication science, with the objective of developing scientific quality standards for comparative communication research. She has published her research in international journals and received several awards in Europe and the United States. She studied Communication Management and Communication Science at the University of Leipzig and Münster (Germany), Zürich (Switzerland), and Ohio University (United States).

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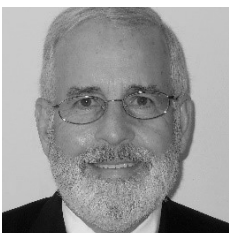
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She runs AshleyPR Ltd. She has supervised PhDs on the subject for the University of Exeter and assisted at the EUPRERA summer school. She is a trustee for Evidence Aid. Sue led the Jos Willems jury for 18 years and was President of Euprera and the CIPR. She edited the Introduction to Public Relations for Pearson. Currently she is leading a DfID funded project with the Moldovan Government and a campaign to engage the citizens with Public Service reforms there. Sue is regularly called upon to capacity build civil servants and manage crisis situations nationally and internationally. <http://ashley-pr.co.uk>



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THE GLOBAL PUBLIC RELATIONS HANDBOOK: THEORY, RESEARCH, AND PRACTICE (3RD ED.)

Global Crisis Communication



This chapter examined crisis research in the U.S., Europe, and Asia along with a discussion of the where global crisis communication research is lacking. The review of the crisis communication in the U.S. identified the high use of Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) and Image Restoration Theory (IRT) in the research. The general neglect of culture in the two theories is noted. European crisis communication considers the role of media systems and

cultural dimensions in crisis communication. The Asian research has found interesting results from examining the specific crisis response strategies of no comment, apologies, and justification. Justification is the most popular response in Asia, apology may be viewed as ritualistic, and no comment can be effective. Finally, the extant global crisis communication research seems to lack nuance. There needs to be a stronger focus on key international differences including political systems, economic systems, and activism when examining global crisis communication.

W. Timothy Coombs, Texas A&M University (USA), and **An-Sofie Claeys**, KU Leuven (Belgium)



The Management and Practice of Public Affairs in a Global Context



Public affairs (aka, PA) refers to those communication activities between an organization and its public policy stakeholders about issues of related interest. The management and practice of public affairs (PA) has been impacted greatly by globalization, especially in the last two decades when technologies and digitization have created cross-border issues for organizations to respond to in their external, nonmarket, public policy or sociopolitical environments. These issues are more complex, raise levels of risk, create greater uncertainty, and can generate doubt (aka, CRUD) among senior executives and their organizations. Globalization compels new concerns, controversies, orientations and thinking among business, community and political leaders

in order for them all to constructively address and adapt to it (Lenn, 1996). Unlike the days before social media (SM), top managers no longer have the luxuries of relative invisibility, distance or time before their organizations address them. Institutions and stakeholders also have been dramatically changed by globalization, thus creating new and larger arenas within which dynamic and interactive STEEP (i.e., social, technological, economic, ecological and political) concerns need to be solved (Fleisher, 2017:24). Finally, because of path dependencies in cultures, history and languages among others, globalization increases the challenge of generating actionable issue and stakeholder intelligence.

Craig S. Fleisher, Aurora WDC (U.S.A.)



The Global Public Relations of Failed States

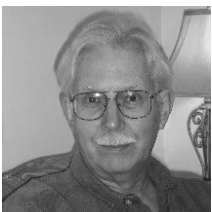


Forming and projecting images, brands and realities in order to form relationships with foreign audiences is not something that is new, there are a long list of leading global countries that can be listed. But what about those countries without the resources, the positive reputation and the highly recognised brand? They

also need to communicate with foreign audiences in order to achieve concrete goals, although some times this is done in unique ways. This chapter uses the case studies of Zimbabwe's message of attraction and North Korea's attempt to maintain an isolated status quo via foreign international audiences with quite different approaches and intended outcomes

Greg Simons, *Uppsala University (Sweden)*

Global Interdependence and Risks: Management and Communication



Risk management and communication are timeless challenges to human interdependence. Industrial processes, innovations, global markets and travel, and the ability of risks to cross national boundaries pose questions as to safety, response efficacy, and resilience. To explore such matters, this chapter revisits the history of risk management

and communication, explains four major streams of risk analysis, and connects them to public relations challenges; it then uses three risk cases to demonstrate the operant interpenetrations of uncertainties, harms, interests and well-being. Rather than finished matters, such global interpenetration predicts future challenges, offers corrective insights, and suggests that such work poses ongoing challenge and commitment.

Robert L. Heath, *The University of Texas in Austin (USA)*



Global Public Sector and Political Communication



How nations and city states ensure that their citizens get adequate services, infrastructure and safety is, in most parts of the world, a task for the public sector. Also referred to as authority, governmental and public administration organizations, public sector and political organizations exist to work together to serve current public needs as well as to collect from citizens the resources required for this task via taxes and fees, for example. Both political and public sector organizations have traditionally been blamed for several ills in society including inefficiency, bureaucracy, serving their own needs above others' and corruption. Despite their central task in society, partly due to the complex setting, short-term election cycles, diverse stakeholders and slightly negative sector reputation and lack of trust, many communication efforts of public and political organizations fail.



To fix these challenges, public sector and political organizations must increasingly engage the citizens and address their fears. This means changing from the traditional modes of one-way information provision to listening and dialogue (Macnamara 2016), and strengthening the intangible assets that the organizations are built on, such as trust and

legitimacy. Citizen engagement and public sector employee engagement are among the recent trends in the context of attempts to make organizations more approachable and citizen friendly. Efficiency remains the key word for public sector change, and many of the "drivers of change in the public sector fit into the NPM tendency to create more effective and efficient public organizations" (Kuipers et al. 2014, 1-20, 15).

This chapter looks at public sector and political communication globally, representing the first of the three societal sectors often differentiated by their functions and type (public, private, NGOs). The public sector and politics deal with governance of public resources for the benefit of society at large, be it in a more or less democratic environment. Communication is worldwide proving to be vital for public sector organizations as their impact is seldom clearly visible to outsiders (Sanders and Canel 2013). Though communication alone cannot solve the many sector-related challenges, this chapter analyzes public and political communication and reflects how public and political organizations could better utilize communication to improve their functions.

This chapter summarizes the public and political communication onto a continuum (see figure below). In the extreme political communication end of the continuum, communication is related to clearly set political aims that change as the politicians change. In the non-political neutral and order type organizations- end of the continuum, communication is about maintaining the public good that only partly

The political - non-political continuum of public sector communication

Political communication	Partially both	Non-political communication
Guided by political aims	Guided by political, administrative and civic aims	Guided by administrative aims
Depending on election cycles	Depending on set policies which may be disrupted by election cycles	Depending on established policies
Campaign like, short-term	Short to mid-term	Continuous, long-term
For/against -dichotomy strong	For/against -dichotomy mixed with other logics	For/against dichotomy weak
Role of individual leaders emphasized	Common good and leaders emphasized	Common good emphasized
Example: political parties	Example: municipalities	Example: regulators



reflect the political changes and trends. Most public sector organizations, however, represent something in between the two extreme ends, as most often the leadership of the organizations may be political but much of the personnel permanent.

The chapter analyzes, defines and discusses public sector and political communication and their

contribution to meeting the diverse citizen needs, and answers the question, are Citizens from Venus, public authorities and politicians from Mars? And if so, how can communication help bridge these differences.

Vilma Luoma-aho, *University of Jyväskylä (Finland)*,
Maria-Jose Canel, *University Complutense of Madrid (Spain)*,
Karen Sanders, *St Mary's University (UK)*

Character Assassination and Reputation Management in the Context of Mediated Complexity



In the context of mediated complexity and the political culture of incivility, character assassination (CA) has become both a structural issue, and a systemic norm. Although character assassination appears to be as old

as human civilization, academic research has done very little to interpret its nature, causes and outcomes in highly mediated and adversary competitive contexts.

This study addresses several CA and reputation management issues as resulting from globalization and emergent communication technologies. In addition, this paper discusses the prospects of locating the CA framework within the literature on reputation management by addressing new challenges that CA-related events pose to various publics.

Sergei Semoilenko, *George Mason University (U.S.A.)*

Powerful families, powerful influences: Family-owned enterprises and public relations in Asia



This chapter examines the characteristics of family-owned enterprises in Asia - specifically, India, South Korea, Japan, China, Hong Kong and Taiwan - and their impact on public relations practices, offering

country-specific examples. The chapter highlights similarities and differences in how diverse macro-environmental contexts have affected their public relations practices, particularly ways in which family-

owned enterprises navigate tensions when they offer socially responsible leadership aimed at strengthening national infrastructures while dealing with the fallout from issues such as corporatization of media, and the close nexus between government and businesses. Implications for public relations practice and research are discussed.

Ganga Dhanesh, *Zayed University (U.A.E.)*, *Flora Hung-Baesecke*, *Massey University (New Zealand)*



Terrorism and Global Public Relations



This chapter reflects upon global terrorism and public relations based on earlier research and secondary data. Definitions and the evolution of terrorism is described. Selected research about terrorism with relevance for public relations is presented, besides a short revisit in the communication history of terrorism. Public relations

strategies and activities are used by terrorists as well as governments, trying to counteract recruitment and impact. Secondary data from the Global Terrorism Database gives an empirical foundation. In the last section of the chapter some final conclusions are made, partly supposed to increase interest for further research about terrorism and public relations.

Jesper Falkheimer, Lund University (Sweden)

Crowdfunding: From global financial crisis to global financial communication



That the 2008 Global Financial Crisis is now part of public discourse just through its GFC initials is one of many signs of the international financialization of life. Financial occupies a modest space in the PR literature. At the same time, technologies, while being one of the most frequently researched topics in financial PR, are often discussed at surface level and limited to website study. At the level of society, and in many different academic fields,

discussions of how technologies and social media are increasing, or could increase, democracy have taken place. Yet the considerable potential of fintech to open economically egalitarian pathways has received little attention. To narrow that gap, our chapter considers two recent crowdfunding campaigns in New Zealand and reviews equity crowdfunding (ECF) possibilities in China.

Mai Anh Doan, University of Waikato (New Zealand),
David McKie, University of Waikato (New Zealand)



Climate Change Imperatives for Global Public Relations: Who Pays and Who Cares?



How can a justice orientation for public relations be deployed to shape climate change action? Environmental justice, here, is not only about disadvantage – it is about reconfigured relationships with nature and recognition of our connections with and emotional attachments to nature - a kinship/partnership model. Exploration of issues of guardianship and water protection highlight the positioning manoeuvres, value of strong global network of activists, awareness of risks, and

the importance of continual pressure on extractive industries as mechanisms for climate change action. The personhood examples help us learn about valuing indigenous ways of thinking and spiritual connections or emotional, empathetic connections with the environment. For public relations theory, guardianship and personhood may help the field move beyond ideologically invested models of mastery over nature, a resource-dominant view of the environmental and a schismatic way of thinking about the relationship between nature and culture. Practically, guardianship and personhood offer a way of working through



complicated or contested multi-layered governance models for climate change action.

Judy Motion, *University of New South Wales (Australia)*

The European Union and Its Public Relations: Context, Actions and Challenges of a Supranational Polity



The European Union (EU) is the most advanced regional political and economic entity in the world. Since the Maastricht Treaty in 1992, the EU has gained increasing power in establishing new legislation in Europe, and has become a key player in international and trade relations. This chapter presents and discusses the

context, the actions and the challenges faced by the EU in communicating to and with its diverse publics. It offers insights and reflections on the EU and its global public relations efforts by showing the complexity of conceptualizing, developing and implementing strategic communications in a multi-cultural environment

Chiara Valentini, *Aarhus University (Denmark)*

Comparative Political Systems and Public Relations: An Overview



All governments seek to communicate with the public and control the flow of information. This chapter first considers variations in communication across two very broad forms of political regimes, democracies and autocracies. We then examine how patterns of public relations vary among different types of democracies – centralized versus decentralized systems, well-established western democracies versus newer democracies in

developing countries, and democracies that operate within individualist political cultures versus those where culture is more collectivist. Variations in communication across different forms of nondemocratic systems are also discussed. The key conclusion is that public relations practitioners must be mindful not only of the type of political system that defines a country, but also the level of government control over society and the nature of elite-mass interactions.

Laura D. Young, *Georgia Gwinnett College (USA)*, **James A. McCann**, *Purdue University (USA)*

NATO and its communication in the 21st century



The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is a multinational political military organization created in 1949 to safeguard peace and security in the transatlantic area. As the security environment and challenges

changed over the decades, NATO adapted its public diplomacy and communication functions accordingly. The chapter describes the evolution of NATO's public diplomacy and communication efforts since its inception and focuses on three important decades since the end of the Cold War. It also describes the structure and procedures of the NATO Public Diplomacy Division



and describes the various functions that it plays today. The chapter provides insights into current challenges faced by NATO and its Allies in era of disinformation and propaganda and their joint response– by enabling cooperation between NATO and the European Union, strengthening coordination between individual member and partner nations and creating Centers of Excellence on Strategic Communication and Hybrid Warfare. NATO has also adapted to new technologies and follows new trends in communication and public diplomacy. Its digital presence is now enabled through diverse social media platforms and dedicated TV

Chanel. It explored new approaches to integrated communication by adopting the UK Government Communication approach through campaigns and developed its measurement and evaluation program. Strategic communication became an important function in supporting coordination amongst NATO communication and political stakeholders. NATO has entered the 21st century well equipped and prepared.

Barbara Maronkova, NATO Information and Documentation Centre (Ukraine)

Leading an Ethical Industry: Local and Global Professional Public Relations Associations



Professional associations are major players in the process of professionalization and the quest for professional status. Looking both globally and in New Zealand, this chapter considers the role of national and international professional associations in the PR industry in promoting and implementing ethical standards. Ethical leadership has a challenging role in the creation of a more democratic society especially in the current



communication environment and the proliferation of distrust through fake news accusations. The chapter evaluates the role and effectiveness of PR codes of ethics and identifies self-contradicting ethical values in PR codes worldwide. Acknowledging that the task of leading ethical standards brings challenges because PR itself requires neither legal approval nor compulsory membership, the chapter by suggesting ways forward.

David McKie, University of Waikato (New Zealand),
Margalit Toledano, University of Waikato (New Zealand)

The Role of Public Relations in the Global Battle for Hearts and Minds: From (Liberal) 'Democracy Promotion' to the Promotion of 'Illiberal Democracy'



The leading world powers – United States, Great Britain, France, Soviet Union, Japan and most recently Russia and China, were and still are using in the peaceful times their public diplomacy and “soft power”: culture, investment, academia,

foreign aid and most recently the social media and cyber space – to influence other countries in the world and to “win the battle of heart and souls”. Particularly the American leaders were strongly convinced that

“United States has a “mission” to spread democratic values and a liberal policies model abroad”. That’s why the “democracy promotion” program became the cornerstone of US foreign policy and since the end of the Cold War, democratic liberalism has been the dominant model for national development.

However, from the beginning of the 21st century, and particularly since the 2008/2009 global financial crisis, new phenomena may be observed: the end of the U.S. public diplomacy persuasion power and its strategic



communication world dominance, followed by the rise of “illiberal democracy”.

The author reveals two paradoxes: the first is that the United States, from which modern public relations, Facebook, Twitter and Google comes, seems to be losing the cyber information war and world communication dominance. Secondly, Western

agencies and PR consultants help the governments of “illiberal democracy” to defend and even promote this hostile and competitive version of the political system. Conclusion: it is not the ethical considerations that rules, but “money is the king”.

Ryszard Lawniczak, *Military University of Technology (Poland)*

Public Relations, Political Communication, and Agenda Setting – The Rise of the Micro-propaganda Machine



“The salient political events of 2016 – the outcome of the British EU referendum (“Brexit”), and the election of Donald J. Trump as 45th President of the United States of America – are both historical and historic events, and yet they also remain current affairs topics. The public, the media, and academics continue to analyse and reflect on the drivers and implications of a populist uprising that was largely unexpected in its consequences.



This chapter looks at the ‘rise of the micro-propaganda machine’, the global information disorder, and the role of public relations, first in historical perspective, then as a transformational shift

in the relationship between politics, the media and the public in modern Western societies. Public relations will address the challenges locally and globally as it evolves toward an integrated, interdisciplinary human science, linking the micro (behavioural) and the macro (social) perspectives of strategic communication.”

Thomas Stoeckle, *The SmallDataForum (Germany)*,
Jonathan Albright, *Columbia University (USA)*

The Development and Challenges of Global Public Relations Agencies



This chapter focuses on international operations of the world’s ten largest public relations agencies at a time when they employ more than 45,000 people and produce more than \$US 5 Billion in annual revenue. From the historical perspective, beginning in the 1950s, it traces the growth and development of global operations for

US-based firms such as Burson-Marsteller and Hill & Knowlton, and for the Australian agency Eric White & Associates. The roles played by global PR leaders such as John Hill, Harold Burson, Robert Leaf and Loet Velman are detailed along with contemporary leaders such as Richard Edelman (Edelman) and Andy Polansky (Weber Shandwick).

Donald K. Wright, *Boston University (USA)*



Internal Communication with a Global Perspective



Internal communication is a multidisciplinary field of practice and study. Positioned between public relations, human resource management and marketing – it is simultaneously a part of various organizational functions while not being a part of any. Research shows an erosion of employee trust in organizational leadership all around

the world. Additionally, massive employee reductions have greatly affected their level of loyalty towards their organizations. For internal communication, in the organization, this means an increased need for sincere, two-way communication. To grow, the function needs to establish clearer links with business objectives and have a stronger focus on strategy instead of tools.

Ana Tkalac Verčić, *University of Zagreb (Croatia)*

A new public relations for corporations in the world of hyper-globalization



Corporations must operate within a world that has gone beyond globalization to hyper-globalization. This is driven by three forces of ever increasing economic integration of global business, instant and global human communication via the Internet and social media, and the rapid pace of change from disruptive

new technologies. Today, global corporations are more likely to face a crisis from either fake news, real wrong doing, or new competitive challenges. To survive and thrive corporate leaders themselves must now be skillful at strategic public relations that is based on ethics, two-way communications, self-correction, and focused on stakeholder relationship management.

Takashi Inoue, *Inoue Public Relations, Inc. (Japan)*

Exploring the Complexity of Global Strategic Communication Practice in Government: The Case of the Canadian Federal Government



My chapter examines the strategic communication practices employed by the Government of Canada, a parliamentary and federated political system, in developing its global or foreign affairs communication - be it around NATO, NAFTA, Syrian refugees, Mali peacekeeping or the potential 'deportees' from the USA illegally crossing the US/Canada border. It answers

the call for "descriptive accounts of public relations practices from individual countries" (Sriramesh & Vercic, 2009, p.3). The focus is on the communication function's policy and structural variables, in particular the interplay between the government's political and thus partisan communication specialists and the public service's permanent and non-partisan specialists.

Fraser Likely, *Likely Communication Strategies (Canada)*



State Capture and Demise of Bell Pottinger: Ill-using Public Relations to Shape Future Kakistocracies?



The word kakistocracy hails from the Greek words kakistos (κάκιστος - worst) and kratos (κράτος - rule), with a literal meaning of “government by the worst people.” Power abuse by governments and individual leaders across the

world are presently rampant. Disconcerting for the practice of public relations is the employment thereof to encourage kakistocrats around the world. The Bell Pottinger incident in South Africa is a demonstration of public relations counsel for the abuse of power in state capture. The episode, lasting almost two years, saw the demise of the Bell Pottinger public relations agency, the resignation of the president of South Africa Jacob

Zuma, and ensuing investigations of other companies and individuals. It weaves a condemnatory tale about how one of the United Kingdom’s best-known public relations agencies caused its own destruction through an irresponsible campaign that was conceived to stoke racial division in South Africa.

The first part of this chapter unpacks the Bell Pottinger public relations scandal and its global consequences. The second part considers the lessons that surfaced from the scandal for the future direction of public relations.

Ronél Rensburg, *University of Pretoria (South Africa)*

Public Relations and Public Diplomacy in a Multi-cultural, Multi-stakeholder, Multi-Platform World: Creating A New Cadre of Public and Corporate Diplomats



The demand for public relations services has grown exponentially over the past 40 years, particularly more recently, due to globalisation, the shift of power to Asian countries, the speed of and access to information and the growing

importance in a networked world of multi-national corporations and NGOs needing to collaborate with the international political system to solve global societal problems.

Given its relative immaturity and interdisciplinary nature, public relations and its associated specialities of public affairs and corporate social responsibility in particular have needed to learn from disciplines such as public diplomacy, due to the importance of culture. While there have found to be practical if not much theoretical overlap, a few studies have sought to reconcile the similarities and differences between public relations and public diplomacy in their respective literatures, the latter being part of international relations, which has been traditionally suspicious of public relations, viewing it largely as propaganda.

Despite the serious need for a more multi-dimensional approach, also involving other disciplines such as strategy, governance, sustainability, leadership and conflict resolution, among others, there has been very little joined up thinking on increasingly complex and often contested issues. No single discipline is taking the lead in building frameworks around public diplomacy to support governments and other actors practically, so there is an opportunity for public relations to input further, given the cultural overlap and the importance to both of the communications element.

What is more, a new sub-set of public diplomacy, business or corporate diplomacy (both of which require further delineation) has emerged, reflecting the increasing political advocacy role of multi-national corporations, as well as greater collaboration with government, multi-lateral agencies and NGOs to solve intractable problems, notably in the emerging world, that no one institution or country can solve on their own. However this new topic is largely being studied by a few academics in the business schools with very little public relations research, let alone discussion between public relations practitioners and academics, which is much needed, given the trends.



This chapter reviews the positive signs, yet greater need to 'join the dots' with public diplomacy in particular, in a fast growing field that has important implications for standards of service, teaching and training, whether academic or practical as well as recruitment if public relations is to become more globally professional.

Roger Hayes, *Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (Singapore)*

John Adams' "Militia Diplomacy" – Public Diplomacy Avant la Lettre



Countries and international organizations use public diplomacy to achieve specific political outcomes in their foreign relations. In this sense it is equivalent to any other means of national power, including warfare, trade, and state diplomacy. Public diplomacy focuses on affecting the opinion of the people in foreign countries as an essential weight in the balance of national politics. The element of politics fundamentally defines public diplomacy from other forms of public communications.

Public diplomacy has more in common with domestic political campaigning by appealing to the population to support an individual or policy. While the objectives of public diplomacy have not fundamentally changed in more than 250 years, the means have. Mass literacy, cable and wireless communication, steam shipping and jet aircraft, broadcast radio, television and the Internet have constantly changed the means and speed we reach foreign publics.

James Thomas Snyder, *U.S. Department of State (USA)*

The Public Relations Strategies of the Global 'Hacktivist' Group Anonymous



This chapter analyses the communication strategies of Anonymous, a group of global hackers, to identify what public relations practitioners can learn from their tactics, the threats posed by international cyber criminals, and how to respond to them. Since 2008, Anonymous has maintained a high profile on traditional and social media worldwide through its attacks on prominent targets including governments, corporations, and terrorists. The group has now achieved such notoriety that terrorists are jealous. According to the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, "jihadists... [are] impressed by the level of media attention Anonymous attained." This chapter finds that Anonymous, which has a rule against attacking mainstream media organizations,

has achieved its prominence in part through carefully aiding the press. Its creation of dramatic, humorous, hyperbolic, mysterious, unpredictable content tied to events already making headlines that is rich in visuals and contains clear calls to action has helped promote virality. Yet, because members of the network need to literally stay anonymous in order to maintain the group's identity and avoid prosecution, Anonymous ultimately forfeits control over its brand identity. Without revealing member identities, it can do little to counter media depictions of its members as terrorists. The study also finds that many of the communication strategies used by Anonymous – such as practicing two-way communication, promoting engagement, and creating spectacles with dramatic content that rapidly goes viral – can be used to improve the efficacy of the cyber strategies of other organizations which work to



advance more mainstream, pro-social causes. However, the willingness of hackers to attack organizations just for “lulz” (laughs generated at the expense of others) poses a threat to every person and organization on the Internet today. Professional communicators must carefully plan for the possibility of such attacks on even the most innocuous of organizations and have their plans and responses at the ready.

Kara Alaimo, Hofstra University (USA)



PR Memes and communicators' perceptions and reflections of PR

Ana ADI, *Quadriga University of Applied Sciences (Germany)*

Introduction and purpose of the study

This study explores communicators' perceptions of their profession. In doing so, it uses more than 130 self-generated PR memes to report on emerging themes and commonalities with existing literature.

Literature review

Public relations have a contested history and, arguably, a continuously contested image, its function within organizations as well as role in society being often discussed by professionals and academics alike. Saltzmar (2011) and Kinsky (2011) analysis of TV series and movies suggests the prevalence of rather negative features of practitioners. This is echoing Spicer's (2009) findings of associations of public relations in media reports with disaster, distraction, hype and schmoose. In fact, media and journalistic portrayals of PR are consistently negative across all research. The low regard for PR is also maintained by business managers (Sterne, 2008) and to a lesser degree by members of the general public (White and Park, 2010); however the PR practitioner's taking the "side" of their organisation and advancing their agenda is what the general public also retains as a priority trait.

Methodology

Students of Quadriga University of Applied Sciences enrolled four MBA and MA programs and taking the Applied Communication Course during 2015-2017 have been asked to create their own PR meme. They have been presented with a blank 6 questions model: "What my friends think I do", "What my parents think I do", "What the other side thinks I do", "What society thinks I do", "What I think I do", and "What I really do" and asked to fill it in prior to being presented with existing online PR memes using the same model or prior to discussing PR definitions, perceptions and history. As all the students enrolled in Quadriga's programs are communication professionals with a minimum of two years of full-time experience in the field (PR/marketing/public affairs departments or agencies), this study is reflective of communicators' perceptions, something that the literature is consistently missing. A qualitative

content analysis of the entries was carried out aiming to identify common themes and associations.

Results and conclusions

The practitioners' descriptions of what their friends, families and society think they do are similar yet telling. A general association (and confusion) of communication tasks with media relations prevails being followed with what could be described as events management and marketing. These generally mentioned in the "friends" category, also where references to good payments and having fun are also included. A lack of understanding of the profession or confusion with the field of the organization the professionals work for is prevalent in the "family" category (most likely, in this sample's case - Baby Boomers and the Silent Generation). The journalists' category (the other side) reflects the contentious relationship also presented in studies assessing the journalists' relationship and perceptions of public relations (see (Pincus et al, 1993; Len-Rios et al, 2009; Callison, 2004; Sterne, 2010; Seidenglanz, 2017). These include references to propaganda, to telling half-truths, to manipulating and spending the company's or public money. The negative connotations are even stronger in the "society" category where strong words like "bribing", "lying", "spinning" and propaganda are often repeated. Other association, more tongue-in-cheek include "money laundering", "flying around with Darth Vader" and "Being evil. Abusing power". All in all, the reported perception of practitioners of their own profession is generally negative, repeating many of the characteristics both literature, media and pop culture have accustomed us with. This is a clear indication that the practitioners are aware of the perceptions or misperceptions of their profession yet this is no indication of their taking any action towards addressing this gap.

Perhaps more telling in this sense are the responses in the categories "what I think I do" and "what I really do" with many practitioners reporting too often of having an operational focus writing, answering emails, calling, "work long hours", "struggling to be heard" rather the desired strategic one ("consult senior management", "inform internal and external publics").



Practical and social implications

Public relations as a profession continues to carry along its negative connotations and practitioners in the field, according to this study, are well aware of them. Despite the negative connotations, public relations continue to be an appealing, growing and lucrative field. The question thus emerges of whether these negative perceptions are going to harm in the long term the profession or stick around regardless.

Their perpetuation however points out to the need of a deeper and more meaningful discussion about the role of public relations in society as well as to the boundaries within which the professionals can operate within their organization and putting the public interest first. This points out not only to the need of universities and training centers to address the issue in a wider context (including ethics, debating history, inviting and including critical perspectives) but also to organisations and professional associations to continuously check and challenge the existing perceptions. It might be “good fun” for a class to joke and discuss in a light-hearted manner the ups and downs of the profession, but the downs in this case are a warning and telling sign as of why PR continues to struggle to be taken seriously.

Keywords

PR perceptions; PR memes; PR image

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Turkish press coverage of the Syrian conflict and the possibilities of peace journalism

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Introduction and purpose

This study is based on a case analysis of Turkish newspapers' coverage of Syrian conflict and reveals the predominance of war journalism. The study aims to investigate structural characteristics of the Turkish press that lead to the predominance of war journalistic practices and inquires the possibilities of peace journalism.

Literature review

Syrian civil war has been one of the bloodiest wars in the Middle East in recent years causing thousands of human casualties, destabilising the region and uprooting thousands from their homelands. Turkey, as a border country to Syria, has a close eye on the Syrian conflict and face political problems not only in domestic but also in international politics. Reporting on Syrian conflict is crucially important in this context as the allies and enemies in constant change and shift. The press coverage of Syrian conflict is characterised by war journalism, in which press favours the points of view of those in power. The existing literature on war journalism in Turkey demonstrates a series of implications of such journalistic practices for a peaceful coexistence of neighbouring populations. As opposed to war journalism which is characterised by promoting hate speech, xenophobia and glorifying violence (Peleg 2006) peace journalism promotes non-violent responses to conflict (Lynch & McGoldrick 2005, 5). Peace journalism fosters and encourages peace and thereby contributes to increased democracy (Blasi 2004, p.2). This study will evaluate the implications of war journalism and inquire about the possibilities of peace journalism in the Turkish press coverage of the Syrian conflict.

Methodology

This study focuses on the press coverage of war between 20 January and 27 January 2018, when Turkey involved in war. Data gathered for this study amounts to 95 news stories from three different newspapers, *Yeni Şafak*, *Hürriyet* and *Cumhuriyet*, representing different ideological standpoints. Analysis is based on a critical

approach informed by the theories and practices of peace journalism.

Results and conclusions

The result of the study reveals journalistic practices far from the principles of peace journalism. The coverage of newspapers of the Syrian conflict heavily privilege domestic political actors, justifies their point of view of the conflict and in some cases promotes violent solutions.

Practical and social implications

The study aims to reveal the predominance of war journalism as a main tendency in journalistic practices and point to the implications of such practices for society and future relations between two countries and neighbouring populations. Thus, the need to point to the positive implications of the practices of peace journalism

Keywords

Turkish press, war journalism, peace journalism, Syrian war

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Effects of Astroturfing in Non-Profit Organizations: Two Competing Hypotheses

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Bugil CHANG, *University of Oklahoma (U.S.A.)*

Introduction

This study examines the possible effects of astroturfing when this bad practice is operated by non-profit organizations. Astroturfing is a practice which seeks for organization benefit rather than a common benefit or common good (Demetrious, 2008). Nevertheless, non-profits normally aim to achieve goals beneficial for the common good. The image of the organization can be damaged because of the intentionality of the hoax (Cox, Martinez & Quinian, 2008). In this context, it is worth to question whether the effects of astroturfing for non-profits will or will not differ from the effects that astroturfing has on market oriented organizations.

Literature Review

In their previous study, Andreu Perez, Kim and Chang (2018) found out the relationships between failed astroturfing and credibility, attitude towards the brand and megaphoning. That study, used two well-known brands (Walmart and Coca-Cola) to understand how astroturfing and disclosure affected different variables. However, there could be differences if we replicate this research with non-profit organizations. On the one hand, people have higher expectations to non-profits in comparison to market oriented organizations (Drucker, 1990). Non-profits normally operate for good. If a hoax was discovered, because of these higher expectations, the negative effects of astroturfing could be even greater. On the other hand, since these organizations final goal is positive and the organizations do not get benefits for their own wealth, people could see astroturfing as "less harmful", and the effects of astroturfing could be then milder. This dichotomy generates two competing hypotheses; therefore, we can ask:

- RQ1: Will people exposed to astroturfing operated by a non-profit organization show a higher or lower credibility than those exposed to astroturfing operated by market oriented organizations?

- RQ2: Will people exposed to astroturfing operated by a non-profit organization show a more positive or negative attitude towards the brand than those exposed to astroturfing operated by market oriented organizations?
- RQ3: Will people exposed to astroturfing operated by a non-profit organization show variations in their megaphoning intentions compared to those exposed to astroturfing operated by market oriented organizations?

Methodology

This study uses an experiment, in which participants are assigned to read a blog post, which content is astroturfed. They will learn about the bad practice they have been exposed to, and then they will be asked to complete a questionnaire assessing their attitudes. The results of this experiment will be compared with the results obtained in the analysis of astroturfing when this strategy was operated by market oriented organizations.

Results and Conclusions

This research is still in process and there are not results found yet.

Implications

This study aims to better understand the framework of astroturfing. Also, it can provide guidelines for practitioners working in the non-profit field. This research is then useful for both practitioners and scholars, and it can set a precedent to infer new characteristics which make of non-profits a sub-field of study interest.

Keywords

astroturfing, non-profits, credibility, attitude towards the brand, megaphoning



How publics respond during infectious disease outbreaks: Blame and information seeking

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Introduction and Purpose

In this present “world in crisis,” health organizations increasingly communicate with publics about health risks and crises. Publics face large-scale infectious disease threats (IDTs), whether they be ongoing threats (e.g., malaria, cholera, HIV/AIDS) or new outbreaks (e.g., Ebola, MERS-CoV, plague, Zika). Yet, little is known about effective health public relations (Seltzer, Gardner, Bichard, & Callison, 2012). IDTs challenge practitioners to protect public health in the face of uncertainty and stress, while misinformation spreads more rapidly than ever before. To improve practice, this study explores the following research questions:

- RQ1: How do individuals’ perceptions of IDT controllability and predictability influence perceived responsibility (individual v. organization) for different IDTs?
- RQ2: How do individuals’ perceptions of IDT controllability and predictability influence individuals’ cognitive coping and information seeking behaviors during IDT situations?

Literature Review

Jin (2010) proposed three dimensions of threat appraisal based on prior research (Coombs, 1998; Smith & Ellsworth, 1985): predictability, controllability, and responsibility. These dimensions are theorized to predict individuals’ crisis coping mechanisms. Predictability describes the certainty with which individuals can ascertain what will happen. Controllability is the extent to which individuals believe they can influence crises. Responsibility refers to how individuals assign blame. Information seeking is one way that individuals cope with crises cognitively (Austin, Liu, & Jin, 2012). This study is the first known experiment to vary levels of predictability and controllability to understand how individuals respond during public health crises.

Methods

We conducted a 2 (predictability: high vs. low) x 2 (controllability: high vs. low) within-subjects online experiment. Over 1,000 U.S. adults completed the study. Each participant served as his or her own control and responded to four randomized IDT scenarios. After reading each scenario, participants responded to questions regarding their perceived responsibility for the IDT (individual vs. organizational) and their information seeking intentions.

Results and Conclusions

Participants believed individuals had the most responsibility for IDTs when both IDT predictability and controllability were high. Likewise, participants believed medical and health professionals had the most responsibility in highly predictable and controllable outbreaks. Conversely, participants believed that federal and local health organizations had the least responsibility when predictability and controllability were high. Participants were more likely to believe that federal and local health organizations had responsibility in outbreaks where predictability was high, but controllability was low.

The less predictable and controllable an IDT, the more likely participants were to look for information—including pictures and videos on social media platforms—from federal, state, and local health organizations. Similarly, participants reported being more likely to search for information from medical providers when IDT controllability was low.

Participants were more likely to search for further information when predictability and controllability were low via online searching and popular articles online, reading local and national newspapers, viewing television, and visiting health organization websites. Participants were least likely to talk to medical professionals when predictability and controllability were both high. When controllability was



low, participants were more likely to talk to medical professionals face-to-face, over the phone, or via email or text, regardless of predictability.

Practical and Social Implications

Health organizations should provide clear information on how publics can protect themselves and their families against IDTs when predictability and controllability are high. Organizations also should emphasize IDTs' predictability and controllability, as this approach is likely to drive stronger appraisals of personal responsibility for health versus overreliance on health organizations to manage these situations. Medical professionals also have higher perceived responsibility when outbreak threats are perceived to be highly predictable and controllable. These professionals can be a good source of information for publics on how to prevent IDT spread, especially since publics believe they have personal responsibility when threats are perceived to be predictable and controllable. For seasonal outbreaks (e.g., flu), early intervention campaigns that emphasize personal responsibility and

threat controllability may be especially productive in mitigating harm.

When IDT predictability is high, but controllability is low, federal and local health organizations need to make publics aware of measures organizations are taking to respond to the threat. Our findings also imply that publics are more likely to search for crisis information through almost all channels when both predictability and controllability are low. Organizations thus should prioritize multiple channels for crisis information, especially to ensure that unfounded rumors do not negatively influence publics' understanding and decision-making. In sum, this research provides insights that can apply globally given that the threat of an outbreak can easily spill across the borders. How to effectively communicate a global public health crisis and conquer cultural, political, and infrastructural barriers needs to be addressed by future research.

Keywords

crisis communication, health, infectious disease



Sense-Making in a Postmodern World: Embracing Paradox Theory for Managing Organizational Tensions and Building Reputation among Hybrid-Identity Organizations

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Introduction and purpose of the study

We live in a postmodern world in which the boundaries between trues and false, rational and irrational, private and public are blurring. In the organizational scene boundaries are blurring between the public sector ('first sector'), the private sector ('second sector'), and the nonprofit sector ('third sector'), while many organizations blend social and environmental aims with business approaches. From an organizational standpoint, as the environment becomes more complex and dynamic, contradictory and competing demands intensify. Thus, organizational elites have to think about new strategies and apply continuous efforts to meet multiple and divergent internal and external demands.

This study focuses on hybrid-identity organizations that are "composed of two or more types that would not normally be expected to go together" (Albert & Whetten, 1985 p. 270). For hybrid-identity organizations (such as social businesses, universities and health care organizations) the challenge seems even bigger since they have to manage additional tensions that arise from their multiple and sometimes conflicting identities.

Using social businesses as a case study this study explores the strategies used by elites of hybrid-identity organizations to manage internal and external tensions as well as organizational reputation.

Literature review

Albert and Whetten (1985) define *organizational identity* as the features of an organization that are central, enduring, and distinct. According to organizational identity theory, a clear and consistent organizational identity has both internal and external benefits for the organization, such as promoting reputation building and influencing financial performance.

Nevertheless, many organizations embed multiple inconsistent identity types, thus creating hybrid-identity organizations. While in the late 1960s, *contingency theory* suggested resolving tensions in hybrid-identity organizations using an 'if-then' logic to decide when and where to focus on each strategy separately, from the 1980s, *paradox theory* offered a long-term strategy for perceiving tensions as ubiquitous and resolving them with a holistic and dynamic 'both-and' decision-making approach. Smith and Lewis (2011) identified four categories of organizational paradoxes (belonging, learning, organizing, and performing), arguing that possible tensions might exist between and within the four categories.

Unlike organizational researchers, public relations scholars look at identity, image and reputation management as important public relations functions that can influence the success of an organization. They make a distinction between organizational identity, which relates to the various attributes with which an organization describes itself, and organizational reputation that refers to the perceptions that others have about an organization (Huang-Horowitz, 2015).

Methodology

This study is based on a qualitative research method of an 'open fishbowl.' In an open fishbowl, the participants sit in a circle and engage in a conversation while the 'observers' sit around the circle and watch. One seat in the inner circle is left vacant, and at any time, an 'observer' can enter the inner circle and join the conversation while one of the contributors voluntarily leaves the inner circle, thus entering and exiting until the discussion ends.

Six managers and advisors of Israeli social businesses participated in a 90-minute open fishbowl, sharing their own experiences and challenges regarding the



management of social businesses. The participants represented social businesses that mainly employ distressed youth in the fields of fashion, food, and software. The author of this paper also participated in the 'open fishbowl,' asking questions and writing a transcript that was later analyzed for qualitative content to explore the main themes and arguments. Some of these themes and arguments are presented in the next section.

Results and conclusions

Following Smith and Lewis' (2011) categorization, the analysis revealed various *performing tensions* (i.e., difficulties to define, quantify and measure social mission success), *organizing and learning tensions* (i.e., acknowledging the importance of public relations for reputation management but avoiding 'unnecessary' expenses) and *belonging tensions* (questions of identity, managing relationships and positioning vis-à-vis divergent stakeholders). In addition, the hybrid identity of social businesses made it difficult for their elites to communicate a clear and consistent identity to their stakeholders, resulting in confusion among potential customers about 'what social businesses are and what they do' and potentially damaging their reputation. An example of this concept includes the difficulty that potential customers have accepting that employees from distressed populations produce high-quality products.

Nevertheless, the findings also revealed that managers of social businesses embrace *a paradox perspective* rather than a *contingency perspective* to navigate inherent and socially constructed tensions. They do not relate to tensions as problems that must be solved by choosing between opposing choices but instead perceive tensions as ubiquitous and persistent forces that encourage long-term success and acceptance. This

idea was demonstrated by managers' tendency to refer to the hybrid identity of social businesses as a given situation and not as a condition that requires choosing between business-like characteristics and societal goals. Accordingly, the solutions that they have found to some of the challenges were calculating the costs of social missions by comparing them to alternative costs, giving weight not only to commercial success but also to societal goals, and 'tailoring' specific messages to different customers by emphasizing either business-like or societal goals.

Implications and limitations

This study suggests embracing a holistic paradox approach for managing tensions and organizational reputation among hybrid-identity organizations. Nevertheless, the small scale of the study makes it mainly a benchmark for future studies that might explore additional organizations as well as evaluate the level of success of this strategy.

Keywords

Paradox theory; Organizational identity, Reputation management

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Immigrant labor in the context of liquid modernity: An analysis of discursive strategies of Sindacato Cinese Nazionale

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Introduction and purpose of the study

Since the 1990s, Chinese immigrant labor has become a distinct feature in the textile and garment industry in many Northern and Central Italian industrial districts. The growing Chinese worker population and the social shift they have brought about has triggered much suspicion, fear, and debate among local communities and public policy circles at various levels. As the first Chinese trade union in Italy, Sindacato Cinese Nazionale (Si.Ci.Na.) faces the challenge to restore reputation of Chinese immigrant workers amidst largely hostile and emotionally-charged publics (Lan, 2015). In this paper, I draw from Zygmunt Bauman's theory of liquid society to answer the question: What discursive strategies does Si.Ci.Na. employee in the liquid modernistic context marked by fear, strangerhood, and late-capitalist rationalities?

Literature review

Zygmunt Bauman (2013a, 2013b) used the concept of liquidity to capture the late-modernistic characteristics of contemporary society, and brought attention to the emotional reactions—particularly fear—to the dissipating social boundaries and increasing cultural heterogeneity. The concept of liquid modernity provides a useful framework to analyze the discursive strategies concerning the issue of immigrant labor. First, it provides a lens to observe the xenophobic public sentiment and public policies that have increasingly become the socio-cultural context of immigrant labor. Second, the conceptualization of liquid modernity offers an uncertainty-centered perspective to understanding discursive strategies. With the generalized strangerhood in liquid society, people's status and social relationships are no longer considered stable, but are in constant flux based on varied situations also influenced by dystopic imagines spread by traditional and digital media. Therefore, it is not viable (nor advisable) for individuals and communities to attempt to build and project unified, consistent, and stable identities. Moreover, different

discursive strategies and techniques are often required in dealing with different audiences.

Methodology

The research process began with compiling a corpus that intends to capture the breadth of discursive activity of Si.Ci.Na., including the communication it held internal and external to the Chinese communities. This include public announcements, statements, communiques, and published texts issued by Si.Ci.Na. or its spokesperson. I located these texts from three main sources: 1) the website and the social media pages of the organization and its key spokesperson, 2) websites of labor organizations, trade unions, and Chinese associations and online communities, and 3) Italian news media.

For data analysis, I employed a frame analysis method developed from Creed, Langstraat, and Scully (2002). Specifically, I used a constant comparative method and multi-level coding to code the corpus, one paragraph at a time. My analysis was sensitive to Liquid theory concept of fear, strangeness and late-capitalist logic, and guided by the *a priori* categories of *punctuation* (nature of the problem), *elaboration* (who/what is responsible) and *motivation* (appropriate course of action). Frames were arrived at in an iterative process as I cluster together the frame components identified, until a frame with coherent internal logic emerges.

Results and conclusions

My analysis reveals several discursive strategies that Si.Ci.Na. employed in the context of Chinese immigrant labor issue.

The first strategy involves the creation of a shared victimhood from organized crime, which serves as ground for building alliance and solidarity among local residents, the Chinese business community and Chinese immigrant labor.



The second strategy focuses on the inadequacy and injustice in the immigration policy and its impact on immigrant worker population. A special feature of this strategy is the juxtaposition of “insiderness” and “outsiderness” in immigrant worker identity.

The third discursive strategy involves highlighting a symbiotic relationship between immigrant workers and local business, especially Italian-owned business. This is done by emphasizing the individual aspect of immigrant worker identity—desensitizing the concept of Chinese immigrant community, and focusing on how each individual creates value for her/his employers.

Practical and social implications

This paper offers a new lens to analyze public policy issues, focusing on the sentimental aspect of civil society. Using the concepts of liquidity and strangeness, my study delineates several discursive strategies used in response to public sentiment of fear, uncertainty, and vulnerability, which serves as a useful case study for organizations trying to build trust in a conflictual

or crisis situation. Moreover, my study also challenges the received view of coherent organizational identity, and argue for the practical implication of fragmented identity in a liquid society.

Keywords

Immigrant Labor, Liquid Modernity, Discursive Strategy

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Sleeping with your enemies – and what happens the day after

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Introduction and purpose of the study

Little is known on how crisis managers perceive and handle relationships with adversaries during crises and later. Professional experience of this author and literature review showed that stakeholders, like activists, competitors, shareholders, disgruntled employees, community groups, authorities, or bloggers often evolve into opponent publics.

Most crises come to conclusions, though, and later there is a need to re-establish relationships with former adversaries (as they are unlikely to perish). Starting over with a clean slate might be difficult after a period of trading accusations and heated exchanges of opinion between the adversaries.

Therefore, it is worthwhile to ask if (and how) crisis managers address their opponents during a crisis and whether they are aware that all players will have to get along when the crisis is over. Based on these assumptions the following research questions can be explored:

RQ1 – How (if at all) do crisis managers reach out to their adversaries (opponent publics) during crises and – especially – after their conclusions?

RQ2 – What communication methods (direct and indirect) do crisis managers use to address their opponent publics?

RQ3 – How (if at all) do opponents communicate with the organization in crises, and after?

Literature review

Opponent or adversary publics disagree with an organization and resist a proposal, usually in a conflict situation. They are hot-issue publics or activists who criticize and fight against issues, arrangements, and institutions they find problematic.

A well-known public relations sage says, “Activism pushes organizations towards excellence”. Even though research on activists’ behavior provides some

guidelines how institutions struck by crises should behave to avoid regenerative crises, there is no clear evidence on methods applied to address opponents during crises. Most rhetorical theories of crisis communication call for applying persuasive strategies to convince stakeholders involved that the institution is right, while the strategic management approach is focused on relationship building and reaching out to active publics no matter what.

As opponents, by definition, are active publics, their critical stance towards an organization usually prevents establishing any relationships. Research on activist investors (who often behave as adversaries) showed that a constructive interaction between them and companies hardly happens, as activists rely on their own opinions and data instead of the organization. Therefore, relationships with potential opponents before, during and after a crisis need to be examined further.

Methodology

To better understand communication (or lack thereof) with opponent publics during and after crises, we will – in addition to literature review – conduct in-depth interviews with senior PR and communication executives, whose experience includes managing serious crises. All interviewees are veteran PR and crisis communication practitioners.

The application of interviews to study crisis communication is a well-proven methodology, useful for discussing and understanding complex, sensitive and sometimes secretive issues.

Results and conclusions

The research will identify whether crisis managers are aware that their opponents and adversaries make important publics that need to be addressed before, during and after a crisis. Crisis managers are likely to establish and shape their relationships with opponent publics along a continuum spanning from negotiating and integrative conflict resolution strategies to distributive strategies to direct attacks, depending on



the stage of a crisis and other factors. Consequently, some refrain from aggressive actions against adversaries during a crisis, as all parties involved will have to live with one another when the crisis is over. Thus, relationships with opponents, scenario building concerning opponents and crisis conclusions need to be included in crisis communication plans.

Practical and social implications

The research will shed a light on how to handle relationships with adversaries during and after a crisis. It will prepare an institution facing a crisis for a post-crisis stage by developing relationship strategies with opponents to be implemented during the crisis and afterwards. As opposed to some irresolvable conflicts (as between religions or in politics), most corporate and NGO crises come to an end that leaves all parties in continuing relationships.

As the adopted research method is qualitative, the study will have some limitations. It will be conducted

in one country and will be mostly confined to a certain number of experts working for organizations facing crises. Future research should explore opponents in crises and their PR experts, enlist a more diversified group of respondents, and expand to other countries.

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Keywords

opponent publics; relationships; crisis; post-crisis



The Role of Public Relations in Building the Bridges: Rethinking the Communication Strategies in Negotiation Process in Cyprus

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Introduction

With the effect of globalization, thus integrated economies and clash of interests, regional conflicts became the 21th century's increasingly continuing problems affecting entirely the whole world, which have direct impact on confidence crisis between countries. Besides, developments in information technologies facilitated the spread of news and information with easy access, speed and interactivity by social media, which diverge or converge the relations of communities depending on the strategies developed. Meanwhile we experience raise in nationalist discourses in leaderships that affects the nations' mutual understanding. They positively locate their own country as "we", bring the traditions into the forefront and position the "other" negatively (Dijk,2015:88-89). This kind of approaches reinforces the existing turmoil as nationalism is reproduced by putting the collective memory into action (Halbwachs,1980:23) through communal and cultural communication components and the relations get into a vicious circle.

Cyprus problem, since the outbreak of inter-communal conflict almost fifty years ago, is one of the important regional conflict affecting the Mediterranean region. With the new developments the need to achieve more effective communication and reconciliation between the two communities became more important as both communities continue to mistrust each other and lack confidence day by day. The question of 'how to lead in times of turmoil' should be the prior question to be answered in terms of building mutual respect and understanding, which requires good leadership and communication strategies.

Aim of the study

The aim of this study is to reveal the communication techniques conducted during peace building efforts with regard of vision set at the negotiation process in Cyprus. The vision of the leadership in the negotiation process is reflected in the technical committees, however, technical committee on developing

relationship of two communities has not yet been established despite the fact that both leadership spoke out the mistrust of the communities to each other after experiencing difficulties in implementing the issues they have already achieved. The research questions for the study are;

- a) Why it is important to use effective communication strategies to reach a common language and unity of messages during the negotiations in order to raise mutual understanding of the parties?
- b) What is the role of public relations in such cases in order to develop communication strategies and to build the bridges for better relations?

Literature Review

Several factors influence how persuasive the public relation messages are and especially the credibility of the source is important for the acceptance of the messages. Theories on persuasion and mass media and approaches for cognitive, affective and behavioral modification are reviewed.

Methodology

In the study chronological technical process during the negotiations is put forth and documents are reviewed, which are referred as course of action. Media content analysis is conducted comparing the media coverage of both parties in certain periods to find out the communication gap within the context of unity of the messages and the vision of the negotiations.

Results and Conclusions

In this study, the existing communication strategies in the negotiation process is discussed and new approaches put forth within the scope of public relations in order to enhance the effective communication of the process, taking into the consideration that nationalist reactions are increasing gradually, as could easily be seen in the elections of both communities recently. First of all, the existing sources of information in both



sides is discussed to reveal the importance of contents of information which mainly are state-sanctioned sources that controls the flow of information and narrations. The relationship between journalists and their sources plays a key role in shaping news content and its impact on public understanding of issues (Davis., Berkowitz.,2009). In the conclusion of the study, the importance of public relations in practicing effective channels for communication to achieve mutual understanding, constituting mechanisms for promoting empathy and rebuild confidence between the two communities is set forth.

Suggestions

It is suggested that a new technical committee, 'Technical Committee on Public Relations' should be established during the negotiation process, eligible to

help leadership to redefine communication strategies to achieve unity of messages in their narrations and in media coverage as well as to carry out perception management. The committee can start dialogue between the journalists from different points of view by establishing sub-committees where the discussions on minimizing the extreme narrations in media coverage could be achieved. In addition to this, new strategies could be developed for state-run news agencies in both sides to help to develop positive perception for each other. It will be productive if this committee undertakes the mission to assist other committees in order to achieve unity of messages in public statements.

Keywords

Public relations, communication strategies, negotiation process



An Issues Management Approach to Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Ethics: A Crisis with the Rising Machines?

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Intro/Purpose

An emergent issue for all sectors of public and private life is the rapid development and use of Artificial Intelligence (AI). AI poses a vast number of positive potentials in public health, civil engineering, transportation, and other sectors. Yet the ethical problems associated with AI are little explored and not yet understood. Public relations analytics already uses a great deal of AI data, though the pitfalls and ethical dilemmas are emergent.

Literature

This emerging issue poses a risk for organizations of all kinds in every sector and constitute an issue as yet to be thoroughly identified and managed in public relations. To date, no scholarly research in this area has been identified and the discussions of the ethical implications of AI in public relations exists primarily in the blogosphere. Literature from issues management, risk management, and AI will be included. Futurists are both positive and negative on machine consciousness and the ability to integrate ethical values and decision making (Davies, 2016) – no one is yet certain of the implications, yet implementation at organizations such as Uber rushes ahead at a quick pace.

Method

Data were collected with AI developers at the Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AAAI) conference; the IPRRC conference for public relations educators and some practitioners; and the Arthur W. Page Society, an organization of thought leaders and CCOs. Through short surveys and qualitative interviews with those on both the technical and communication sides of AI, this study examines the extent to which ethics is considered in AI as well as the a potential issue, risk, or threat AI poses in public relations.

RQ 1: To what extent do AI specialist consider ethics and moral ramifications of AI in their work?

RQ 2: To what extent do public relations educators and public relations professionals consider the ethics of AI use and the moral ramifications of AI in their work?

RQ 2: What are the pressing areas of AI ethics that public relations specialists should use in their issues management?

This problematic ethical issues and potential risk for public relations spans a vast number of new technologies: facial recognition, the use of big data (personal information collection), nanotechnology, machine learning, sentient robotics, sentient satellites, warfare drones, nanotechnology, neural nets and post-humanism. For example, Saudi Arabia recently awarded citizenship to Sophia, a Hong Kong-engineered AI robot. How do government public relations professionals around the world respond to such a decision? Beyond the government relations realm, the AI revolution and related technologies described above will change every sector of industry and will change every form of business.

Results

This exploratory research also addresses a meta-question: *Are public relations scholars and professionals ready to address the issues, specifically the myriad complex ethical dilemmas, that will result from the AI revolution?* By understanding the challenges posed by AI, specific recommendations for issues management and ethical counsel can be made for public relations scholars and professionals. Issues management is central to identify emerging trends for an organization and managing issues of risk or uncertainty, helping to proactively prepare for the future. Ethical frameworks are essential for assessing and advising management on the complex changes brought by AI.

Implications

By using an issues management approach to the ethical conundrums posed by AI, this study seeks to identify and assess the potential ethical issues with which



public relations must deal. Attention to these issues should foster a public relations industry that is ethically engaged and prepared to counsel on the ethics of proactive AI use, rather than waiting for Facebook to set parameters; or other fields, such as engineering or law, to define the ethics of AI in organizations.

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Journalism and Media in Times of Crisis: Who are the Key Stakeholders and how are they Portrayed?

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Introduction and purpose of the study

In modern society, risk has become ubiquitous and has pervaded everyday life (Giddens, 1999). This proliferation of risks bring new challenges for the media. Restricted by available space or airtime as well as by the media structure which limits their ability to “contextualize social information and explain its meaning”, media must wait for a situation to be triggered by a spectacular event before being able to address social problems and crises that affect society (Raboy 1993: 84).

Nevertheless, the perception of risks would be affected by their media coverage because of the importance of disaster coverage and the internationalization of information, made possible by new technologies, which would create a media rapprochement and give to the public the perception that even distant risks lie in wait for them. In this sense, studies on risk perception (Fischhoff et al., 1978) show that audiences overestimate the “imaginary risks” or the frequency of spectacular and highly publicized events (attacks, murders, suicides, etc.), yet less frequent, and underestimate the natural risks that are most common, but the least publicized (such as diseases and accidents). The way in which the media treat a subject would therefore play a key role in the perception of risk among individuals who would evaluate events by comparison with those who have been highly publicized beforehand.

Considering this context, it seems essential to analyze the coverage of crises and disasters in order to better understand the elements that are put forward in the media, the role played by spokespersons and the portrayal of victims. Disasters do not impact everyone equally; and an important issue embedded within discussions about community resilience is the need to consider support needs of high risk populations and the ‘asset profiles’ of persons labeled as ‘high-risk’ and their potential contribution to disaster risk

reduction and community resilience. In time of crisis, what are the discourses across different mass media related to the persons in charge of communication, the general population and those who live with functional limitations?

Methodology

We will use media analysis to address these questions and objectives. A multiple case study design (Yin, 1998) will be used. The data sources will include international news clips, internet and newspaper stories, and social media. Twelve disasters that occurred in Canada will form the case studies. The decision regarding the disasters to include for the media analysis case studies was based on representation of different types of events cross-cutting regions in Canada, between 2009 to 2015.

We will over-sample extreme weather events, to explore how different discourses permeate the media. Media artefacts for each disaster will be analyzed using discourse analysis, following the steps recommended by Rose (2012). Dominant discursive formations will be identified for each of the case studies. A discursive formation is “(...) the way meanings are connected together in a particular discourse” (Rose, 2012, p.191). Emergent themes from each case study will be compared and contrasted with the other case studies, to identify common discourses across different types of disasters.

Results

Expected research outcomes include prompting public discourse about assets, how media can contribute to individual and collective asset literacy, and how innovative thinking about assets can contribute to community resilience and ultimately increase the understanding of complex health messages



for audiences. By understanding the role of asset literacy, we expect that professionals across multiple sectors, specially public relations and communication management, will be inspired to learn more about what constitutes an inclusive society, and recognize how diversity, empowerment, and inclusion can support disaster resilience and should be included in communication strategies. These results will also help public relations professionals better understand how their messages are perceived and disseminated by the media and what elements are prioritized in this type of coverage.

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Keywords

Crisis; Risk; Media; Public Relations; Communication



Model of Strategic Public Relations – MSPR: the role of PR in a VUCA world

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Introduction

This article aims to present the Model of Strategic Public Relations – MSPR, and through this bring PR for a strategic level. In MSPR is argued that only at that level it is possible to align a harmonious and coherent narrative and, this way, consider its intervention in the social environment creating a symbolic universe and therefore, locating all collective events in a coherent unit, to establish a shared memory, connecting the past to the future in a whole charged of meaning (Berger & Luckmann, 2001). If we limit PR to an eminently executive or instrumental role, its power of narrative construction, that is, its power to understand organizations as thematic structures and beings of discourse is taken away. This way organizations are prevented from achieving legitimization of their daily roles and from being assumed as a symbolic universe.

Literature review

Starting on Américo Ramalho's (1986) statement "PR have a social, economic and political role", this article, in a macro level, develops a reflection to this statement based on the fundamental principles of the constructivist and rethorical theories, using a method based on the naturalist paradigm and ending on the presentation of the MSPR. This model is not presented as normative, but rather as a way of systematizing and crossing knowledge. It is the result of a long path of research and critical analysis of published literature, but also of the co-reflection with academics and professionals, in what emerges close to the grounded theory method, even if it is applied informally and not in all its methodological accuracy.

To consider organizations as discourse entities, or thematic structures, constitutes a particular vision of public relations, enhancing their natural vocation of communication and relationship (van Ruler & Verčič, 2002), which obliges them to go far beyond the immediacy of action or reaction. Through public relations point of view considering organizations as a way of propagate symbolisms, meanings and rituals in the social space, it's considering them as social cells per se.

The MSPR defines as fundamental and, consequently, guiding lines: Who am I and how do I see myself, who are the others with whom I relate and how do they see me and, finally, what are the fundamental values that guide my behavior, as axes to understand what role do I have in society and a fundamental basis for acting on a daily basis. Why these lines presuppose a strategic dimension? Analyzing the various contributions and schools of strategic thinking, it is understood that the elements contained in these lines are contextualized in what these contributions and schools define as a strategy.

According to this foundation, the MSPR presents three strategic areas: study of organizational identity (the "I"), study of the publics (the "other"), and finally know and systematize the ethical values that guide the behavior of an organization.

Methodology

Regarding a mezzo level, the objective set out for this article is the conceptual identification with the model by those who have experience of high strategic decision-making process in organizations (CEO and members of the boards) and by PR practitioners with relevant experience.

To achieve this objective, and considering the inputs resulting from previous ten interviews with professionals in Portugal, the option was to make two focus groups: one with six CEO or chairmen or member of the boards and another with eight PR practitioners. In both cases, they are professionals who, due to their curricula are classified as senior qualified informants.

Results and conclusions

Based on the analysis of the results obtained it is concluded that all participants identify themselves, lato sensu, with the concept of strategy of MSPR. For these participants, strategy constitutes the fundamental axis of the decision-making process, the line that gives structure and coherence and implies a macro and long-term vision.



Considering the areas that are classified on the MSPR, as strategic areas (study of organizational identity, study of the publics and study of ethical values) and as tactical-operational areas (media relationship, internal communication, communities relationship or specialized public relations - lobbying, financial communication, crisis communication, environmental communication, i.a.), organisation top managers and PR practitioners identify themselves, *lato senso*, with the model. For these leaders a strategic dimension implies to identify and study organizational identity, to identify and study the relationships between the organization and its environment, and to identify and study the organization's fundamental values, and integrate this

information into the high decision-making process.

Practical and social implications

Thinking an organization in what it is, with whom it relates and under what values it guides its behavior, it is a way of adding bottom lines to those organizations, and enables them to act in a coherent and harmonious way in a VUCA world.

Keywords

Strategic Public Relations, Public Relations, Strategy, Model

The Role and Impact of Public Relations on Enhancing the Visibility of Non-profit Organisations. Case Study: Foundation “Croatia for Children”

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Introduction and purpose of the study

Non-profits play an important role in modern society. According to Andreasen and Kotler (2008) their role is triple: non-profits provide services which are not often offered by the government; profit organisations cannot sometimes be trusted to fairly and equitably provide goods and services and lastly, non-profits cover a gap that national (and international) governments create due to their implementation of policies that are not effective in creating faster change. Bearing in mind aforementioned roles as well as the fact that non-profit organisations tend to maintain the close and healthy relations with the public they have to spread the word about their activities and scope of their work in order to attract interest of the public, garner the support from it and foster further development. This is the key point where public relations steps in. Unlike the profit-organisations, non-profits usually fail to allocate resources for public relations. Durham (2009) emphasized that non-profits find it much harder than their for-profit counterparts do to build in budgets, staff and infrastructure that public relations require because non-profits are inherently more complicated, have varied level of leaderships, diverse audience and complex ways of generating income. Only a limited pool of non-profits realize the necessity and benefits of public relations. In this regard, the purpose of this research is to investigate and analyze the role and impact of public relations in enhancing the visibility of non-profits.

Literature review

The emphasis on applying public relations to non-profits has been shaped by the work of Andreasen and Kotler (2008) who define two models of public relations in non-profits: the classic, traditional model centred on institutional image, maintaining a certain equilibrium in relationship between the public and institutions and awareness (public advocacy) model, closer to

contemporary public relations that serve to initiate social action. Their support of the application of public relations to the non-profit environment has created a shift in the mind-set from realizing the advantages of applying public relations concepts and tools in the non-profit arena. Public relations play a vital role for non-profits to maintain the close relationships with the public, inform them about their activities and try to engage them (Duhalm, 2009). Moreover, public relations represent an effective tool to regain the credibility and trust of public in the non-profit sector, as well as to maintain the climate of sensitivity regarding various social issues. According to Morelli (2011:7), non-profits have slowly been introducing public relations into their activities, realizing that it may help them achieve their mission.

Methodology

The case study method was applied in the research. Case study deemed as an appropriate method since it enables researcher to closely examine the data within the specific context. The main questions of this research were “how” and “why” (i.e. How public relations can enhance the visibility of non-profits? Why public relations represent an effective tool to enhance the visibility of non-profits?) which are more “explanatory” questions, thus they lead to the use of case studies (Yin, 2014: 6). Since there were no other cases available for replication, this research adopted single-case rather than multiple-case design. Single and unique case study allows researchers to study phenomena that could not be studied under different circumstances (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007:27). In spite the fact that the drawback of a single-case design is its inability to provide a generalising conclusion, single and detailed case-study of Foundation “Croatia for Children” will represent a ground floor for future researches on the same and/or similar scope.



Results and conclusions

The results of conducted research confirmed that public relations play a vital role and contribute to enhancing the visibility of non-profit organisations. Moreover, it is evident that public relations are of the utmost importance in accomplishing objectives that non-profits set: develop two-sided communication between the organisation and beneficiaries, win the public acceptance for the organisation's mission as well as the acceptance of key stakeholders, ensure creating and maintaining a favourable climate circumstances, ensure and maintaining public interest and the interest of key stakeholders and ultimately, foster the engagement and interest of public and key stakeholders.

Practical and social implication

The results serve as an indicator that public relations scholarship need to devote more attention to the role and importance of public relations in non-profit sector since the last decades were characterized by the shift in the mind-set regarding the importance of public relations in non-profit sector. In addition to that, the results serve as an indicator that public relations can contribute to maintaining the close and healthy relations with the public and key stakeholders who may help non-profits to achieve their goals.

Keywords

public relations, non-profits, visibility, engagement



Public Reactions to CSR 2.0: A Cross-National Study on Creating Shared Values in the World of Crisis

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Introduction and purpose of study

The rapid development of human societies brings many global challenges (e.g., sustainable development, climate change, income inequality, race/gender inequality, public distrust in institutions, etc.). The world in crisis requires all sectors in society to work together towards a solution. Even though CSR has become a common corporate practice, the dilemma is why and how corporations should **actively** engage in CSR activities, which **have** social impacts, over the **long** run. Porter and Kramer's (2011) creating shared values (CSV) is proposed as an answer. The concern from the CSR literature is the negative public reaction (e.g., distrust in the corporation) resulting from the economic-gain component of the shared value. This empirical study, therefore, explicates the public reactions to CSV initiatives in various issue domains in comparison to their reactions to CSR initiatives.

Literature review

CSV is a specific kind of strategic CSR. This study adopts Porter and Kramer's (2011) definition of CSV – "policies and operating practices which enhance the competitiveness of a company while simultaneously advancing the economic and social conditions in the communities in which it operates" (p. 66) – and Wójcik's (2016) conceptualized differences between CSR and CSV. In this study, CSR referred to all other CSR activities that are not CSV.

Mayer et al.'s (1995) three dimensions of trust (i.e., integrity, expertise, and social benevolence) and Freeman's (1984) stakeholder theory were applied in this study to postulate that CSV has a more significant effect on public trust (in business) and positive public reactions than CSR, because it showcases the three

above-mentioned trust dimensions of an organization simultaneously. Furthermore, CSV creates economic and social values that benefit multiple stakeholders while CSR often creates social value for some stakeholders by sharing economic value of other stakeholders (investors and employees).

Methodology

The study conducted a 2 (responsible practice: CSV vs. CSR) x 3 (issue domain: economic development vs. environmental sustainability vs. employee management) between-subject experiment in the US (n = 593), Germany (n = 592) and China (n = 599) in October 2017. The participants were randomly recruited from the online panels of a reputable international research firm. Participants in the US and Germany were more equally distributed in gender while there were more males (52.3%) in China. In addition, the Chinese participants were much younger, more employed and with a higher educational level than their counterparts in the US and Germany.

The three chosen countries represent the largest economies of their respective continents. People in these countries acquire a different level of CSR knowledge, face the economic, environment and social challenges with different priorities, and have a different culture.

Results and conclusions

Two-way ANOVA analyses revealed four key results:

- 1) Participants in all three countries were more likely to engage in corporate communication about CSV initiatives than CSR ones regardless of the issue domain.



- 2) Americans and Chinese had a higher level of trust and purchase intention toward CSV-performing companies than those practicing CSR regardless of the issue domain. Germans did not see any difference.
- 3) Among the studied participants, only Americans had a different perceived corporate reputation between CSV- and CSR-performing companies (CSV companies had a more positive reputation). In addition, issue domains (i.e., employee management) had a positive moderating effect on the impact of CSV on perceived corporate reputation.
- 4) Among the studied participants, only Chinese had a stronger intention to recommend a CSV-performing company than a CSR-performing company on digital platforms

In conclusion, CSV initiatives generated similar or more positive public reactions than CSR initiatives do in the three countries.

Theoretical and practical Implications

This is one of the first research studies contributing to CSV theory from the public relations perspective. It demonstrated that CSV can be even more effective than CSR in soliciting certain attitudes and intentions of publics in certain countries. It also provided effective CSV operationalization and manipulation based on

insights of our previous qualitative research. In the presentation, we will further discuss why our findings were inconsistent with the positive/negative impacts of strategic CSR on CSR skepticism/public trust in corporations practicing strategic CSR suggested by previous research. Practically, this research advances public relations professionals' CSR knowledge and provides evidence for advocacy of CSV to better contend with the world in crisis.

Keywords

CSV, trust in business, public reaction, CSR

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Fake News, My News, Real News: Source credibility crisis and the rise of PR professionals as indirect gatekeepers

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Introduction and purpose of the study

Globally, public trust in media fell down to an all-time low from 51% to 43% in 2017 (2017 Edelman Trust Barometer). Although the low level of trust has remained unchanged in between 2017 and 2018, journalists have started rebuilding their position in the last year – the difference, which may be partially explained by the change in understanding how people define media. Especially digital media have been negatively influencing ability to identify expert opinions, (Flanagin & Metzger, 2017) and complicated traditional perception of media as trustworthy source of information (Tench & Yeomans, 2013).

The first aim of the quantitative stage of the research project was to understand to what extent individual level, psychological factors influence acceptance of fake news. The second aim of the qualitative element of the agenda was to evaluate attitudes of journalists confronted with the idea of co-creating content with PR professionals as one of the suggested measures preventing sharing misleading, inaccurate and/or false information.

Literature review

Inability of publics to distinguish credible from not trustworthy sources brings up social psychological notion of source credibility being at the centre of persuasion theorists attention since 1940' (e.g. Bandura, 2001; Hovland, 1953, Petty & Cacioppo, 1986; Eagly & Chaiken, 1984). With the majority of people uncertain how to distinguish real from fake news, and 7 in 10 people is worried about information or fake news being used as a weapon (2018 Edelman Trust Barometer), it is not surprising that research on fake news flourished in recent years (Allcott & Gentzkow, 2016; Balmas, 2014; Dahl et al., 2017; Del Vicario et al., 2017; Fulgoni & Lipsman, 2017; Sørensen et al., 2017; Tusinski Berg, 2017). It should also come as no surprise that media credibility has been at the centre of attention of media and journalism theorists (e.g. Metzger et al. 2003; Metzger et al. 2016; Meyer 1988)

Although, as Del Vicario and her colleagues (2017) note that social media gather people of similar interests and opinions using algorithms matching content with users' interests, they also allow spreading rumours and conspiracy theories rapidly. Research also shows that social media users seem to treat experts views as less credible than those of their friends. Self-esteem then often leads individuals to selectively use information that is consistent with the views of their group members and eliminate conflicting opinions from their perspective and homophily (Aiello, 2012; Bassi, et al., 2015).

A similar psychological mechanism – false consensus effect (Ross et. al., 1977) –explains why people overestimate the prevalence of opinions and beliefs consistent with their own. Consequences of this motivational and cognitive phenomenon may lead to selective information sharing among group member (Stasser & Titus, 1981).

Taking into account eminent influence of the above biases on information processing and judgement formation it was interesting to test whether these mechanisms can also account for higher acceptance of fake news by social media users.

Methodology

In this study, quantitative and qualitative methodologies were employed.

In the first, experimental study, 240 (N=240) participants were randomly assigned to one of four experimental conditions. In each of the conditions they were asked 15 Likert-type questions of the Need for Cognitive Closure Scale and provide answers to questions about their declared education, political views, professional experience and habits. In the next stage, participants were informed that they would be shown a Facebook posts of a person either similar (vs. not similar) in competence (vs. opinion), depending on the experimental condition, and subsequently presented with several posts containing fake news.



Then, participants were asked to evaluate posts' as well as author's credibility, likeability and believability. Lastly they were debriefed about the real purpose of the study and explained that the news presented to them were purportedly made up by the experimenter.

In the second study, to probe the possibility of perceiving PR professionals as indirect gatekeepers facilitating dissemination of accurate information, 6 semi-structured interviews with national media representatives were conducted.

Results and conclusions

Findings of the experimental study partially supported prediction that similarity to the source increases credibility of the message. Results of the qualitative project showed mixed and often unfavourable

perception of the PR industry. The results are limited to fake news presented on Facebook and should be treated with caution as Facebook has been communicating its efforts to modify content selection algorithms in order to deal with the fake news problem.

Practical and social implications

Obtained results are discussed with reference to PR practice and challenges for the field are delineated. Implications include but are not limited to suggesting closer cooperation between journalists and PR professionals – a view criticised by some academics.

Keywords

Fake news, Public Relations, gatekeepers, Facebook



Scansis as a Unique Crisis Type: Theoretical and Practical Implications

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Introduction/Purpose

There is an influx of research in crisis communication that uses the term scandal but scandal is poorly conceptualized. Scandal has been treated as a type of crisis, interchangeable with crisis, and a function of a poor crisis response (e.g., DeMaria, 2010). This lack of conceptual clarity limits the utility of what scandal research can add to crisis communication. Recently, the term scansis was introduced to provide clarity. Drawing from political communication and social psychology, scandals can be defined by the moral outrage they produce, hence not all crises are scandals nor are all scandals crises. The term scansis denotes when a crisis has also become a scandal. Appraisal theory was used to explain how specific factors within a crisis can product moral outrage. Essentially the crisis must produce attributions of crisis responsibility, anger, and a perception of injustice for outrage to emerge.

Given the moral outrage associated with scansis, it was hypothesized that the crisis response to a scansis would require some redress to the moral nature of the situation—a scansis would create a unique communicative demand not found in other crises. More specifically, a corrective action associated with a scansis would need to acknowledge the moral violation thereby demonstrating empathy with the victims. The purpose of this study was to test whether or not a crisis response that was empathetic was more effective than just corrective action during a scansis:

H1: In a scansis an empathetic response couple with corrective action will be more effect than corrective action alone or no response at enhancing the post-crisis reputation and purchase intention while limiting negative word-of-mouth.

Literature Review

As noted earlier, the crisis communication literature is imprecise in its use of the term scandal. Political communication views scandal as a unique concept linked to moral outrage (Entman, 2012). Appraisal

theory in social psychology has determined that moral outrage is a function of responsibility for an action, anger, and perceptions of injustice (Antonetti & Maklan, 2014). Because scandal is distinct but related to crisis, it is problematic to either equate the two or to consider one a type of the other. Instead, the term scansis was created to capture the unique nature of when a crisis also can be considered a scandal.

Methodology

An experiment was conducted to test the effects of a no response, corrective action alone, and a corrective with empathy (recognition of a moral violation). The subjects were an adult population between the ages of 25 and 75. There were 200 participants in the study and they were randomly assigned to one of the three conditions. The dependent variables were organizational reputation, purchase intention, and negative word-of-mouth. Other variables in the study included account acceptance, anger, justice, greed, empathy, and outrage. The crisis case was an actual case involving a major price increase by the pharmaceutical company Mylan for one of its popular products.

Results & Conclusions

The manipulation check found that respondents did find the corrective action plus empathy as more empathetic than the corrective only or no response conditions. A MANOVA analysis found no significant differences between the two conditions for any of the three dependent variables. Though the hypothesis was not supported, the study is still useful. The results suggest that a scansis produces such a strong negative effect through moral outrage that crisis communication has no immediate effect on the crisis situation. Scansis might be immune to any communicative intervention designed to enhance organizational assets. A poor crisis response can still make any crisis situation worse (double-crisis). The paper argues for a triadic appraisal model for a scansis as a way to advance theory in this area. Most crises are driven by attributions of crisis



responsibility that generate anger related to the crisis thereby involving two appraisals—a situation is negative and a responsibility for the crisis. A scansis creates a third appraisal related to outrage. Once outrage is perceived, the effects of crisis response strategies are negated in terms of immediate effects.

Practical & Social Implications

The results raise questions about how crisis communicator might best be served by focusing on the ethical reasons for their response in a scansis rather than on immediate, short-term benefits. Past crisis research might have tied practitioner recommendations too closely to immediate effects and not given enough attention to ethical concerns and the potential long-term effects of crisis responses.

Keywords

Crisis communication, Crisis, Scandal, Scansis

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Optimization of spokespersons' use of voice in organizational crisis communication

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Literature

Research on crisis communication has mainly focused on the content of crisis communication, such as the impact of crisis response strategies (e.g., apologies). However, people frequently receive news about crises via audiovisual media, such as television or video messages on the Internet. Such audiovisual crisis communication not only conveys the content of a message, but also nonverbal cues (Coombs & Holladay, 2009). These nonverbal cues can comprise of visual cues (e.g., hand gestures, eye contact) and/or vocal cues (e.g., voice pitch, speech errors). Although several authors have recognized the importance of nonverbal communication in times of crisis, it remains relatively unexplored in research. There has been some research on visual cues (e.g., Arpan, 2002), but research on vocal cues is very limited (Claeys & Cauberghe, 2014). Therefore, a doctoral dissertation by the first author of this abstract, which will be finalized in June 2018, examined the impact of an organizational spokesperson's voice in times of crisis.

Methodology and results

In order to examine this, we used a mixed methods approach.

First, we examined the impact of specific vocal cues. We conducted a between-subject experiment (N = 227) in which voice pitch (high vs. low), speech rate (fast vs. slow), and crisis response strategy (deny vs. apology) were manipulated. The results show that a CEO's voice pitch and speech rate have an impact on post-crisis reputation, but only when using an apology. The most effective combinations of vocal cues are high pitch + fast speech rate and low pitch + slow speech rate.

Second, we examined the impact of emotions in a spokesperson's voice. In a between-subjects experiment (N = 157), we manipulated emotions in the voice of a spokesperson in times of crisis (sad vs. neutral) and the crisis stage (during vs. in the aftermath of the crisis). On the one hand, an emotional voice

leads to better attitudes towards the organization because it increases the public's empathy with the spokesperson. On the other hand, an emotional voice has a negative impact on the attitudes towards the organization because it decreases the perception of the spokesperson's dominance. However, the negative effect of an emotional voice through a lower perceived dominance only occurs during the crisis, while the positive effect of an emotional voice through increased empathy occurs both during and in the aftermath of the crisis.

Third, we examined the interplay between a spokesperson's vocal and visual cues. In two between-subjects experiments (study 1: N = 125 / study 2: N = 126), we manipulated vocal cues of deception (study 1: speech disturbances / study 2: voice pitch) and visual cues of deception (gaze aversion, hand adaptors, posture shifts). Deceptive visual cues have a negative impact on attitudes towards the organization and the public's purchase intentions because they lower the spokesperson's credibility. Vocal cues of deception also have a negative impact on attitudes and purchase intentions, but only in combination with visual cues of deception.

Finally, we studied how nonverbal cues are used in crisis communication practice. A quantitative content analysis of 160 crisis communication videos examined the use of nonverbal cues of deception in audiovisual crisis communication. Nonverbal cues of deception are mainly displayed in preventable crises (in contrast with victim crises) and mainly by individuals in crisis (in contrast with organizations). Moreover, corporate videos allow most control over nonverbal cues of deception, and especially speech errors appear hard to control. In a final study, 17 semi-structured in-depth interviews with media trainers show that media trainers generally consider nonverbal communication more important than verbal, but devote more attention to verbal aspects in their media training, because they think nonverbal cues are difficult to teach.



Implications

These studies first clearly show the importance of nonverbal cues in times of crisis, and more specifically, the importance of vocal cues, which are understudied. They show that voice pitch, speech rate, speech disturbances, and emotions in the voice all affect crisis outcomes. Moreover, vocal cues affect not only a spokesperson's credibility and dominance, and empathy towards him/her, but also the reputation, attitudes and behavior towards the organization as a whole. Second, the studies show that vocal cues can influence the effectiveness of crisis response strategies. This is an important insight for incorporating nonverbal communication in existing crisis communication

models about crisis response strategies. Third, the findings show that visual cues of deception determine whether or not vocal cues have an impact, which gives insight into the relative importance of visual and vocal cues in times of crisis. Fourth, the results show how nonverbal cues are used in practice, which bridges the gap between research and practice. Finally, these studies offer a number of practical guidelines regarding appropriate nonverbal communication in times of crisis.

Keywords

crisis communication; nonverbal communication; voice



Stalling the regression in human rights triggered by political polarization: The new frontier of corporate social responsibility

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Introduction

Executives of corporations have been speaking up against egregious violations of human rights. Apple CEO Tim Cook has been a vocal champion of social causes such as racial equality, right to privacy and rights of the lesbian, bisexual, gay, and transexual community. Microsoft, Facebook and Google executives have spoken against the move to rescind the Dreamers or Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, which gives temporary protection to undocumented migrants who arrived in the US as children. Facebook has created updated guidelines to its newsfeed and hired staffers to monitor news on the site in response to the scourge of fake news that has been accused of influencing the 2016 presidential election in the U.S.

The world has been racked by multiple crises in the past few years partly due to the increasing polarization of political discourse leading to the rise of the alt right in the U.S., and across some European countries. This rising polarization poses threat of regression to the progress made in advancing social, civil and political rights.

This essay argues that the stances taken by corporations on matters of social importance articulate a new frontier for corporate social responsibility (CSR). Have the respective roles of governments and corporations been changing? Instead of the traditional perspective of governments regulating corporations as agents of unfettered capitalism driven by motives of profit-maximization, this paper argues that corporations are increasingly having to moderate extreme political stances of governments. In this new role, are corporations becoming the guardians; the vanguards of protecting progressive human rights; and stalling the regression of progress achieved in human rights? Most importantly, what is the role of public relations in this changing scenario?

Literature Review

One of the key debates in research on CSR has been the negotiation of boundaries of social responsibility among governments, corporations and civil society. This debate is reflected in the multitude of theoretical approaches to CSR ranging from shareholder value theory to corporate citizenship (Mele, 2008). On the one hand, shareholder value theory, best exemplified by Milton Friedman, argues that the only social responsibility of business is making profits and increasing the economic value of the company for its shareholders. On the other hand, corporate citizenship theory, based on a political standpoint, argues that businesses have an active role to play in society and they need to get involved in philanthropic activities in the communities they are embedded in.

Scholars have argued that forces of globalization have changed the respective roles of governments and corporations. According to corporate citizenship theory, corporations step in where there is a governance gap; where governments cease to administer social, civil and political rights; where governments have not yet administered these rights; and where the administration of rights may be beyond the reach of the government (Matten & Crane, 2005). In this view of corporate citizenship, corporations provide social rights by supplying social services such as education and health care; or they can enable civil rights that provide freedom from abuses and violations of human rights; or they can be a channel for political rights.

Although corporate citizenship theory, especially the concept of corporations stepping in to fill a governance gap, has often been applied in the context of developing nations (Visser, 2008), this paper argues that current political developments in developed nations have forced corporations to enable civil rights for citizens in these contexts as well.



Main argument

The main argument in this essay is that the traditional roles of governments and corporations in society need to be questioned. Instead of governments regulating free market forces, it's corporations that are increasingly playing a moderating role on excessive government viewpoints and actions.

The 2018 Edelman trust barometer revealed that although people's trust in business, government, NGOs and media are at record low levels, voices of expertise are regaining credibility with CEOs recording a seven-percentage point gain since 2017. This trend might be a reflection of the increasing role corporations can assume as guardians of human rights.

What is the role of public relations in this changing context? Public relations practitioners as boundary spanners and conscience keepers of their organizations have an important role in raising their organization's

voices against violations of human social, civil and political rights.

Implications

Theoretically, this essay problematizes conventional understandings of CSR and, employing corporate citizenship theory, repositions corporations as guardians of social and civil rights in the face of increasing polarization of political views. Implications for practice include an articulation of the role public relations practitioners can play to contribute to this reconceptualization. Socially, such a conceptualization can have implications for questions of accountability when non-elected entities step up as guardians of human rights.

Keywords

Corporate social responsibility, corporate citizenship, human rights



Fake news, a construction of reality

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The **purpose** of a study is to critically assess common presupposition, that fake news is:

- a) a threat for civilization as we know it;
- b) something that appeared only recently or at least that recent examples present more serious threat for civilization as those from the past.

It looks like fast and global spread of fake news widen the gap between objective reality and that reality asserted by fake news. It is thus accepted especially by so called liberal media but also wider intellectual community that we are living in post truth era. Such shift is mainly attributed to a strong anti-scientific movement of which one of more important consequence is agnotology that is then understood as one of major causes for inefficiency of democracy, post-democracy.

Assessment rests on principal difference between so called objective reality and subjective reality (Plato, Aristotle, Steven Pinker, Steve Austen, Ferdinand Saussure, Claude Levi Strauss, Daniel Dennett, Jacques Lacan...); between genetic and memetic evolution (Susan Blackmore, Stephen Jay Gould, ...) and between quantum and Newtonian mechanics (Stuart Kauffman, Robert W. Ulanowicz, ...). It is also represented by opposition between scientism of Richard Dawkins from 2002 onwards and his work from 1976 to 2002.

Study **rests** on the only possible empirical study within memetics: that of thought experiments, argumentations and consistent reasoning based on neuroscience, physics and philosophy of evolution.

Results

If "fake" relates to speech act that contradicts or does not comply to reality, the nature of reality should be clarified first. Is reality as solid and predictable as defined by Newtonian mechanics or it follows more quantum like principle of uncertainty? Human neural activity is more like quantum than Newtonian reality. On the top of that memetic reality as one of end results of neural activities does not belong to physical (genetic) reality. Memetic reality relates to physical only while in the same time creates its own reality. Memetic activity is poetic (constructive). As poetic reality is strong, as descriptive (explaining physical reality) is weak and

imperfect since physical reality is impenetrable for memes. We as all living creatures live in physical reality (it hurts if we hit a wall with our head regardless any memetic theory), but at the same time we as human beings execute our specific human nature in memes only. Memetic reality cannot but be constructed, fake in relation to objective reality.

Practical implications

Since public relations target deal with memetic reality only, it is necessary to understand ontology of that reality. Only then truth, post truth or fake news can be understood.

Limitations

Political and religious prejudices.

Keywords

gene; meme; engagement; nature; nurture

First stop: Poiesis / Plato and Aristotle

The real meaning of poiesis degraded almost to mere poetry over millennia since the concept was introduced by Plato. Poiesis in most simple terms is creation of something new. A creation of physis for Plato, a creation of metaphysics that reflects physis for Aristotle. In both cases: creation. And creation cannot be but creation of new reality.

What is a nature of such reality?

Second stop: Jacques Lacan

There are many that entered the conundrum opened by idealists like Plato and realists or even materialists like Aristotle. In both cases dualism of matter and spirit is baffling. But for Jacques Lacan who precisely differentiate "the real" from "reality". The real as something that constitutes all phenomena but is impenetrable for humans. And constructed reality that in his words emerges like symptom; that would in Aristotle word be poiesis.



Is real impenetrable, inaccessible?

Third stop: quantum mechanics by many

It is very difficult for common mind to accept impenetrability of real after painful bump into the wall. Contemporary physics in a way proves Lacan philosophical thesis. In search for smallest particle of universal physis, physicists found that what constitutes reality evades definition. It can be particle and wave at the same time. Here and there at the same time. It can only be presented to us by abstract mathematical formulas or by computer interpretations. We can never see this real behind reality in which we indulge daily. We only see emergent properties, traces on computer screen that are results of something behind that we do not and cannot see, hear or feel. Nothing (behind) creates the beauty of here.

It is thus proved that physical reality is constructed permanently, with each instance of wave collapse.

What about memetic reality?

Fourth stop: Susan Blackmore,

According to Richard Dawkins and other memologists memes evolved as second replicator (after genes). They are co-created in replication and mutation. They become sometimes even more important in human evolution than genes and physical reality. There is for instance much lower influence on contemporary androgyny trend from chemicals than from memetic pressure. While we still survive with two or mostly three sexes within genetic domain, genders inflated to 63 or even more recently. Androgyny is old fashioned already! And all this evolution due to fast memetic replication and mutation.

Are 63 genders fake news?

Fifth stop: Kauffman, Ulanowitz, Drapal...

Is burning bush seen by Moises fake news? Is Penelope pretending to weave a burial shroud for Odysseus's fake news? Is Newton observing a falling apple a fake news? Is Coca Cola fake news? Is me being here fake news?

What is then the nature of truth?

Sixth stop: intersubjectivity

As much as:

- observation itself changes physical reality;
- brand belongs (is constructed) by brand owner as much as by brand user;
- I am here at this moment but am also anywhere where remains of my memes could be found;

So much human reality is intersubjective and nothing but intersubjective. Reality is objectively co-created with each human interaction. Such reality is not subjective (arbitrary), but objective, real. Since we co-construct reality with each interaction, no outside authority can exist that would prove or disapprove such reality. Only you and me can say: this is fake. But we cannot say that something the we created is fake, since we created it. And there is no third body that can falsify our creation. Reality is poetic, unfalsifiable. Fake news as social construct is such co-constructed reality; but as any other social reality denotes nothing. As such fake news exists from the very beginning of social creations and will exist as constituent part of our identity forever. It is our bread and butter at the same time.

Conclusion?

Seventh stop: There is no fake; there is only blockchain

Blockchain technology represents now highest level of intersubjectivity and poiesis. Each of us create a part of a blockchain that is then approved by another block, by another personal key. Interaction of personal constructions (personal keys) with the help of a public key creates objective reality of global blockchain. As intersubjective blockchain is objective and irrevocable reality. If no one replies to my block, it becomes orphan and as such fake. It is not even news any more.

Lesson for public relations and democracy?

Yes. We will have to start to live without outside authority that would play an arbiter of truth. There are experts in certain fields, and there are scientists that employ falsification principles to explain reality. But it was our false presumption (fortunately only in western mechanistic world for only last 600 years) that any kind of outside authority exists. It cannot exist in principle. No outside help thus exists for PR practice either.

From this we can conclude that we have only entered the field of Democracy. If all participants depend on any kind of outside authority, so long they perform anything but democracy. It is only when there is no



outside point of reference there is a chance to relate to one another without obstacles. It is not hard to understand blockchain technology as prime example of a system without background, without third party authority; completely intersubjective. But to have it does not mean that we understand it and to accept it. It is not easy to live without a godfather.



Agility in strategic communication research: Historical roots, conceptual specification, and implications for theory and practice

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Introduction

In a VUCA world characterized by complex and dynamic environments, companies in general and communication departments in particular struggle to keep pace with the high volatility of stakeholder demands and the increasing speed of communication. Traditional vertical structures and processes make organizations slow, ineffective, and less adaptive to abrupt changes. Thus, more and more companies strive to become more *agile* by redesigning their structures and business processes, emphasizing teams and projects, flat hierarchies, self-management, and empowerment. The term “agility” – often described synonymously as “responsiveness”, “flexibility”, or “adaptability” – has become one of the new buzzwords in today’s business world and communication industry. While it lacks an unanimous definition, it can be broadly understood as “a successful exploration of competitive bases (speed, flexibility, innovation proactivity, quality and profitability) through the integration of reconfigurable resources and best practices in a knowledge-rich environment, to provide customer-driven products and services in a fast changing market environment” (Yusuf, Sahardi, & Gunasekaran, 1999, p. 37). While the idea is certainly not new and has been around since the 1960s, the contemporary digital transformation and disruption of traditional industries (industry 4.0) has given the concept of agility a new impetus.

Literature Review

A glance at the literature reveals that the concept of agility has been explored since the 1990s, especially in the field of organizational theory and production management (e.g. Bernardes & Hanna, 2008; Gunasekaran & Yusuf, 2002). The concept was adopted by business consultants and stimulated research in the domain of management science, particularly in the fields of information technology and information systems scholarship, business processes, logistics, leadership and marketing research. Today it is an iridescent term that encompasses a multitude of concepts, methods,

and tools, yet, at the expense of a clear definitional and conceptual foundation.

Despite its omnipresence in the business world, the field of strategic communication/PR has been astonishingly reluctant in adopting the topic of agility. A preliminary literature review shows that the concept presents a still uncharted research territory, lacking fundamental definitional, conceptual, and empirical underpinnings. When using the search term “agil*”, the database *Communication & Mass Media Complete* produced only one hit explicitly related to strategic communication/PR research: a contribution by van Ruler (2015) in which she presents the *reflective communication scrum* as an agile method for PR planning.

Approach

Addressing this gap, the paper seeks to bring theoretical substance to the concept of agility. We will explore its historical roots within the fields of organizational theory and management research. We will then link the concept of agility with relevant theoretical perspectives from the field of strategic communication/PR and organizational communication, namely the discourse around postmodernism, chaos and complexity theories, systemic management approaches, as well as to the recent discourse concerning mediatization, digitalization, and datafication.

Results/Implications

Finally, the paper will outline practical implications for the field of strategic communication/PR. Inevitably, the developments described above will force organizations to change and increasingly apply new agile methods and tools. Communication departments in turn will either be *drivers of* or *be driven by* these changes. To drive change successfully, communication managers have to be aware of how to design and work in these new structures, and empower their employees to do so. A critical task will be to promote acceptance across the entire organization for new work environments



with dynamic teams and flexible targets. As van Ruler pointed out, communication leaders will also need to rethink traditional approaches to communication planning, goal setting, and performance measurement (van Ruler, 2014; see also from a different angle Nothhaft & Wehmeier, 2007). Instead, new approaches that incorporate emergent, dynamic, and systemic methods and tools to communication management have to be developed.

Keywords

Agility; strategic communication: organizational theory; organizational transformation; VUCA world

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Nonprofits and theirs communication professionals – their role in today's world

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Introduction and purpose of the study and research question

This paper addresses the questions, perplexities and results of an ongoing project that involves mixed methods analysis and that has as its main purpose to understand the role of the communication professionals in the non for profit organisations in Portugal. The specific research questions that this paper addresses may be summarised as an interrogation about the role that the communication professionals are called to fulfill in these institutions. Do the communication professionals have technical, tactical and strategic responsibilities in the portuguese non for profit organisations?

Two main groups of non for profit organisations have been studied: the NGO for development (173) and the sportive federations (56). Other groups will be studied in a near future but these two groups were chosen for quite different, even though, complementary, purposes. The first group represents what people think about when asked about non-profits, the second is usually never considered in this kind of studies but is understood as representing a new and important market for communication professionals.

Methodology

From the perspective of the research design this approach is included in the framework of what is generally designated as a mixed methodology of sequential explanation. (cf. Creswell, 2014). In a first moment quantitative methods were used to recollect information concerning descriptive aspects of the organisations and afterwards, and in order to get a deeper understanding of these organisations researchers moved to a qualitative approach.

To recollect the data 80 interviews were conducted during a year. An interview guide was used in order to ensure that the basic lines of inquiry as well as the main topics were pursued with each person interviewed; the communications professional or whoever fulfilled that function at each one of the organisations. The

interviews were recorded, transcribed and the material reduced. Afterwards the text was analysed (qualitative content analysis with recourse to NVIVO software) and the interpretations were conducted by the entire team in order to reduce biases due to personal judgements.

Results and conclusions

Doing the interviewing process main topics were addressed concerning the different kind of functions communication professionals are called to perform organised in 3 major groups that we have thought as the three common levels of professional performance: instrumental, tactical and strategic. In regard to the instrumental level the main issues concerned the existence of certain kind of instruments as leaflets, or actions that were asked to be fulfilled at the spontaneity of the moment.

The tactical level in a certain sense presupposed the existence of a professional at the institution that had some kind of expertise and the capacity to develop a more complex and integrated approach in the communication field as planning a campaign or by positioning the organisation or the sports field. Under the umbrella concept of strategic responsibilities we've considered aspects as the definition of the communication priorities in a strategic and planned way, the management of the institution's reputation or the capacity to determine the style and the tone throughout the organisations.

Questions as the existence of a media relations plan or a risk and crisis communication plan were also addressed. Under the idea of a more operational approach we've considered aspects that have to do with events and actions that are dealt in a merely responsive or casuistical way. The study highlights the lack of a consistent work in the communication area as well as the total absence of any kind of strategic thinking. Communication functions are understood as mere discursive ones and in many cases just as a way to improve the writing or the presentation of some kind of leaflet or report. We seem to be far apart from what seems to be a more optimistic view as expressed, by



for instances the European Communication Monitor (cf. Tench et al., 2017)) concerning the role of the communication professionals in our contemporaneity.

Practical and social implications

Due to the challenges of the new era, a globalised world with more and more asymmetries and were the concepts of “space” and “time” have new definitions, the social economy has suffered an enormous

development and an important role both at a political and a social level. In a world where the notion of “precariat”, to use the expression of Guy Standing (cf. Standing, 2011, 2013) to understand the nonprofits and the role of theirs communication professionals became a relevant endeavour.

Keywords

Non-profits; communication professionals; mixed methods approach



Renegotiating the non-social license to operate: Natural gas extraction from goldmine to controversial business

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Introduction and aim

Natural gas extraction from the Groningen gas fields in the Netherlands used to be a non-controversial activity, but became highly contested over the past few years. The Groningen gas field was discovered in 1959, and contains the largest onshore reserve of natural gas in Europe. Extraction from this and close-by fields started in the 1960s. The Dutch national government plays a key role in the natural gas industry and forms a public-private partnership with the Dutch Petroleum Company (NAM) for natural gas production. NAM is a joint-venture by Royal Dutch Shell and ExxonMobil and is the license holder for actual extraction. It is therefore the first point of contact in case of nuisance. In addition to a political mandate to commercially operate the Groningen gas fields, NAM needs approval from local residents and society at large. In this study, we analyse how NAM attempted to maintain its social license.

Literature review

The first earthquake in the area was officially registered in 1986. Earthquakes had already previously been felt, but were not recorded. They do not naturally occur in this region and were already linked to natural gas extraction in 1988, but NAM stated back then that this relation was nonsensical. The Royal Netherlands Meteorological Institute (KNMI) concluded in 1993 that the earthquakes in the region can be caused by natural gas extraction and NAM subsequently admitted this link. About 1000 minor earthquakes were registered between 1986 and 2012. All changed, however, when the most severe earthquake in the region hitherto, measuring 3.6 on the Richter scale, occurred in August 2012. Risk and crisis communication became suddenly urgent to maintain the social license to continue operating the Groningen gas fields.

This incident led to a wide media coverage in local, national and international press and the national

government commissioned 15 studies across a range of topics on the issue. Previously, the national media had not performed their role as watchdog very prominently and only became active now (Opperhuizen, Schouten and Klein, 2018); probably also triggered by a critical report of the State Supervision of Mines (SodM) and earthquakes occurring more often and being more intense in 2013. Fluctuations in media attention can therefore only partially be related to the actual earthquake hazard. The increased chance in itself does not seem to be decisive in the enormous and rapid media attention shift in 2013. In this study, we relate this finding to the press releases by NAM, Shell, ExxonMobil and the Dutch government related to the earthquakes. Were the risks of natural gas extraction being downplayed in these press releases and by doing so, did they misled the general public? Furthermore, fuelling distrust and protest, NAM must compensate direct damage from natural gas extraction, but had no good track record in doing so. NAM assesses the damage and decides about the reimbursement itself. Dutch society seemed to withdraw its previously issued social license to operate in the Groningen gas fields.

Related to this, NAM and the Dutch government used to perceive the risks as an objective threat and approached risk and crisis communication accordingly in a techno-scientific manner. With the increasing protests, they need to change their tone of voice to conceive risk as a social-cultural experience (Cox and Pezzullo, 2016). NAM and Dutch government are severely distrusted by the public and had to change its in its public relations changed their various communicative and rhetorical practices to take control on the discourse on earthquakes.

Methodology

We analysed all the press releases from NAM, Shell, ExxonMobil and the Dutch government from 1st



of January 2011 to today (January 2018) related to earthquakes from a discursive analytical perspective (Potter, 1996) and focus on the communicative and rhetorical practices that these organizations employ to control the discourse of risk and earthquakes in an attempt to circumvent public criticism (Buttny, 2009).

Results and conclusions

NAM published 158 press releases relating to the earthquakes on its website and the Dutch government published 193 press releases. Contrary to our expectations, Shell issued only one and ExxonMobil did not issue one single press release on the Dutch earthquakes in the period 2011 – 2018. These 352 were included in our analysis. A first indication of

changing frames is that NAM indicated earthquakes that happened before August 2013 as 'light', while this word disappeared after the trigger event.

Practical and social implications

This paper helps understanding the discursive strategies that NAM employed to maintain its social license to operate in the Groningen gas fields. Such understanding provides the basis for both recommendations on how to improve these strategies and on how to mitigate them.

Keywords

Natural gas extraction; Controversial industry; crises communication



Making PR Great Again: Global Agencies Respond to the Trump Presidency

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Introduction and purpose of the study

Issues management includes a natural overlap with government because of its focus on public policy and risk management (Heath, 1997). Public relations agencies normally engage in an issue monitoring and scenario building to response to emergent issues and risk.

The purpose of this study is to examine approaches the world's top 100 public relations agencies used to respond to the issues and risks posed by a new U.S. administration during President Trump's first 100 days in office. Little research has been conducted in the areas of issues management, risk response, social media, and ethical leadership among those in the PR agencies in reaction to the political sphere. Therefore, we arrived at the following research questions:

RQ1: What approaches did the top 100 global PR agencies use to respond to the Trump Presidency?

RQ2: Through what emergent themes were ethical counsel and leadership demonstrated in the public relations agency blogs?

Literature review

Issues management is pertinent to the Trump Presidency's first 100 days because PR professionals had to prepare and respond to the policies of the new administration. As part of the strategic management of communication, issues management entails "a vigilant eye toward public policy trends" (Heath, 1997, p. 82). Issues management is comprised of a six-step process: (1) identify public issues and trends in public expectations; (2) evaluate their impact and set priorities; (3) conduct research and analyses; (4) develop strategy; (5) implement strategy; and (6) evaluate strategy (Buchholz, Evans, & Wagely, 1994, p. 41).

Because many issues all the potential for complex consequences on stakeholders and publics, Bowen, Rawlins, Martin (2010) suggested adding an ethical analysis as a seventh step of the issues management

approach. In risk and in issues management, uncertainty always necessitates a need for ethics.

Methodology

This study employed a mixed methods approach. Both quantitative and qualitative content analyses were carried out to examine organizational blogs to identify approaches and uncover themes through which agencies' ethical counsel and leadership were demonstrated.

Top 100 PR agencies were identified using the 2016 Global PR agency ranking. The time frame was November 9, 2016 – May 1, 2017. Search words were "Donald Trump." The unit of analysis was an article.

Among the top 100 PR agencies, 63 did not have searchable websites. Fifteen agencies did not publish a single article on the topic of the Trump Presidency. Three agencies were not included because their websites used a native language. Therefore, only 19 agencies' blogs were included in the study. A total of 113 articles were included in the sample.

Results and conclusions

There were three main approaches PR agencies used to discuss the Trump victory and its consequences for their clients, as well as for the U.S. and the world. The most popular was the Columnist/Blogger approach or a personalized reflection of agency staffers on the Trump victory. The second most popular – the PR Counsel approach – aimed at providing professional advice to prepare brands for Trump's attacks and/or take advantages of new opportunities in the Trump era. The third most popular – the Expert approach – was an in-depth analysis of a phenomenon and a Trump presidency's implications.

The following themes emerged as agencies attempted to demonstrate ethical counsel and leadership while reflecting on the Trump victory: Populism wins, Trump as a wildcard, and Risk: The new caution.



Overall, issues and risk management, digital engagement on social media, and ethical leadership were intrinsically tied in a global agencies' response to the unexpected Trump victory. However, there was a significant discrepancy in terms of the amount of attention agencies paid to Trump as a challenge. While some agencies published a substantial number of articles leading their clients in a risky environment, other agencies appeared to publish none failing to take a stance on an important issue.

Practical and social implications

This research recommends that the early use of proactive and interactive issues and risk management among PR agencies, as opposed to personal opinion and more reactive strategies, should be emphasized in the future to create a higher strategic alignment between agencies and their clients in government affairs. Less personalized reflection in the columnist/blogger approach and more PR counsel would help

to strengthen not only the professionalism of the PR practice, but also the servant leadership through which agencies can build trusting relationships with clients and stakeholders.

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Keywords

Communication agencies; Donald Trump; issue and risk management



Public Relations and Behavioral Insights Nudging: How Grunig and Hunt's Domino Model of Communication Effects Lies at the Center of Successful Behavioural Change

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Introduction

It's not a new dance move and it's highly unlikely that it will go viral – but nudging has become the new craze in governments, institutions and corporations around the world. Through the use of communicative 'interventions', organizations are trying to ethically influence the attitudes and behaviours of their citizens, customers, patients and yes, even their students.

Behavioural insights are being used to guide individuals to adopt healthy lifestyle habits, save for the future, vote in democratic elections and submit their assignments on time: without penalty or retribution through the use of what behavioural economists call "nudges".

The purpose of this study is to draw a closer connection between the new and growing field of behavioural insights and the behavioural foundations of public relations, using the Dominion Model of Communication Effects as proposed by Grunig and Hunt in their seminal book 'Managing Public Relations' published in 1984.

Research Question

How and to what extent is Grunig & Hunt's 'Domino Model of Communication Effects' at the core of successful behavioral nudges.

Literature Review

There has been a great deal written over the last 10 years about the importance and challenges of influencing/changing employees, customers and policy makers attitudes and behaviours on issues as critical as public health, productivity, finance wellbeing and civic engagement. Behavioral economists Richard Thaler and Cass Sunstein first proposed the notion of "nudges" in 2008 to ethically influence individual, organizational and governmental decision making. While not explicitly state, a nudge is some form of communication 'intervention' or 'factor' that significantly alters a

person's behaviour. According to Halpern (2015) "a 'nudge' is essentially a means of encouraging or guiding behaviour" (p. 22).

Nearly 35 years ago, in one of the most exhaustive and influential books on the management of public relations, Jim Grunig and Todd Hunt (1984) situated the role of public relations squarely within the behavioral/ effects theories of the mass communication science: "we will build a conceptual framework for public relations that is drawn from the social and behavioral sciences" (p. 5). In that same book, the authors proposed a parsimonious model of public relations effects based on the 1960s notion of domino theory of public diplomacy – if one country fell to the Communists, then there was a greater likelihood that the other countries in the region would fall like dominos: "one domino would topple the others in an inevitable progression" (p. 124).

I propose that Grunig and Hunt's 'Dominio Model of Communication Effects' is at the core of Thaler and Sunstein's nudge theory of behavioural change – in essence the 'intervention' or 'factor' that guides the intended behavioral changes are in fact communication messages.

Not surprisingly, none of the leading behavioural science scholars specifically identify these interventions as the products of public relations practitioners or communication specialists. However, these gentle hints or suggestions, as identified by Halpern (2015), are intended to ethically influence behavioral outcomes through mutually beneficial communication.

Since the establishment of the U.K.'s Behavioural Insights Team (BIT) in 2010, the practice of using behavioural insights and nudges has been successfully adopted by number of countries, governmental bodies and institutions, and corporations with important and significant outcomes (Halpern, 2015). As the president of the World Bank, Jim Yong Kim stated in 2015, "the promise of this approach to decision making and



behavior is enormous, and its scope of application is extremely wide" (Sunstein, 2016, p.10).

Methodology

The author will present the summary of a systematic literature review of behavioural science and public relations, connecting the two disciplines through the results of behavioural nudging. Furthermore, a content analysis of secondary research and the results of published 'nudge' studies will be examined to establish the role of public relations/communications in guiding the intended behavioural changes.

Results and Conclusions

The results of this study should shed light on the important role of public relations in behavioural nudges to building mutually beneficial relationships between an organizations "and its diverse publics, through the use of communication, to achieve mutual understanding, realize organizational goals, and serve the public interest" (Flynn, Gregory & Valin, 2008).

Practical and Social Implications

With the noted success of the British Government's 'Nudge Unit' and the growing adoption of similar units in other national governments and global institutions, identifying and understanding the critical role that

public relations efforts (through the Domino Model of Communication Effects) plays in achieving successful behavioural changes should have a positive impact on both the practice and the public interest.

Keywords

public relations, behavioral insights, nudge, communication effects,

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Redefining the Field: The Institutional Logics of Crisis Management and Crisis Communication

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Introduction and purpose of the study

The field of crisis management and crisis communication has developed considerably over the past 25 years. What started out as a simple practice has now transformed into something that looks like a genuine academic discipline in the social sciences, with its recognized international conferences and journals, textbooks and handbooks (Coombs, 2014). However, this development has not yet led to more fundamental meta-theoretical reflections regarding the status of the field. The numerous case studies and experimental tests that we have conducted over the past two decades have produced important empirical insights (An & Cheng, 2010), no doubt about that, but we are still not able to give strong answers to questions such as: Do crisis management and crisis communication form a field or a discipline in themselves? To what extent does it make sense to distinguish between sub-fields? And why do crisis management scholars deplore the fragmented nature of the field while crisis communication scholars claim the opposite?

The aim of this conceptual paper is to present and discuss how to redefine the field of crisis management and crisis communication as *one* field or discipline. Based on the theory of institutional logics, we want to demonstrate how the field can be divided into three institutionalized and inter-related areas of society: (1) *public crisis management*, (2) *political crisis management*, and (3) *corporate crisis management*.

Literature review

Each area has its own history, its own vocabulary, and its own key concepts and theories. In political crisis management, for example, the politicians seem to welcome crisis as an opportunity (cf. the concept of crisis exploitation strategy, Boin et al., 2009, and 'the politics of crisis management', Boin et al. 2017). In corporate crisis management, on the other hand, the managers want to escape crisis which is considered a threat. Two of the areas can be characterized as public and one as private. Likewise, two of the areas can be characterized as based on competition.

Methodology

The methodological approach in the paper is inspired by the stream of research known as the theory of institutional logics. Friedland and Alford (1991) developed the concept of institutional logic to 'bring back society' in organizational research and to explore society as an inter-institutional system. They viewed institutions as supra-organizational patterns of activity rooted in material practices and symbolic systems by which individuals and organizations produce and reproduce their material lives and render their experiences meaningful. Thornton and Ocasio (1999) defined institutional logics as "the socially constructed, historical patterns of material practices, assumptions, values, beliefs, and rules by which individuals produce and reproduce their material subsistence, organize time and space, and provide meaning to their social reality."

Results and conclusions

Our examination of the history, vocabulary and concepts within each of the three interrelated areas of public crisis management, political crisis management and corporate crisis management, demonstrates that behind the three areas of society there is an institutional logic which can be decoded through various types of institutional messages (Lammers, 2011).

Implications

This study contributes to gathering three different research traditions within crisis management and crisis communication and add valuable cross-disciplinary insights into the field.

Keywords

crisis management, crisis communication, institutional logics, field



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The Crisis Manager in Popular Crisis Management Books (PCMBs)

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Introduction and purpose of the study

"Our collective plan-worship. (...) Strategic planning, to be fair, can be a valuable exercise, but too many businesses and institutions view "strategy" as an utopian stand-in for what's really needed in a crisis, and that's leadership" (Dezenhall & Weber, 2011: 176).

According to this quote, crisis management is more about personality and leadership than about strategic planning. This is a typical way of describing the need for competent crisis leaders in *popular crisis management books* (PCMBs) written by crisis consultants.

The aim of this study is to investigate how the role and function, personality and competencies of the crisis manager is understood and defined by the authors of PCMBs, and to examine the most important topics and discussions presented by the authors concerning the nature and components of crisis leadership.

Literature review

Despite the popularity of popular business books, only few empirical studies have been conducted in this area (Furusten, 1999, Lischinky, 2008), and to our knowledge no one has studied popular crisis management books.

A brief literature review of academic research reveals that the role, function and personality of the crisis manager is seldom subject to detailed exploration. This doesn't seem to be the case in PCMBs. Partly inspired by the study of Lewis et al. (2006) of best-selling popular press books on communicating during organizational change implementation, our study attempts to do a first investigation of the crisis manager as understood and defined in popular crisis management books.

Methodology

Empirically, the study is based on a corpus of 20 popular crisis management books, published in the United States and in the United Kingdom between 1986 and 2018. The books were collected from the online retailer Amazon.com and have catchy titles

such as *Damage Control*, (2007), *Masters of Disasters*, (2011), *Crisis Management: Get Ready, Get Ready Get Ready* (2016), and *Corporate Smokejumper* (2017). The 20 PCMBs were analysed by means of a text analytical model inspired by Michael Halliday and his theory of the three metafunctions of language.

Results and conclusions

The study forms part of a larger research project that has been running since 2007. The overall aim of this larger project is to investigate how crisis consultants define organizational crises, how they understand and practice crisis management and crisis communication, how they present and promote their expertise, how this expertise has developed after the financial crisis in 2008, and how it is put into practice by their clients.

The findings of the study revealed that PCMBs are much more diverse than expected, and that they also cover important aspects of crisis management left out in academic publications. However, almost all of the authors were engaged in discussions regarding the nature of crisis management/crisis leadership, and topics such as: Is crisis management just like any other type of management or is it specialized type of management with its own strategic and tactic toolbox?

Practical and social implications

A study of popular crisis management books is relevant in two ways. First, such a study provides the community of crisis management consultants and consulting firms with a detailed overview of the market for PCMBs. This also applies to their clients who will get a chance to become more competent buyers of advice. Second, such a study provides an idea of how consultants understand and conceptualize important aspects of crisis management.

Keywords

crisis manager, crisis leadership, popular crisis management books, crisis consultants



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The Fit To Partner Test: Theoretical and Practical Considerations for Establishing Corporate and NGO Partnerships in an Uncertain World (Garsten, Read and Diehl)

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Introduction

Global partnerships between the NGOs, corporations and the state are needed to deliver the United National Sustainability Goals. Indeed, the final UN Sustainability Goal (No 17) is 'Partnerships' to deliver the goals.

This aim has encouraged increasing numbers of corporate and INGO partnerships (Barrell forthcoming). In addition, partnerships have been driven by other factors such as: the need for resources, increasing competition within the voluntary sector, globalisation, and a growing emphasis on corporate values.

Public relations practitioners, as 'boundary spanners', often have major roles in forging partnerships between NGOs and businesses. For instance, in the UK, 30% of PR practitioners surveyed in CIPR research (2017) state that they conduct CSR. This is 3% up from the response to the same question in 2016.

Literature Review

There are benefits and risks associated with partnership to both parties. Benefits include increased staff motivation, resources, knowhow and access to networks. Nevertheless, different values and cultures can be disruptive, as well as threaten reputational assets. True partnerships involve, Schiller observes (2005), shared contributions and risks.

To assist PR practitioners working in the NGO and CSR spheres, Read and Diehl (2018 forthcoming) have devised a 'Fit to Partner' test. This five-step checklist helps NGOs and corporates explore partnership fits.

Methodology

The 'Fit To Partner' test model will be put out to consultation with UK experts with experience of

developing partnerships. To secure detailed and nuanced data from these expert practitioners, a series of in-depth qualitative interviews will be conducted. Interviewees, from NGOs and the business sector, will include individuals from relevant trade bodies, specialist consultants, and recent winners of *Third Sector* magazine's (2017) Charity/Business awards. Firstly, they will be asked to disclose criteria they use, or recommend, when brokering or establishing a partnership. Secondly, they will be invited to directly comment, and provide critical observations, on the 'Fit to Partner' test.

Results and conclusions

The results will be used to refine the 'Fit To Partner' test. Recommendations will be made for areas for practical developments and further study.

Practical and social implications

This research will help to refine the 'Fit to Partner' test framework for NGO and CSR practitioners. The next stage of the research will be to give the test to a wider, and international, selection of NGOs and businesses.

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Keywords

CSR, NGOs, INGOs, business and partnerships



Understanding corporate values in a crisis-prone environment: A comparative study between Turkey and USA

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Introduction and purpose

This study has two-fold purpose: first, to examine corporate values disseminated through organizational websites of Turkish and American companies via semantic network analysis (SNA) approach, in order to reveal similarities and differences between two the nations; and second, to compare these values with the expected values in turmoil identified using the expert (i.e. academician) appraisal method.

Literature review

In the current climate of political, economic, social, and environmental changes and threats, it is difficult to predict and foresee the future for individuals, and also for corporate entities. Thus, instantaneous crises are inevitable, necessitating the adoption of a corporate culture with values that ingrain crisis management (Crandall, Parnell, and Spillan, 2013). Several studies (e.g. Henry, 2011; Pearson, Roux-Dufort, and Clair, 2007) emphasize the key role of corporate values in crisis management. In a crisis situation, it is essential to be well-prepared, in terms of knowing what action should be taken. At this juncture, corporate values should indicate how the organization will take up the challenge and handle the issue to rapidly repair any damage to its reputation.

Values cannot be constructed in a vacuum, regardless of their social configurations, as they are closely bound to the economic, political, and environmental context. When an organization communicates its value system, which serves as its “sense-making device”, it provides a guidance to shape employees’ behavior during a crisis. While values can play a crucial role as a guide for practitioners, they would also constitute assurance for stakeholders that the organization will meet its responsibilities. In this sense, companies may make a promise, as an implied contract, to act upon their declared values. For example, the stated core value of being transparent may, if extensively communicated,

be regarded as evidence of its commitment which may pressure organization members to act in accordance with its transparency values during a crisis situation. The Tylenol crisis in the Johnson & Johnson Company is a prominent example for the role of core values in crisis management. Unfortunately, not all organizations follow this example. Particularly, if an organization has failed to build its values upon current context, which comes about due to changing circumstances, the resulting crisis will lead to an infringement of the contract (Mazzei, Kim and Dell’Oro, 2012).

Corporate value creation should originate from core competencies of organization, rather than emerging from a mere desire to keep pace with current trends, without sufficient consideration their achievability. Similarly, the communication of value statements should also reflect the common mindset, grounded in organizational assets, such the values of the founder and employees (Dolan, Garcia and Richley, 2006), and intellectual capital and corporate culture (Marr, Schiuma, and Neely, 2004). Accordingly, it is important that organizations convey their real values rather than idealized value statements, particularly in the context of constantly changing influences.

Methodology

Initially, SNA, as a research paradigm, was employed, using Pajek software to analyze the structure of corporate values of a sample of Turkish and US companies (228 companies from Turkey, 381 from US) based on Fortune 500 rankings. In the second stage, which is still ongoing, the expected values in turmoil will be identified via expert appraisal method in order to examine the extent to which these match the conveyed value statements. For the expert views, 30 public relations academicians from each country will be contacted and asked to provide free associations.



Results and conclusions

The results reveal that Turkish network has 198 nodes, whereas the American, 252. The density of the Turkish network is calculated as 0.014, and for the US, 0.0098. This lower score points to the higher number of stated corporate values in the network. Metrics such as cohesions and centrality were calculated from the two networks to identify structural nature of corporate values. Consequently, the most repeated dimensions for Turkey were found to be: *customer-focused, development-oriented, honest, innovative, and trustworthy*; and for the USA: *accountable, customer-focused, decent, honest, and innovative*. This study focuses on the declared values of the analyzed companies, limited to organizations from the Fortune 500 ranking lists of two identified nations. For further research, increasing the number of countries can offer greater insight into the objective of the study.

Practical and social implications

To the author's knowledge, there are no comparative studies providing enhanced understanding on corporate values in a business environment that is subject to crisis. Thus, the results will shed light on the corporate literature as well as providing practical managerial guidelines.

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Nobody hears their cries: Weak signals in media narratives and crises development

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Introduction and purpose of the study

While the metaphor of “the boiling frog” is often used to define slowly evolving crises, this paper proposes that in addition to slow constant environmental change, organisations also experience isolated and sporadic events that, over time, may accumulate and produce crises. Organisations frequently miss the ‘weak signals’ of these events because they are separated in time and space and their collective significance is unrecognised even with environmental scanning. The presence of weak signals may indicate that reputational damage is occurring, or that organisational structures and/or cultures are eroding. As such, the business management concept of weak signals (Asnoff 1975) can be applied to contemporary issues and crisis management thinking in public relations.

This paper examines the media portrayal of authorities dealing with post-traumatic stress (PTS) in the workplaces of veterans and first responders. With increased global volatility and uncertainty, workers in some occupations face trauma on a regular basis, testing their mental resilience and impacting their work and family lives. Individuals serving on the front lines of conflict, law enforcement and emergency services are particularly affected. Awareness, understanding and treatment of post-traumatic stress has developed substantially, with the assistance of considered and empathetic media reportage and increased organisational support. However, media content analysis indicates that the contemporary media narrative of PTS shifts attention to the employer as villain, often framing organisations as heartless, vindictive and bureaucratic. In contrast, the affected individual is positioned as a victim, lacking agency and engaged in a ‘battle’ for support. Despite generating relatively weak signals, the media narrative adds to the crisis of trust in organisations and governments by promulgating a negative message that strengthens over time.

Literature review

While the instances of workplace PTS constitute very serious personal crises for individuals, we argue that

the media positioning of authorities as untrustworthy villains also presents a significant crisis. Viewing a specific media narrative and its attribute framing as a crisis is unusual. The literature on crisis communication typically defines crises as “sudden and unexpected” events (Coombs 2007). However, a negative media agenda may slowly develop into a persistent pattern as it becomes a media norm. The impact of this media agenda on organisational reputation changes over time from an issue to a crisis. Much of the crisis communication literature (Benoit 1997, Coombs 2007) is focused on corporate management once a crisis occurs, and the need for repair to preserve the organisation. Identifying the significance of a more slowly developing, less obvious crisis presents different considerations.

Mendonça et al (2012) describe ‘weak signals’ as ‘advanced indicators of change phenomena’ (p. 220) in the form of ‘premature and imperfect information’ which foreshadows ‘discrete shocks and...powerful trends’ (p. 219). For the public relations practitioner, the weak signals are often buried in environmental information obscured by noise, fragmented across channels, or overlooked as incomplete and irrelevant. We argue that developing the organisational capability to identify and interpret ‘weak signals’ (Mendonça et al, 2012, p. 219) would enhance crisis communication competency.

Methodology

A qualitative thematic analysis of 309 articles from eleven Australian newspapers over a 12-month period was conducted as part of a larger project. Articles reporting the issue of post-traumatic stress in veteran, police, fire and ambulance service communities were included. Initial coding identified references made to authorities such as organisational and political leaders and government agencies. These references were analysed to determine how these authorities were characterised in media narratives, and the extent and type of responsibility attributed to them.



Results, conclusions and implications

Three main themes emerged from the data. The strongest of these was the intermittent, but persistent, weak signal produced by negative framing of organisations in media reporting. This narrative construction allocates blame for the negative treatment of individuals with PTS to organisations in order to elicit sympathy for the 'victims' in the narrative. From this thematic analysis, attribution of responsibility was identified in media reporting about how the authorities *should* respond. The third, and minor theme was the description of the provision of support services.

Unaddressed, the weak signals regarding a villain-victim narrative might further undermine public trust in contemporary service organisations and drive a wedge into the developing partnership between workers and employers as they tackle the problem of PTS.

More generally, this example indicates how weak signals emanating from individual and intermittent events are important to organisations in issues management and environmental scanning, and that paying attention to them may prevent crises from developing.

Keywords

weak signals, crisis communication, traumatic stress, media framing

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Crisis narratives of #Harvey and #Irma: Conversations on Twitter and Instagram

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Introduction and Purpose

Two powerful 2017 hurricanes - Harvey and Irma - were extensively discussed on social media. While previous research on natural disaster-focused social media communication has mostly focused on Twitter, it is important to understand these conversations as they take place on other popular platforms as well. This study analyzed the public discourse on Twitter and Instagram in the wake of these hurricanes, using the following research questions:

- RQ1: What did hurricane Harvey and Irma posts look like on Twitter and Instagram?
- RQ2: How did publics engage with hurricane Harvey and Irma conversations on Twitter and Instagram?
- RQ3: What crisis narratives were present in hurricane Harvey and Irma conversations on Twitter and Instagram?
- RQ4: How were risk perception constructs represented in hurricane Harvey and Irma posts on Twitter and Instagram?

Literature Review

Social media use is gaining momentum in times of natural disasters. However, it has largely been examined through one platform - Twitter - and these findings have been generalized to other social media platforms. Few studies on social media disaster communication have empirically explored whether there is any difference in the use of different social media platforms, or between different disaster events.

A new typology of crisis narratives - namely, accounts of blame, stories of renewal, victim narratives, heroic tales, and memorials - argues that these narratives may have differential effects on audiences seeking information in times of natural disasters, and may impact emotional outcomes for audiences. Finally, the Risk Perception

Model, one of the prevailing risk communication theory models, helps explain how risk perceptions are formed.

Method

In a quantitative content analysis, a random sample of 400 Harvey-related tweets, 400 Irma-related tweets, 400 Harvey-related Instagram posts, and 400 Irma-related Instagram posts were analyzed.

Results and Conclusions

Fundraising appeals, asking help for others, hope, sympathy/compassion, and calls to action were significantly more frequently present on Instagram, confirming a trend seen in other recent social media studies where attempts to mobilize funds and other assistance for those affected by crises were more frequently present on Instagram compared to Twitter. Tweets more frequently discussed details about the respective hurricanes.

Across platforms and hurricanes, posts that mentions pets, both related to crisis preparation as well as resolving the issue of pets losing their homes, elicited overwhelming levels of engagement, a strategy that may be of use by both government and public health organizations to draw attention to relevant posts.

In Harvey-focused Instagram posts, posts that mentioned participating in aid activities produced higher median like frequencies, and posts that mentioned gratefulness, victim narratives, heroic narratives, and untrustworthy entities elicited a higher median comment frequency.

Out of the five crisis narrative types - victim narratives, heroic tales, accounts of blame, stories of renewal, and memorials - victim narratives were present most frequently in the overall sample as well as on the individual platforms. Renewal narratives were present significantly more frequently on Instagram; heroic tales



and blame accounts were more frequently present on Twitter. The presence of heroic tales was connected with higher engagement on both platforms, while the presence of blame narratives and victim narratives produced more comments on Instagram.

Risk perception variables were more frequently present on Twitter compared to Instagram, particularly mentions of catastrophic potential, irreversible outcomes, and untrustworthy entities. In addition, tweets that include risk perception constructs were more likely to be retweeted, liked, and replied to, while the presence of risk perception constructs does not seem to affect Instagram post engagement as much. This pattern was consistent for both Hurricane Harvey and Hurricane Irma.

Practical and Social Implications

This study of Twitter and Instagram focused on two recent hurricanes – Harvey and Irma – first and foremost showed that Twitter users primarily discuss the actual hurricane and its risks and consequences, while Instagram's posts focus more on providing help

for those affected by the hurricanes. This implies that these social media platforms are used for different purposes during these hurricane crises: Twitter seems to function as an information distribution channel, while Instagram functions as a channel for aid mobilization.

Crisis narratives were used throughout both platforms, and in both hurricane conversations, with victims' stories being the most frequently present, which was confirmed by the more frequent use of episodic framing. Blame and heroic narratives were more frequently present on Twitter compared to Instagram. This confirms that platforms are used differently during disaster crises. Government and public health organizations, still more active on Twitter and Facebook than on Instagram, should develop use plans for engaging with stakeholders on both, especially in light of mobilizing aid for victims on Instagram, and disseminating relevant crisis information on Twitter. The use of crisis narratives should be further developed for social media communication in the midst of disasters.

Keywords

crisis communication, hurricanes, Twitter, Instagram



How actors shape issue arenas on Twitter: Food issues in the Netherlands

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Issue arenas have gained interest in public relations research as an alternative to traditional stakeholder theories. The issue arena approach focuses on a multi-stakeholder debate on issues, and proceeds through the development of the issue over time, in relation to the key stakeholders, their positions and problem statements in the debate.

We aim to add a new dimension to the issue arena approach that accounts for both the stakeholders participating in the debate, and how actors and topics are addressed in the debate. We argue that such

'second-level' issue arena approach provides more detailed results on stakeholder interactions in terms of co-addressed actors and topics in the issue arena.

As a methodological innovation, we apply a semi-automated tool for mapping the co-occurrences of addressed actors and topics in Twitter, and visualize the results as networks. Empirically, we analyze the issue of bird flu affecting the poultry in The Netherlands in 2015 to 2017 with a sample of 704 Twitter messages. Theoretical and practical implications for public relations research will be discussed.



The intersection of Litigation, Reputation & Brand Trust: The High Cost of Low Trust

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Litigation can be a double-edged sword to reputation and trust. Legal actions directly affect people's behavior and shape reputation indirectly. In the process of litigation, public opinions, media reports and legal documents can affect the way that stakeholders treat the parties to the dispute. For example, in commercial litigation, plaintiffs usually push the boundaries of their allegations in an attempt to affect the potential trier of fact, the jury, the judge, as well as the public, to see the case in the plaintiffs' context. The defendant is often at an initial disadvantage.

Litigation communications has evolved from the application of *Marsee vs. U.S. Tobacco* case in 1985. Since then, litigation PR plays a vital role in managing extrajudicial information through a story-based approach, an integrated media relations, trial services (jury selection, trial theme development, daily interaction with media), and personal responsibility argument. Litigation communication now follows a lifespan approach when practiced at the most sophisticated levels. In the three phases of legal or trial proceedings, pre-trial, trial and post-trial, each has a clear and common objective with one overarching perspective that may become the most trusted voice or the most listened to voice in the courtroom. Two categories of cases in the US have demonstrated the

effort of litigation PR. In the case of *Sabadia vs. Holland and Knight* in 2012, a jury pool was first identified and a metaphor was created that depicted the case for the jury. Another case included 48 tobacco trials from 1980s to 1990s that litigation PR met with all key media influencers to accentuate their prejudices and emphasized the essential role of personal responsibility in smoking use.

In litigation proceedings, however, one may win the compensation but lose something more important, i.e. stakeholder trust. New media technology also facilitates the dissemination of issues or crises globally. As a result, litigation PR professionals need a special toolkit of functional skills including the need of growing antenna tuned into geopolitical sensitivity, local cultural nuances and conversance of legal arguments to avoid the loss of organization reputation, brand trust, CEO credibility and potential business risks.

To conclude, a communicator needs to think about the context with legal system involved and has a voice in the company's legal strategy. Also, consider including legal events (i.e. filing a lawsuit, a release of regulatory investigation report, etc.) into issue or crisis communication and evaluation. Litigation PR has to build trust with stakeholders in the whole trial process and explicitly and constantly repeat the story.

The Relational Turn in Public Relations Research: Signs of a Digital-Era Paradigm Shift in Communication Studies

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Introduction

The development of the public relations (PR) industry has depended largely on practitioners' communicative talents. Moreover, PR scholarship has long informed other domains of communication studies in academia and has been shaped by them in turn (Botan & Taylor, 2004; Zaharna, 2016). In recent decades, the advance of digital media has largely reshaped PR practices and research. **How, then, are we to understand the impact of digital media on this mutual relationship between PR scholarship and practices and the broader field of communications research?** Treating the year 2000 as the digital/pre-digital divide, we provide an account of how PR research has progressed from the pre-digital to the digital era and the implications of that progress for understanding a paradigm shift that, we propose, is underway in communication studies.

Literature review

Consulting Huang's (1999) review of the development of PR scholarship in the 1990s, we posit four primary theoretical perspectives for PR research in the pre-digital age: *management*, *rhetorical*, *critical*, and *marketing*. Despite the difference in terms of the goals of PR, the relative role of the public compared to that of organizations, the social role and worldviews of PR practitioners, and theories/models, the four theoretical perspectives converge in terms of their underlying framework and focus: the delivery and exchange of *information* (see italicized terms in Table 1). Notably, the informational hermeneutics that guided PR research in the pre-digital age is essentially functional (see Botan & Taylor, 2004, p. 651), insofar as the four theoretical perspectives underscored the achievement of organizational ends through strategic production and dissemination of organizational messages.

Method

Through the thematic analysis and a meta-review of 186 theoretical articles related to digital PR research

published in *PR Review* and *Journal of PR Research* between 2000 and 2016, we found that 44.6% of 186 articles under examination adopted the *management* perspective (n = 83, 44.6%), followed by the *rhetorical* (n = 60, 32.3%) and *critical* (n = 41, 22.0%) perspectives, while the *marketing* perspective saw a sharp decline (n = 2, 1.1%).

Results and conclusions

In contrast with the old focus on the functional delivery or exchange of information in pre-digital PR scholarship, we find that **digital PR research from the management, rhetorical, and critical perspectives emphasize the co-creation of organization-public relationships for reciprocity** (see Figure 1), which suggests that the foundation of PR research has changed from the old informational hermeneutics to a new relational hermeneutics in the digital era.

Moreover, drawing upon the literature on relation studies in the global, community, and interpersonal communicative contexts, we identify a similar relational turn in these domains of communication studies that highlight multiple actors' dialogic engagement in co-creating various social relations to advance social reforms in the digital age. Taken together, these relational turns indicate that **a paradigm shift from an informational to a relational hermeneutics is now well underway in the broader discipline of communication studies**. The paradigm shift from *information* to *relation* implies a fundamental change in the understanding of *communication* in our field, and it invites us to rethink the relevance of an informational to a relational hermeneutics to interpreting communicative phenomena in the digital age.

Keywords

digital PR research; theoretical perspective; co-creation; relation; paradigm shift

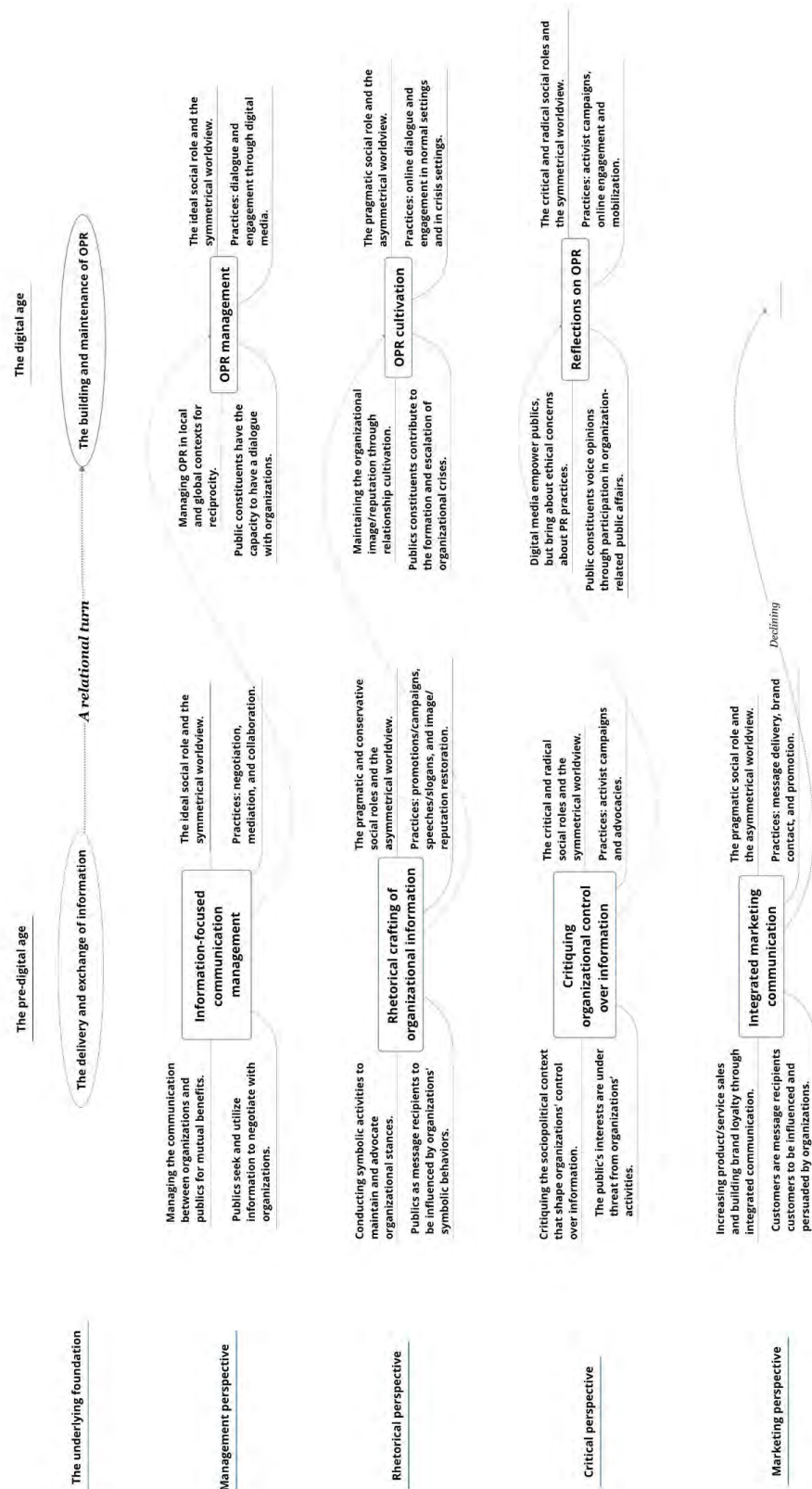


Table 1: Four theoretical perspectives in pre-digital PR research

Perspective	Management	Rhetorical	Critical	Marketing
Essential goals of PR practices	Managing the communication between an organization and its public for mutual benefits through <i>negotiations, mediations, and collaborations</i> .	Conducting symbolic activities such as <i>slogans/speeches, promotions/campaigns</i> , and <i>image restoration</i> to maintain and advocate organizational stances.	Critiquing the sociopolitical context that shapes organizations' control over information, and advocating equality through symbolic activities such as <i>advocacies</i> and <i>activist campaigns</i> .	Increasing product/service sales and building brand loyalty through <i>delivery of integrated message</i> and <i>promotion</i> .
The relative role of organizations to the public	The public seek and utilize <i>information</i> to negotiate with organizations.	The public are <i>information</i> recipients whose perceptions will be influenced by organizations' symbolic activities.	The public's interests are under threat from organizations' activities due to organizational control over <i>information</i> resources.	The public are <i>information</i> recipients whose attitudes/behaviors will be influenced by organizations.
Social roles and worldviews of PR practitioners	- Ideal social role - Symmetrical worldview	- Pragmatic and conservative social roles - Asymmetrical worldview	- Critical and radical social roles - Symmetrical worldview	- Pragmatic social role - Asymmetrical worldview
Theories/models	- Four models of PR - Conflict resolution theory - Situational theory of publics	- Image restoration theory - Issue management - Framing	- Political economy - Critical discourse - Feminism	- Marketing theory - Integrated marketing communication



Figure 1: The changing foundation of PR research. (Note: OPR = organization-public relationships)





Developing Participatory CSR in a Time of Distrust: Authenticity, Organizational Listening, and Dialogue

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Introduction

The Edelman Trust Barometer® 2018 shows that 20 out of the 28 countries in the study are now in distrust societies. In addition, the rise of fake news has caused great concerns among publics (Edelman, 2018). From the US election to Brexit, there were indications of publics' anxiety for change. At the same time, even though trust has declined significantly at the government levels, experts across business and CEOs have gained trust from the publics.

The President and CEO of Siemens, in discussing the changing world at the 2018 World Economic Forum in Davos, advocated for business to focus more on social responsibility and sustainability, embracing stakeholder values and social values (Kaeser, 2018). Wood (1991) posited that business and society are interwoven, instead of being two distinct entities. Corporations have responsibilities to those who are affected in one way or other by corporate behaviours. Kent and Taylor's (2016) contended that CSR is a powerful and ethical corporate practice. CSR should thus be developed by incorporating values from the society and allowing all stakeholders, not only consumers to participate.

On the flip side, declining trust and fake news everywhere also facilitate the increasing scepticism as to the motives of corporate social responsibility efforts. Research has indicated that scepticism directed at self-serving motives when corporations engaged in CSR activities affected publics' perception on whether corporations are genuine and authentic in their CSR endeavours.

Furthermore, Etter's (2013) research showed social media users had low interactivity on information related to corporate CSR communication in their social media engagement with corporations. Question then: what and how can corporations do as a responsible corporate citizen in this post truth era? Marketing literature has discussed "participatory CSR" which sometimes is related to product purchase (e.g., Kotler et al., 2012). Yet, for profit-seeking corporations to

become responsible corporate citizens, it is essential to go beyond the approach that CSR is part of the marketing tools in enhancing product purchase and market share.

Therefore, **the purpose of this study** is to explore how corporates can authentically engage with stakeholders in the participative CSR practices so as to be responsible corporate citizens.

Literature Review

Practicing participatory CSR involves corporations' not only engaging with customers for participating in corporate CSR initiatives, but also developing programs which reflect social values and stakeholder expectations. CSR practices should be authentic in showing concern and care to the society. Besides discussing corporations' role in the society, this section will also focus on the discussions of the following concepts:

Organizational Listening

The discussion on organizational listening started in the 1960s. Kelly (1962) contended that organizations need to show empathy and develop human relations for better engaging with employees. Hunt and Cusella's (1983) research showed empathy, receiving skills, instruction-criticism, and giving feedback conducive to listening to stakeholders. In public relations, Macnamara (2017) considered that important concepts like dialogue, engagement, and relationships have ignored the listening part. Gregory (2015) advocated for organizations to develop "a culture of listening and engagement" as one of the important roles for public relations.

Before an organization starts to develop its CSR program, public relations practitioners can engage publics to identify their expectations, acknowledge the values and recognize the concerns from the stakeholders so that the CSR program can be beneficial to the society at large.



Authenticity

Molleda (2010) contended that authenticity should be essential in the research and practices of public relations as organizations faced great demands from publics for greater transparency, openness, and responsibility. Shen and Kim (2012) identified three components of perceived organizational authenticity—truthfulness, transparency, and consistency. Authenticity thus requires ongoing efforts by an organization to constantly reflect on its own motives, beliefs, feelings, and aspirations as well as those of its publics. For organizations to be responsible corporate citizens, it is essential to be transparent and open in discussing and co-create values shared by all sides, and to develop the CSR programs reflecting those values.

Dialogic Theory

The dialogic theory Kent and Taylor (2002) developed contains the features of mutuality, propinquity, empathy, risk, and commitment. These features can be incorporated into daily public relations practices. Even

though this dialogic approach cannot by itself guarantee ethical public relations practices, a dialogic orientation can enhance the possibility for organizations to understand publics better so as to develop a genuine CSR program that reflects the values from both sides.

Conclusion

At the end of the discussion on these concepts, propositions and a theoretical model from the discussions on participatory CSR will be presented.

Practical and Social Implications

This research will shed light on how public relations can help facilitate organizations' active engaging in dialogues and listening for developing genuine CSR programs beneficial to the stakeholders and the society.

Keywords

Corporate Social Responsibility, Authenticity, Organizational Listening, Dialogue, Distrust



Enacting mediatization in public sector organizations: The role of communication managers

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Studies on mediatization of public sector organizations (PSOs) often deal with conceptualizations, determinants, and structural characteristics of organizational mediatization processes. In contrast to that, we propose an actor-centered approach, focusing on the media orientations of communication managers.

This study investigates how communication managers perceive the media environment and how these media orientations influence their stakeholder relations. PSOs deal with sector-specific strategic communication challenges regarding the influence of the political realm and media scrutiny. The present qualitative interview

study focusses on Dutch independent administrative bodies which operate at arm's length distance from the central government and thus operate relatively autonomously.

We propose a new conceptualization of 'media orientation'. Its dimensions are reflected in stakeholder relations. We find that communication managers increasingly try to cope with sector-specific challenges by implementing integrated communication strategies and exploring their communicative autonomy. Level of management support and incidents are key determining factors.



PR and society: The generative power of history in the present and future

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Introduction and purpose of the study

For the past year, we have been in the first phase of a long-term research agenda focused on Canadian public relations, and in particular, our interest in how, where and why gender matters in public relations practice in this country. We have produced initial findings from professional life stories gathered from women who have contributed to the formation of the public relations sector in Canada.

Our phenomenological research on the narratives of these pioneering “PR women” has been very insightful and we see it as being significant for three reasons: 1) it is contributing to the public relations body of knowledge by providing much-needed historical knowledge in regard to what is a nearly absent Canadian context; 2) it is allowing us to paint a more nuanced picture of how historical, regional, and cultural contexts form public relations professional identities differently, and 3) it is allowing us to learn what it is that allowed women to thrive in their careers so that those lessons can be intentionally integrated into professional development and formal education contexts.

Literature review

We are interested in conducting research aligned with Thurlow’s (2017) critical approach, which has outlined the distinctive Canadian public relations history as being notably different from the dominant American PR narrative, showing “how Canada’s focus on public policy and immigration together formed the pillars of Canadian public relations” (p. 39). Yet the American public relations approach still dominates the text-book market for public relations education and practice, which could be viewed as a form of colonization. It is curious there has been very little coverage and work done on the history of Canadian public relations other than Thurlow’s (2017) and Likely’s (2009) work in this regard. The distinctiveness of the Canadian history of public relations with its focus on nation building, public sector, and immigration, is important and very much links to Canadian culture and values.

Canada is not the only country to have had a dominant American public relations narrative as many countries globally have adopted it wholesale – partly by sending their best and brightest students to do their PhD’s in the United States or other western countries and who then go on to instruct their own students using the dominant American approach, particularly Grunig and Hunt’s (1984) work on the four models of public relations and so on. The impact of this uncritical adoption of a theory whose context is distinctly American has been that students do not know how public relations in their own country has historically developed, which is problematic given the large differences in cultural values. Their very different histories were being lost, as is knowledge of how to work strategically and ethically within culturally different contexts.

In taking a critical historiographical approach, we can educate students to be internalizing located knowledge, that comes out of a time, a culture, a set of politics, and distinct legal formations. This forces us to see that theory arises from the ground, and provides an argument for creating place/culturally specific teaching materials with the goal of avoiding colonization and of driving theory development that is more nuanced and better able to account for culture (in all of its specificity, temporality, geography, demography, etc.).

Methodology

We used a phenomenological approach as it is concerned with describing the lived experience of the phenomenon under examination, so for our research this would be the lived experience of our participants, senior women public relations practitioners from their early years and family environment right through their education and career paths. By examining our participants’ consciousness we hope to understand their realities and concrete experience regarding their lived experiences.

Results and conclusions

From our pilot study exploring narratives of six pioneering women, we have found how important it is



to look at the people who created much of the Canadian public relations discipline. These are unique individuals who used the resources of their regional and temporal context to professionalize the practice as they went. It was they who decided to collaborate, to create education and training, who worked hard to develop best practices and strengthen accreditation processes. They were intentional in developing curriculum in order to prepare the next generation(s) with the skills, the academic knowledge, and the firm ethical stance that has come through so clearly as they developed their own community of practice, from knowing each other

via the Canadian Public Relations Society.

What we can learn from these women, at least for the Canadian public relations sector, is that the public relations sector does not make itself, and that in this part of Canada, it arose in part as a result of these pioneering women being welcoming, supportive, and willing to share knowledge.

Keywords

Canada, Public Relations, History



Experts' perception of the influence of cooperation between PR agencies and organization on stakeholders' relationships – results of a Delphi study with Croatian practitioners

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Introduction and purpose of the study

Public relations practice is a product of the society and economic environment in which it is practiced. There are many views of the profession, ranging from positive to negative, including misperceptions which resulted in constant problems with PR's image and reputation (Spicer, 1993; Henderson, 1998; White and Park, 2010; Callison, 2014). I explored perceptions of public relations experts working in both in-house departments and agencies regarding the influence of cooperation between PR agencies and the organizations they support on stakeholder relationships. For this purpose, I have conducted a Delphi method study among PR experts seeking to identify their perceptions of their own profession, of their working environment, and of the relationship between agencies and organizations.

Literature review

Existing studies about perceptions of public relations show that the perceptions that many have of public relations are more often than not independent of their contact with PR professionals. Spicer (1993), Henderson (1998) covered media in which PR was portrayed negatively. White and Park (2010), Callison et al. (2014), Callison (2004) explored general public and revealed that PR enjoys a better image than it was perceived. Studies that covered student population (Bowen 2002; Stacks et al., 1999; Fall and Hughes, 2009) and business (Murray and White, 2004; Sterne, 2008; Zerfass et al., 2014; Zerfass and Sherzada, 2015) cause concern while CEOs' perceptions revealed positive trend regarding the growing importance of corporate communications. Therefore, there is still a need to go deeper in the field, and identify how communication experts perceive their own industry. This will help PR practitioners and the profession to position themselves adequately and decrease the influence of existing misinterpretations and misconceptions.

Methodology

Agency experts and in-house experts who were recruited through purposeful and snowballing sampling technique were then split into two groups; they had to have more than 10 years of experience in the field and had to either be representatives of the most important PR agencies in Croatia or work for major Croatian companies. Participants took part simultaneously to the three stages of the research process whose aim was to answer the following research questions:

- How do public relations practitioners perceive the importance of their work/profession?
- What are their perceptions of their working environment?
- How do public relations practitioners perceive cooperation between agencies and organizations?
- Does the cooperation between public relations agency and organization influence stakeholder relationships?

Results and conclusions

Both agency and in-house PR professionals highly value their profession and explain its purpose as providing advisory service (either to the clients or to top managers). The results also showed that experts' perceptions of their working environment were highly influenced by the position they hold in the hierarchy of their company: regarding improvements, agency experts were focused on managerial issues while in-house experts focused on positioning of their department within the organization. As opposed to agency experts, in-house experts perceived their working environment as less dynamic because they are focused on specific industry and on one organization. They consider that they still play a supporting role within their organization and see the need to work



more on achieving an understanding of the importance of communication function within their organization.

When asked about the perceptions of the cooperation, both groups of experts were more positive in assessing their role in facilitating cooperation, while for the performance of their counterpart they had many suggestions for the improvement.

Practical and social implications

This research adds value to the existing literature on perceptions of PR because it demonstrates the situation among Croatian experts. Also, by providing their answers, experts have helped in crystalizing recommendations for further individual development for the existing and future PR experts in Croatia and perhaps beyond. In addition, this research contributes to better understanding between these two groups of experts which in future can contribute to the development of the industry and maybe even to

negotiating more cooperation with clients that have not used agency services before. It is a relatively restricted research (due to time restrictions and the number of participants) but it has revealed interesting insights that could be subject of further research. After being hit by several serious kickbacks in recent years (economic crisis, Fimi media corruption scandal and Government ban on hiring external PR agency), this and similar research projects might be a good starting point in increasing the level of understanding the importance of proper communication management that is conducted by experienced and specialized PR experts within business environment, in better positioning of the industry among publics outside of the industry and in improvement of skills and knowledge among practitioners.

Keywords

Croatia; PR perceptions; PR experts' perceptions of PR; PR agency; in-house PR; cooperation



Crisis communication consulting: The (new) role of PR agencies in solving organizational crises

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Introduction and purpose of the study

Organizations facing serious crisis situations often hire specialized public relations firms or agencies to support their communication with their key stakeholders and publics. The role of these firms often varies; from providing strategic advice to key members of the organization's management to assisting PR personnel in daily communication operations. The relationship between organizations and their communication consultants often turns out to be very specific. In some cases, it is burdened by clients' demands to strongly impose its own opinions and views on the strategy that should be implemented, and in other cases dominated by the strong influence of consultants on their clients and action they undertake. The authors of this paper analyse the role that public relations firms and agencies have in addressing contemporary organizational crisis by investigating their role in different crisis situations with a special emphasis on determining whether it is strategic advising or executive implementation of activities, specific tasks they are entrusted by their clients, as well as their broader perspective on crisis communication practice and its future development.

Literature review

Crisis communication has been a topic of a significant number of books, papers and research studies, as well as public relations firms and agencies and their specific role in advising organizations in different fields of public relations. However, a limited number of studies, among which are von Platen (2015) and Johansen (2017), have analysed the specific role and business models of public relations firms in crisis communication projects. Considering the important role that external consultants can have in conceptualizing the way organizations communicate with their publics, it seems justified to broaden the theoretical and literature overview of this specific field of work that public relations firms and agencies conduct for their clients.

Methodology

A qualitative research based on 30 semi-structured in-depth interviews with two groups of individuals working in public relations firms and agencies that offer crisis communication consulting in Croatia will be conducted for the purpose of this research. The first group consists of public relations firm's directors or CEOs that run their firm's business and the second are their senior consultants or consultants that handle accounts that imply crisis communication projects. Only personnel from top 20 Croatian PR agencies according to annual turnover will be included in this research.

Results and conclusions

The obtained results will help in raising the level of understanding of the perceived position of public relations firms and agencies while advising their clients in crisis communication projects. The research will also provide valuable insight on how public relations consultants perceive their own role in crisis communication projects, what approaches they are likely to use, as well as publics and stakeholders they are required to prioritise when conducting communication activities for their clients. The conclusion of the research could be the development of a model of doing business and conducting crisis communication for public relations firms and agencies in Croatia.

Practical and social implications

Besides contributing to the practical and academic thought of crisis communication, this research will help both clients and consultants to conceptualize and better understand their ideal roles within the crisis communication process. Organizations using the services of crisis communication consultants or those considering such action will be provided with a possibility of better understanding of responsibilities and assignments in crisis communication processes, as well as business models of firms and agencies handling crisis communication.



Keywords

*public relations, crisis communication, public relations
firms and agencies, communication consulting, strategic
communication*



NGOs' visibility in conflict news coverage – on the relevance of evidence-based communication

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Introduction and purpose of the study

Research indicates that NGOs have a growing potential of being a relevant (persuasive) news source during violent conflicts. This argument is rooted in the assumption that during conflicts journalists face a situation of increased uncertainty. Their access to information is restricted and the amount of propaganda material is heightened, whilst NGOs in contrast, have local contacts on the ground and an increased level of regional expertise. Our study seeks to investigate on the visibility of respective NGOs during violent conflicts and aims to analyze if evidence-based communication as a way to emphasize local expertise and counter propaganda can increase an NGO's media visibility.

Literature review

Our research is based on two lines of research: First, it builds on approaches on characteristics of successful persuasion strategies. Based on Stacks' (2002: 22) definition of PR as the 'management of credibility', we apply a normative approach of PR theory (e.g. Grunig, 1992). In doing so, our research builds in particular on studies, which indicate the importance of 'evidence' for the accuracy and credibility of strategic communication (e.g. O'Keefe, 1998).

Second, our research builds on studies on the success of particular information politics of activists and advocacy networks (e.g. Keck & Sikkink, 1998; Schwarz and Fritsch, 2014). Combining these lines of research allows us to examine the provision of evidence in PR-material as a measurable criterion for the success of strategic communication -- whereat we consider 'success' in terms of media resonance.

Methodology

The study relies on the sample of an EU-funded project that examines six conflicts (DRC, Burundi, Syria, Israel/Palestine, Kosovo, Macedonia) expressing

a variance in conflict region, type and phase. For each conflict, we analyze at least three years. The study is based on an input-output-analysis of German, English and French press releases by 55 NGOs (11,815 texts) and the conflict coverage in nine international news outlets (109,468 news items). We choose to conduct an automated content analysis to be able to gather insights beyond single-case designs, across a larger time span and different contexts.

The dependent variable thereby is the number of news items per quarter that refer at least once to an NGO. As the main independent variable, we measured the number of press releases that contained at least one reference to evidence. For each language, we first annotated a corpus of press releases to identify how evidence can be expressed. We then supplemented these expressions with the help of translators and tested subsamples of texts until we reached a precision of .7. In addition, we measured a series of control variables such as the number of texts distributed by an NGO and the number of news items.

Results

The results indicate that NGOs overall only play a minor role as journalistic sources in conflict news coverage. The organization with the highest visibility only appeared in 5% of the news discourse (*Syrian Observatory for Human Rights* in news coverage on Syria). In addition, descriptive analysis reveals that larger transnational NGOs like (*Human Rights Watch*, *Red Cross*) had a large visibility than local NGOs. Finally, NGOs that are focused on human rights issues showed a higher visibility than others did.

The regression model reveals positive effects of the number of texts with 'evidence', the overall number of distributed texts, the conflict case and the number of news items on an NGO's media visibility. An increase of 1% in the share of texts with evidence, thereby leads to an average increase in media visibility of 0.64%. The dummy coded conflict case variable indicates that



NGOs' visibility was higher in the more violent cases Syria and DRC than in the others. The other variables did not have a significant impact.

Practical and social implications

Our results show that NGOs media resonance can be improved by applying evidence-based communication in strategic PR-material. In addition, the differences between conflict cases indicate that in situations where journalists suffer under restricted access to information, evidence-based communication can enhance the effect of PR efforts. Future research should differentiate between different types of evidential statements to deepen the insight into this phenomenon.

Keywords

NGOs, evidence-based communication, conflict communication, automated content analysis, media visibility

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Managing Reputational Costs Via Internal Issues Management: Testing the Effects of Employees' Issues Perceptions and Informational Leak

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Introduction

This study examines the impacts of the characteristics of a corporate issue, either internal or external, on employees' perceptions toward the issue itself and toward their organization. An increasing number of scholars are exploring corporate issue management through internal perspectives regarding employees as organizational ambassadors (Frandsen & Johansen, 2011). Knowing how to strategically communicate with internal publics (employees) is becoming more critical than ever to anticipate and prevent crisis during corporate issue periods. Given that employees' behavioral patterns and perceptions may vary depending on the characteristics of different issues (Lee, 2017), this study focused on how employees' attitudes toward corporate issues and their organization differ based on the type of issue: internal (e.g., workplace discrimination, harassment, etc.) or external (e.g., consumer complaints, lawsuit, etc.).

Literature Review

To understand internal publics' perceptions and behaviors regarding an organizational issue, this study adopted the framework of the situational theory of problem solving (STOPS: Kim & Grunig, 1999) in the context of an organization-employee relationship. Using the variables of individuals' perceptions of problem, involvement, and constraint about an issue, and of communicative behaviors with valence (e.g., positive, negative), this study intends to understand employees' issue-specific attitudes and behaviors from a public relations perspective. This study used the concepts of organizational authenticity (Shen & Kim, 2012) and trust (Hon & Grunig, 1999) to examine how employees evaluate their organization during a corporate issue, depending on whether the issue is internally or externally oriented. Specifically, the current study suggests the following research questions:

- RQ1. During a corporate issue period, how does

issue characteristic (internal/external) affect employees' problem, involvement, and constraint recognition?

- RQ2. During a corporate issue period, how does issue characteristic (internal/external) affect employees' information forwarding behaviors (positive/negative)?
- RQ3. During a corporate issue period, how do employees perceive organizational authenticity and trust differently depending on issue characteristic?

Methodology

An online survey was conducted with 373 full-time employees working in large-sized companies in the United States who experienced any major internal or external organizational issues for the past 6 months. To answer the research questions, a series of mixed ANCOVA was conducted.

Results and Conclusions

The results of the study indicate that employees who experienced internally oriented organizational issues were more likely to perceive the issue as an important one and feel involved in it than those who experienced externally oriented issues. Employees in an organization experiencing an internal issue, rather than an external one, were also more likely to leak negative information about the organization. No significant difference was found in terms of employees' positive information forwarding behaviors. Furthermore, experiencing an internal issue decreased employees' perceptions of organizational authenticity more significantly than an external issue, regardless of the degree to which employees were satisfied with their organization's post-issue managerial actions.



Implications

This study introduces notable theoretical and practical insights for employee relations and issue management. Using public relations theories to link employees' perceptual, attitudinal, and behavioral motivations in an organizational issue context, this study extended the theoretical understanding of internal publics' issue-specific perceptions and issue-information behaviors. As the results show that internal publics (employees) are more likely to be engaged in an internal issue rather than an external one, the study suggests that public relations professionals and managers need to establish

the strategic view that a poorly managed internal issue could damage external reputation, via employees' negative information behavior (e.g., leaks). Managing internal issues through strategic communication to maintain truthful and quality relationships with employees will minimize external negative information flow and avoid risks on the loss of reputation during corporate periods of crisis.

Keywords

issue management, employee communication, organization-employee relationship



Crisis Nearby or Faraway: Exploring the Influences of Psychological Distance of Crisis

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Introduction and Purpose of the Study

Crisis, by nature, is an unpredictable and uncontrollable event that likely damages an organization's reputation (Coombs, 2010). Given the fact that how an organization perceives a given crisis event determines its crisis response strategies, crisis scholars have made attempts to identify and understand the nature of crisis to aid crisis managers' strategic decision making. For example, organizational threat is regarded as a situational factor in understanding how an organization copes with a crisis. It was argued that, "greater threat a public presents to an organization, the faster the organization will respond to that public and the more accommodating the organization will be of that public" (Cancel, Mitrook, & Cameron, 1999, p. 184). The threats different publics present in crisis situations also drives the organization's decisions regarding crisis response strategies. To contribute to the existing crisis communication literature, this study develops a new framework to understand crisis by explicating the concept of psychological distance of crisis.

Literature Review

This crisis distance framework is corroborated by construal level theory (Trope & Liberman, 2010). The theory posits that abstract mental construal of events or objects is based on psychological distance (Trope & Liberman, 2010). Four dimensions of distance were proposed based on how an event is located from the reference point: distance in time (temporal), that of place (spatial), that of personal involvement (social), and likelihood (hypothetical). In the context of crisis events, these four distance dimensions are further operationalized as: (1) *Temporal distance*, which lies between now and when the damages inflicted by a crisis are realized on an organization (or the relevant industry); (2) *Spatial distance*, which occurs between a crisis and an individual's geographical location; (3) *Social distance*, which is located between a crisis and the organization (or the relevant industry); and (4) *Hypothetical distance*, which taps the likelihood of damages, caused by crisis, affecting to an organization

(or the relevant industry).

Construal of events, which refers to "the processes that give rise to the representation of the event itself" (Trope & Liberman, 2010, p. 443), provides the mechanism to perceive each type of distance. With regard to construal levels used for assessing different psychological associations, distant (and highly unlikely) objects are regarded as more abstract, structured, and high-level. In contrast, proximal (and highly likely) objects are construed as more concrete, unstructured, and low-level. The distance-based psychological associations with events are important in crisis communication because construal of an event influences individuals' judgment, attitudes, and behaviors (Trope & Liberman, 2010).

The arguments help to predict the effects of psychological distance on crisis outcomes. On one hand, the psychological associations with distance affects relevance of an issue (Chandran & Menon, 2004). For instance, events at a distant point in time are perceived less relevant than those at a proximal point. On the other hand, in the context of evaluating a given event and its damages, individuals are likely to express more positive views toward distant events than proximal ones (Trope & Liberman, 2010). Scholars have argued that a high-level construal object (at a distant point) tends to elicit more positivity. Building on the theoretical explanation, the present study addresses the following research question: how will the psychological distance of the four dimensions affect public relations practitioners' crisis outcomes in the context of data breach crisis that threatens the global finance industry and its stakeholders?

Methodology

An online survey, regarding how public relations practitioners appraise data breach crisis distances, is conducted among communication professionals working in public relations agencies from multiple countries, who are recruited by via Public Relations Organisation International (PROI) Worldwide.



Participants are presented with data breach crisis information and specific incident scenario depicting threats confronting their clients in the financial industry. Then, participants are asked to respond to questions capturing their crisis distance appraisal outcomes, such as temporal, social, hypothetical, and spatial distances toward the crisis, followed by crisis emotions, threat appraisal (situational demands and resources), crisis responsibility, reputation, and crisis preparedness confidence.

Expected Results and Implications

This study predicts the surveyed public relations practitioners will report more expected crisis communication outcomes when they perceive higher

levels of temporal, spatial, social, and hypothetical crisis distances. Despite several methodological limitations such as a convenience sample, a cross-sectional research design, the present study will contribute to crisis communication research by introducing a new approach that expands the way of understanding crisis and suggesting how to tailor effective crisis communication strategies accordingly. Psychological distance of crisis is posited as a new factor for crisis managers to discern the nature of crisis and will lead to a new direction of crisis communication research and practice.

Keywords

crisis communication, psychological distance, construal level theory



A World in Denial: Understanding Antecedents and Perceptual Consequences of Climate Change Denial Attitudes

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Introduction and Purpose of the Study

Historic as 2017 was in many positive ways, it also has the distinction of being the second-hottest year ever to be recorded. With experts predicting that human-induced climate change is likely to trigger the world's "biggest refugee crisis" (Taylor, 2017), the need for the world to come together and address this crisis is dire. Unfortunately, there are many who deny the legitimacy of human-induced climate change. With President, Donald J. Trump being a vocal climate change skeptic, efforts to mitigate climate change in the U.S. have taken a step back. Indeed, recent policy roll-backs from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as well as the United States' exit from the Paris Climate Change Agreement have strengthened the voices of climate change deniers. What factors cause individuals to deny human-induced climate change in the face of overwhelming scientific evidence to the contrary, then, is a question that needs to be answered to be able to address their denial and its consequences. The purpose of this study is therefore to understand the antecedents and perceptual consequences of climate change denial.

Literature Review

The idea of climate change denial has been investigated by social scientific scholarship for years. Various studies have found strong relationships between climate change denial and political orientation, conservatism, authoritarianism, and other socio-political factors (e.g., Hakkinen & Akrami, 2014). However, climate change denial is an attitude that persists despite years of global policy, U.S. regulatory policy, as well as extensive scientific inquiry and communication about such inquiry to the general population. It therefore behooves scholarship to understand how individuals' perceptions about such information sources about climate change impact their attitudes about it. The first set of hypotheses tested in this study, therefore, posit a negative relationship between trust in the EPA, in the scientific community, and in the federal government and climate change denial.

To understand the perceptual consequences of climate change denial, this study utilizes the situational theory of problem solving (STOPS) as the conceptual frame. The STOPS (Kim & Grunig, 2011) posits issue-specific perceptual factors that motivate individuals to communicate about the issue. However, climate change denial presents an interesting dilemma for situational theorists in that it involves the de-recognition of a problem; that is, climate change deniers do not believe climate change to be a problem that needs to be addressed. Therefore, the ideas of problem and involvement de-recognition are conceptualized, and an operationalization parallel to the original STOPS is presented in this study. The second set of hypotheses posit that climate change denial attitudes will be positively associated with problem and involvement de-recognition, and negatively associated with constraint recognition.

Methodology

Surveys were conducted among U.S. adults (N = 495), of which 47.07% were climate change deniers. After ensuring reliability of each variable, structural equation modeling was performed to answer the hypotheses.

Results and Conclusions

Both the measurement model and structural model were found to have good fit. In terms of hypotheses, EPA trust ($\beta = -.29, p < .001$) and trust in the scientific community ($\beta = -.40, p < .001$) were found to significantly negatively predict climate change denial. A positive association was found between trust in the federal government ($\beta = .29, p < .001$) and climate change denial. However, this finding makes sense when considering President Trump's avowed climate change skepticism. Furthermore, climate change denial strongly predicted individuals' problem ($\beta = .94, p < .001$) and involvement de-recognition ($\beta = .90, p < .001$), as well as their constraint recognition ($\beta = -.33, p < .001$).



Practical and Social Implications

The purpose of this study was to identify the antecedents and perceptual consequences of climate change denial. The results confirmed the key role played by lack of trust in sources of climate change information, i.e., the EPA and the scientific community, in predicting climate change attitudes. This finding points to the importance of the scientific community engaging with individuals who deny climate change in ways that will address the trust deficit found in this study. Additionally, this study found support for the link between climate attitudes and problem-related perceptions. Such perceptions were then found to influence individuals' communication behaviors about climate change, as per the STOPS model. These findings help problematize climate change as a communication issue, and lay the

foundation for future scholarship to help our world survive this crisis.

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Social Media and Crisis Communication Practices: Ideas, Ideals & Nightmares of Our Time

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Introduction and Purpose of the Study

The emerging environmental risks and uncertainties surrounding businesses, governments and even NGO sector worldwide have combined to highlight the need for effective public relations and crisis management practices. High profile business failures, terrorist attacks and occasional scandals involving celebrities all help demonstrate the importance and need for organizations to be understood especially on controversial matters involving change in times of crises. In the past decade or so, stakeholder activists have broadened the spectrum of crisis communication as they take advantage of widely available social media to highlight various aspects of controversial issues that would have otherwise remained unknown or unheard. This paper elicits the uses of social media by such activist groups to make a case for the enormous opportunity that social media offer to PR practitioners in crisis situations, as well as outline the threats that failure to use them effectively could pose to organizations at local, national and international levels. By providing vital communication platforms, social media facilitate two-way communication between an organization and its various publics. The same social media that have provided trained PR practitioners with platforms to accomplish highly effective two-way communication practices have similarly turned millions in society into an army of 'citizen journalists' with limited or no training, or commitment to ethical principles of communication; providing room for non credible usage of these platforms where everyone is free to express "what's on their mind." Dissemination of rumours and 'fake news' and even promotion of terrorist propaganda have become embedded risks of these otherwise very timely channels for crisis communication.

Literature Review

The dominant discourse in contemporary public relations stresses that social media are effective tools for communication during crisis situations (Coombs,

2014); yet unethical usage of social media may also pose special challenges to PR practitioners. As suggested by Jordan-Meier (2011), "how the media are managed can hurt or help you in a crisis," (p.14); thus, the need to (re)consider ethical implications of social media use in times of controversies or conflict times is imperative. This further calls for the need to have better social media literacy and handling skills to enable users to differentiate credible information from those designed to mislead. This also underlines the need to integrate social media communication skills and ethics into PR curricula in universities. This study surveys relevant literature to examine the potentials and risks of social media usage in crisis communication by highlighting some of the relevant crisis communication models, strategies, and theories.

Methodology

The study uses triangulation of critical and case studies approaches as well as survey research. Survey research was used among University PR-major students to probe their perceptions of social media as vehicles and forums for PR activism during moments of crisis. Moreover, the use of social media by these future PR professionals themselves as activists during crisis situations would also be analyzed. The group of budding PR practitioners was drawn from a mixed group of international students (drawn from various African countries, Cyprus, Turkey, Syria, Jordan, Palestine and Russia) who are studying at a major university on the island of Cyprus. A pilot study was conducted to determine issues the students considered as major international crises, and two issues that emerged as "international crises" (the Syrian refugee crisis, and kidnapping of Chibok girls by rebel Boko Haram group in Nigeria) were used as reference cases to design and administer the final survey instrument.



Results and Conclusions

The paper concludes by critically assessing and eliciting the potentials that social media hold for PR practitioners as channels and tools for effective communication in crises situations. It emerged that the manner in which stakeholder activists use of social media during crisis situations could render them a double-edged sword that could cut either way depending on the manner in which it was used; constructively and ethically for the benefit of the organization, or abusively used to propagate controversy, falsehood, or to cultivate division and perpetuate hate.

Keywords

Crisis communication, social media, activism, social media literacy, ethics

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Teflon Reputations and Glass Jaws: Managing Reputations in the Public Sphere

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Introduction and Purpose of Study

The paper explicates the concept of declarative public support (DPS). The evidence of DPS exists throughout the history, across nations, and cultures evident from significant historical events. People go to lengths to support an ideology, a mission, an idea, a person or a combination of these. Greeks gathered in the Agora to publicly participate in and also show support regarding religious, political, judicial, social, and commercial affairs. Similarly, the Internet has proved to be a befitting pulpit for DPS which social media has made convenient by allowing quick and easy acts such as liking, sharing, commenting, and so on. Such open display of support may often initiate with one's social support networks and eventually be followed by individuals outside of that network in mass numbers. Thus, DPS is the concept of publicly and openly sharing an opinion in support of a recognizable figure who often hold some celebrity capital. It is worth noting that the recognizable figure may be an individual or an entity such as a brand, an organization or an ideology that they represent.

The purpose of the paper is to demonstrate that DPS is an overlooked concept that exists in the public sphere. Particularly pertaining to recognizable figures, better conceptualizing and theorizing of DPS will be beneficial in the reputation management theory and as well as its practice.

Literature Review

Social scientists have provided remarkable research in how humans give and receive support from each other and show opinions. However, the author explains ways in which DPS is different from similar concepts such as social support, elections, referendums, and public opinion polls and collective action. By learning more about these differences, the concept of DPS becomes clearer. To fully explicate this concept, the author provides evidence that DPS is observable, fills gaps in the public relations literature and helps understand why some figures have seemingly indestructible reputations like *Teflon* and others have *glass jaws* or delicate reputations that can be shattered with a blow, as if made of glass.

Methodology

The paper is a methodical explication of the concept of DPS and provides a conceptual analysis. The author provides the empirical evidence that it exists and the ways in which it is different from similar concepts such as social support, opinion sharing, and collective action in the public sphere; moreover, DPS explains some gaps found in the understanding of these concepts.

Results and Conclusions

The author contends that conceptualizing and exploring DPS will help public relations practitioners find ways in which they can manage reputation crises better. Communication technologies, particularly social media has disrupted the way humans communicate and have made private individuals more relevant in the public sphere, their opinions have become especially more relevant in the public sphere. The author contends that the concept of DPS has become more noticeable and observable especially in the social media.

There are potential implications of the study on the practice of reputation management. The author provides evidence that DPS is observable, fills gaps in the public relations literature, and helps understanding why some figures have seemingly indestructible reputations like *Teflon* and others have *glass jaws* or delicate reputations that can be shattered with a blow, as if made of glass.

Further, the author indicates four antecedents that trigger the degree of DPS received during a reputation attack, whether high, low or none; and in other instances, receiving public censure. The antecedents of DPS are: Perceived fame or *infamia*; perceived melodrama; the resonance of the reputation attack and; the perceived social contract with the victim of reputation attack. Further, the author discusses the consequences of DPS which exist on three levels: On the individual level for the contributors of DPS, for example, they may become the center of scrutiny themselves when they declare public support for the victim of reputation attack; on the individual level of the receivers of DPS, for example, it provides feedback to the victims of reputation



attack during a reputation crisis and; the societal level consequences which may include a collective shift in perceptions and attitudes caused by the collective shift in the social norms.

The limitation of the paper is that it needs experimental research. The author suggests a future study in the further explication of DPS supported by experimental research.

Practical and Social Implications

The author posits that understanding DPS and its antecedents have a predictive nature and better

understanding of this concepts will equip reputation management teams to better manage and repair reputations of their clients. Further, the author hypothesizes that individuals are encouraged to increase acts of DPS when they observe their close friends and family exhibit the same behavior. Over time, the inclination to perpetuate DPS explains the supportive environment where prominent events take place such as when reputations are saved from destruction, when social movements thrive, and so on.

Keywords

reputation management, declarative public support (DPS), public opinion, character attacks



From Promoting Liberal Democracy and the Free Market to the Necessity of Defending them: Challenges for the PR Industry

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Introduction and the purpose of the study

"Democracy promotion" has been an important part of the Western liberal order that has been nurtured and defended by the US since World War II. It was designed to secure U.S. power relations and domination in the world, obviously only complementary to the military hegemony. One should mention the two aspects of this concept: the economic and the political one, as it was based on the belief that democracy can exist only in the market economy.

Parallel to the efforts to implant the market economy model, based on Washington Consensus prescriptions, the US and the EU member states also rendered their "democracy assistance" with the intent of imposing "a particular model of democracy" – liberal democracy.

The final result of the U.S.-led Western "democracy promotion" efforts were:

- imposition of a "set of economic and political prescriptions on developing and post-Communist transitional countries." ; and
- an important contribution to the dissolution of the Soviet Union in December 1991, as well as the "regime changes" in Russia and most of the other post-socialist/communist countries but only in the first stage of transition.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union 25 years ago, Francis Fukuyama has proudly announced "the end of history". In his opinion, capitalism along with liberal democracy had won. Fukuyama could not have been more wrong about "the end of history". The beginning of the 21st century has proven that the era of competing ideologies is far from being over, because authoritarianism is quite successfully competing with liberalism and Islamist fundamentalism, and spreading around the world. More importantly, the 2008/2009 global financial crisis, and the "Occupy Wall Street" type of protests have proven that the marriage of free market economics and liberal democracy is incapable

of creating political and socio-economic systems benefiting the majority.

In effect, the beginning of the 21st century has brought an end to Western, and particularly the U.S. strategic communication and public diplomacy persuasion power to promote liberal democracy and free market because:

1. "the American dream" is no longer appealing and the U.S. government lacks credibility as a messenger and partner with key foreign audiences;
2. the disapproval of the "Washington Consensus" prescriptions after the 2008/2009 financial crisis manifesting themselves around the world;
3. the European Union crisis which extends beyond Brexit, as well as the problem of the Eurozone and the challenge of mass migration;
4. quite efficient counteroffensive from the side of the 'illiberal democracy'/autocratic governments of Russia, Hungary, China, as well as terrorist Islamic ISIS.

Two basic research questions have been formulated in this study:

- first, by using which strategies and tools for communication and public diplomacy, consultants and PR agencies managed to convince tens of governments and millions of citizens around the world, particularly in the former socialist/communist countries, that a liberal version of democracy plus a neoliberal market economy model is the best one;
- second, what are the chances, that the highly sophisticated and powerful western PR industry will be able today successfully defend the liberal democracy and free market ideology, after the disastrous effects of the 2008/2009 financial crisis, cyber information war, successful spreading of the model of 'illiberal democracy' and radical Islamic ideology.



Literature overview

The topic falls within the framework of social theory, among others in specific fields like comparative political systems (Almond, 1956), comparative economic systems (Gregory, P. R., & Stuart, R. C., 1989) and in the public relations theory in such concepts like: public relations and promotion of democracy (Pratt, 1985, 1986; Taylor 2000; Bardhan & Weaver, 2011), public diplomacy (Nye, Zaharna), transitional public relations (Ławniczak, 2003, 2016) and image restoration theory (Benoit, 1995).

Methodology

Quantitative research method, with both inductive as well as deductive approaches applied.

Results and conclusions and practical and social implication

Public diplomacy and the friendly assistance of the PR industry in general may not be not enough to restore trust in the values of liberal democracy and free market, as long as the stakeholders can observe that the government and corporate PR and lobbying

is further on unsupported by action by the corporate leaders, governments and international institutions like EU. However PR industry has further on a critical role to play.

Keywords

public diplomacy; "democracy promotion"; Washington Consensus; 2008/2009 financial crisis; image restoration and reputation repair.

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Challenges in enhancing disaster communication through spontaneous stakeholder communicative self-organisation

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Introduction and purpose of the study

For more than two weeks, wind driven fires raged in the “Great Knysna Fire of 2017”, South Africa. This led to the largest mobilisation of South African fire fighters in the country’s history.

In the chaos that ensued, communication cables, towers and the like were damaged, which disrupted municipal disaster communication to the community. Yet the community were able to communicate among themselves to provide life-saving information and arrange rescue actions during the disaster, and organise relief efforts in the latter part of the disaster. However, this left the local government, who are accountable for disaster management, in lieu, and led to conflict between the parties.

This paper combines disaster risk reduction and communication management literature, to investigate the challenges and complexities in stakeholders spontaneously self-organising communication efforts, during a disaster.

Literature review

Strategic communication management literature advocates a pro-active, stakeholder inclusive approach to communication planning, that encourages power sharing. The benefit to the stakeholder, and organisation, is considered an important outcome of the communicative effort. However, accountability for possible life-threatening outcomes of shared communicative efforts, is less clear.

The guiding document in the disaster risk reduction field, The Sendai Framework for disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, suggests a strong focus on pre-disaster cooperation between government and other stakeholders to collaborate on structures and policies. The Framework advocates that the particular government involved retain overall responsibility and accountability for the management of the disaster,

thereby cementing their communicative power.

In South Africa, their disaster risk governance is argued to be one of the most forward thinking in the world. However, the execution of these frameworks are lacking, particularly when referring to community engagement (Van Niekerk, 2014). The South African Disaster Management Act No 57 of 2002 only encourage volunteer action in a pre-planned structured environment, and highlight carefully managing the possibility of spontaneous volunteer action.

In practice, the Incident Command System (ICS) – a globally recognised disaster management coordination system also used in South Africa – bring stability in a disaster by coordinating all activities on behalf of the government responsible. The ICS extensively guides the communication during a disaster, but currently do not allow for the community affected by the disaster to spontaneously manage a section of the ICS functions, like communication.

In summary, from literature a clear gap in incorporating spontaneous stakeholder communicative self-organisation in disaster management, can be identified.

Methodology

Data was obtained through thematic analysis of 5 semi-structured interviews with government officials and 2 community influencers, as well as a qualitative social media (Facebook) analysis of the Knysna Fire 2017 page. The qualitative thematic analysis allowed the researcher sufficient flexibility to explore the topic under investigation.

Results and conclusions

It seemed that there were little understanding between the municipality and community in terms of their roles and responsibilities during the disaster, which proved detrimental to their relationship. The community did not show much understanding of the formal disaster



management frameworks and policies, and interpreted the lack of information from the government as a lack of involvement and willingness to assist. The municipalities also did not expect that communities could contribute to the disaster management effort, leading to them trying to gain control over the community's self-organisation efforts. These views negatively influenced further disaster relief efforts.

The findings suggest that the community, like in other disaster examples, self-organised their communication resources during the disaster to coordinate relief efforts, separately from the governmental efforts. These efforts were well organised and held great potential for assisting in disaster management efforts, given that it could be formalised within the disaster management frameworks and structures.

Future studies could broaden their outlook to include various examples of community self-organisation of communication during a disaster, to gain further insight into this phenomena and test a collaborative disaster management framework.

Practical and social implications

Communication management literature can offer well researched and proven solutions for collaboration between government and the community during a

disaster. In addition, a communication practitioner understanding the possibilities and challenges of spontaneous community communication during a disaster, could assist in enacting a strategic role by proactively advising the disaster management team on this issue. This will then also highlight the importance and need for a trained communication practitioner in a disaster situation.

Input from a strategic view of communication management, could assist in adapting future international and local disaster management policies and frameworks to include the possibility of spontaneous communicative organisation by communities. Lastly the widely used ICS system could be expanded to incorporate these community communication efforts within their structures.

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Keywords

Disaster communication; Strategic communication management; Community collaboration; Knysna Fire Disaster



Signs of trust. Investigating social media as connective enablers between municipalities and digital publics

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Introduction and purpose of the study

An implosion of trust: recently, the Edelman Trust Barometer has highlighted how the distrust in institutions, such as government and media, is growing. In a “VUCA” world and in an “age of distrust”, a key question is how public authorities could reconnect with citizens and strategic publics. Traditional and digital media play a relevant role in spreading the sense of distrust toward institutions, but at the same, communication and PR can represent an effective leverage for public authorities to inform and engage citizens. In particular, the strategic use of social media seems to play a crucial role in reconnecting governments and public organizations with citizens, shortening the distance between these actors, developing and nurturing mutual trust and engagement. This enthusiasm is not often supported by empirical studies comparing different perspectives on the same object. This study focuses on how digital publics can detect and value “signs of trustworthiness” (Bacharach & Gambetta, 2001) in Facebook timelines directly managed by municipalities, and how PR managers working for these administrations can enhance trust and credibility within their institutional social media communication strategies. In this framework, can social media represent a connective and enabling environment to build up trust between citizens and municipalities?

Literature review

Communication flows play a crucial role in spreading the sense of distrust among citizens, especially after the big increase of social media use in addition to traditional platforms. Scholars (Haro-de-Rosario et al., 2018; Warren et al., 2014) have highlighted that an effective use of social media by local governments and institutions can enhance citizens’ engagement and trust, particularly when the bidirectional potential of social media is implemented, fostering higher levels of commitment, so that citizens and governments can share contents, policies and ideas in a collaborative

way. Therefore, it is necessary to understand how the use of social media might potentially make a difference in negotiating trust and in the perceptions and sentiments of citizens toward public authorities (Lovari & Parisi, 2015; Mergel, 2013). For these reasons, the study aims at investigating which are – or could be – the “signs of trustworthiness” (Bacharach & Gambetta, 2001) that lead citizens during their daily social media experiences, when they interact with municipalities in their “official social media channels” and whether there is a correspondence and/or alignment between these signs and “trust signals” implemented by PR practitioners.

Methodology

The study will be carried out in March/April 2018, using different methods. The first phase will see the administration of an online survey of 25 questions (closed and open-ended questions), published in the Facebook Pages of ten Italian municipalities with a geographical distribution reflecting the results of the previous studies (Lovari & Parisi, 2015). Questions will be pretested and the survey will be promoted in the Facebook timelines by the municipalities. Questions cover topics related to the RQs, highlighting the communicative behaviors that citizens detect as signs of trust and to whom they give more importance to effectively relate with municipalities on Facebook timelines.

In a second phase, researchers will carry out in-depth interviews with a selected panel of PR practitioners managing social media channels on behalf of the ten municipalities involved in the survey. Interviews will investigate whether social media managers adopt specific strategies and tactics in order to develop trust, stimulate engagement and to re-connect with digital publics, within their broader strategies and editorial plans.



Results and conclusions

Data will be available and elaborated before the conference. Findings will help researchers to identify the presence of perceived signs of trust and to compare/relate/align them with strategies and tactics adopted by public sector communicators on social media accounts to relate with citizens.

Practical and social implication

Results will be discussed within the theoretical framework. Limitations, further steps of research and implications for PR practitioners and public sector communication working in municipalities will be discussed.

Keywords

trust, social media, public sector communication, strategic communication, municipalities

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Missing the good old days? PR in the era of online misbehavior

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Introduction and purpose of the study

Since the digital world began to conquer individual and organizational lives, online misbehaviour has been receiving attention from researchers focusing on various forms of this phenomenon. Though the discussion has gained much attention from different theoretical approaches such as marketing and psychology, it seems to be almost untouched in the field of communication and public relations.

The main objective of this research is to understand how PR practitioners perceive and evaluate online misbehaviour and how this phenomenon affects organization-public relationships.

The objective is twofold: First, to demonstrate how PR practitioners currently act towards misbehaviour in social media and second to discover if PR practitioners can and are willing to take a role in creating platforms in which misbehaviour is less frequent and disruptive. While the former seeks to present a current picture of how PR practitioners deal with online misbehaviour, the latter has a longer-term vision of contributing to public relations theory and practice in creating, despite the risks, a better, more transparent and dialogic online communication platform.

Literature review

More than ten years ago, Freestone and Mitchell (2004) investigated Internet-related misbehaviours and stated that: "Internet represents a new environment for unethical behaviour" (p. 126). Since then online misbehaviour has been under investigation from the theoretical perspectives of marketing, psychology, informatics and educational sciences. Online misbehaviour indicates a type of behaviour that is out of the normative expectations of a particular online community (Fichman&Sanfilippo, 2015). It represents a wide array of behaviours including mischief, trolling, flaming, lurking, cyberbullying, cyber violence and hate speech (Fichman&Sanfilippo, 2015; Golf-Papez & Veer, 2017).

In 2017 the Microsoft Corporation carried out research in 14 countries at the level of civility and future risks of online interactions. According to the results, 71% of users from Turkey have been exposed to online risks, among which the most common is trolling, along with other misbehaviour as cyberbullying and hate speech. While 19% of the entire sample from 14 countries experienced trolling, in the case of Turkey the equivalent was 44%. Similarly for hate speech, the result was 15% overall while it was 25% for the Turkish sample. Microsoft's research demonstrates that online misbehaviour deserves scholarly attention as a phenomenon that generates a new potential risk for organization-public relationships. In addition, the results from Turkey indicate the country's position as a critical empirical setting to investigate these effects.

Methodology

This research follows a qualitative, interpretive approach and a phenomenological design (Creswell, 2007). To gather elaborate information and perspectives about a subject from relatively few people, main data sources come from in-depth interviews (Guion, Diehl & McDonald, 2011) with the purposefully selected sample of PR practitioners that have a pioneer role and success in Turkey. In addition to the main data source, this research utilizes online observation of the organizational social media accounts managed by the informants.

Results and conclusions

This study presents results pertaining to how PR practitioners perceive, evaluate and manage online misbehaviour in their organization-public relationships. According to the results of a first-stage of coding, practitioners seem to perceive online misbehaviour as a threat that needs to be dealt with immediately. Informants emphasized that particularly trolling and flaming disturb participants of the online platform by breaking the flow of conversation. The ways practitioners use to manage this process seem to be quite reactive,



such as deleting and banning content and even starting legal procedures against the misbehaved participants. Basically, they try to manage online misbehaviour following the traditional steps of a crisis management process. Online misbehaviour does not always emerge as an independent, individual activity; sometimes the flame could be sparked off by brands that would like to harm their competitors. In each case, it is perceived as a huge risk in damaging reputation and trust and provoking the emergence of distrust. The limitations of this study are based on the nature of qualitative research, particularly based on a purposefully selected sample that is quite hard to reach. Future studies could consider online misbehaviour in relation to various arguments as reputation, trust, crisis and dialogue.

Practical and social implications

This research seeks to contribute to both theory and practice by proposing a more proactive and a democratized way of reducing online misbehaviour based on the reasoning of practitioners. In the era of social media, more transparent and genuine organization-public relationships are needed and this study tries to offer a safer platform for both organizations and its public to contribute to a better digital communication environment.

Keywords

Online misbehaviour, public relations, organization-public relationships

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Addressing academic and social neglect: Narratives of progress involving discipline disruptions, financial communication, and a new role for PR

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Taking inequality as one major and challenging component of a world in crises, this paper tackles the challenge through three interlinked areas of neglect in PR: discipline interactions; engagement with big real world issues; and financial communication. It is a theory paper with practical implications. Accordingly, rather than reviewing a single body of literature, it synthesises ways of engaging effectively from literature in communication, economics, financial communication, interdisciplinarity, and management.

In a seminal article, Herbst (2008) found that early Communication Studies was “stunningly interdisciplinary” as it borrowed freely from Sociology, Marketing, Political Science, among others (p. 604). Yet, over time, it grapples with the tensions of retaining the creativity and freedom that interdisciplinarity allows, on the one hand, and the need to maintain legitimacy as a discipline, on the other. As a smaller, less diverse field coming under the broad communication umbrella, PR feels these tensions intensely. However, even communication scholars claiming to chart 21C flows of information, people, and relationships that result from globalisation and economic change, scholarship’s disciplinary dams constrain its own fluidity. Scholars often work in their self-managed discipline, field or subfield-based, and isolated silos that “are often jerry-built to accommodate a situation Geertz dubbed increasingly ‘fluid, plural, uncentered, and ineradicably untidy’” (Klein, 2010, p. 20).

Picking up Herbst’s (2008) observation that discipline-based “literature reviews often miss a body of work that might have altered the project in fundamental ways” (p. 609), I follow her search for transformational change “out of the disciplinary constellation” (p. 608) and her call to work across disciplines to understand “the cultural, social, political, psychological, and economic phenomena that surround us” (p. 613). Specifically, I seek to map the wider and multi-ridged contours of financial communication, currently confined to the narrower field of investor relations (IR) (itself a subfield

of PR). IR studies relationships between companies and financial communities, which can encompass elements of communication, finance, marketing, securities law compliance, and more. However, the fragmented approach tends to be slow to catch on to large scale changes. As a result, it is not IR but consulting firm McKinsey (<https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/strategy-and-corporate-finance/our-insights/the-global-forces-inspiring-a-new-narrative-of-progress>) who not only code inequality as a rising social tension that demands a new strategy, but who also construct a narrative updating FDR’s “New Deal” into the “next deal” to sustain progress and to engage with the coming resource shortages.”

This paper contends that, to engage with social tensions around equality and to tell convincing future stories, PR needs to learn from McKinsey in identifying global forces inspiring new narratives of progress and from Interdisciplinary Studies (ID). The first *Handbook of ID* concluded that the scientific disciplines (e.g., biology, chemistry) and the social sciences (e.g., economics, sociology) together shape “not only our perception of the sciences proper but also of the world around us as if they were the given structure of the world” (Weingart, 2010, p. 3). Seven years on, the lead editor of the second *Handbook of ID* suggests that to stay relevant the problem for ID to solve is one of “politics, democracy, and technocracy [as] the bridge between academic sophists and the rest of society” (Frodeman, 2017).

PR is positioned with the capacities to contribute to that solution where Discourse and Financial Communication (DAFC) have failed by continuing with IR-style conservatism. The paper concludes with illustrations of how PR can actively intervene in financial communication designed to increase work for IR/PR practitioners while building on the potential of financial technology’s digital disruptions to reduce economic inequalities. Most disruptions come with democratic DNA in their genes – citizen journalists, producers not



consumers, blogging for (nearly) everyone – although the status quo can later reassert itself at least partially (Trump's revenge of the tweets) but IR has remained on the side of the powerful. Nevertheless, PR has already been involved in significant prosocial crowdfunding successes, and can leverage communication and community building to benefit itself, and vulnerable sections of society, through bridge building. I end by evaluating how equity crowdfunding communities can benefit financially from the platform revolution, increase funding for startups, and share the economic fruits of the financialization of everything more widely.

Keywords

Interdisciplinarity; social engagement; financial communication; PR

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Managing in a volatile, complex, and ambiguous world: A systematic review of 25 years of management research in communication and public relations

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Introduction and Purpose

As the world has become a more volatile, complex, and uncertain place for organisations of all complexions, the task of managing responses to such environmental change, particularly in terms of how it impacts on an organization's key stakeholder relationships, is one of the key responsibilities of communications/public relations managers. Against this backdrop of volatile environmental change, this paper explores how thinking about the role and practice of communications/public relations management, and the competencies needed to perform these roles has evolved over the past 2-3 decades.

Background

For communication practitioners, managing the potential complexity of an organisation's key stakeholder relationships and how they may be shaped by environmental change can be seen to cast practitioners in the role of 'boundary-spanning experts' (Aldrich & Herker, 1977; White and Dozier, 1992), helping to scan the external and internal environments and bring a stakeholder perspective into sharper-focus in strategic decision-making processes. Indeed, this 'boundary-spanning' capability is often cited as one of the strongest arguments for public relations professionals having a place at the top management table (White and Dozier, 1992). However, little recognition of this boundary-spanning role can be found in the management literature; rather, if public relations is mentioned at all, it is seen to play a predominantly technical, publicity generating, or in some cases, propagandistic role (Moss et al, 2000). Thus a key challenge for public relations researchers in bridging this divide is to establish what constitutes the general and specific set of managerial role responsibilities, behaviours, and competencies required in the communications/public relations context.

Method

To provide a comprehensive insight into of how thinking about the managerial dimension of communication / public relations practitioner's role has evolved over the past two and half decades, we needed to construct a very thorough review of all relevant literature. To this end, rather than follow the traditional narrative approach, we have undertaken a systematic review of the management and public relations literatures (Transfield, Denyer, and Smart, 2003), which emphasises the transparency and replicability of the review process used to synthesise existing research in the defined field. This approach also minimises the potential for bias through exhaustive searching of all relevant literatures and careful auditing of all decisions and steps undertaken during the literature search process. Here the search for relevant literature spanned all key social science and specific management databases. Through repeated iterations of the search process with differing combinations of core and qualifying search terms, we were able to refine and narrow down the number of items found from over 2000 to a more manageable 450 items, which was further refined to just over 200 items through initial careful scrutiny of the works to identify immediately relevant articles.

Framework

To facilitate a more critical examination and interpretation of the way thinking appears to have evolved about the 'managerial' role and competencies of communications/public relations practitioners, we identified three core underlying themes which enabled us to reconfigure the literature derived from our searches in a more constructive and meaningful way: [i] *PR practitioner [managerial] roles and responsibilities*, [ii] *practitioner [managerial] competencies/ behavioural repertoires* and [iii] *the contexts shaping practitioner role enactment*.



Results

This paper goes on to explore how each of these three themes provide a complementary 'lens' illuminating how thinking about managerial role enactment has developed both from a traditional practitioner role enactment perspective – drawing predominantly on the manager – technician role dichotomy – and contrasting this rather unproblematic consideration of communication/public relations manager responsibilities and behaviours with the more complex, multifaceted, and sometimes contested view of managerial role enactment found within the management literature. The second theme of managerial competencies or 'behavioural repertoires' serves to highlight further the current divide between public relations and management research in terms of the scope and depth of the scholarship that has been undertaken to explore and identify the core

competencies required for effective management of communications at different levels and in different organisational contexts. The third of these organising themes in many ways serves to link both the previous thematic areas, focusing attention on the critical importance of situational, organisational, and societal context as key forces shaping both the scope and specific responsibilities of the communication manager and by inference, the set of competencies they need to display. Through this systematic review of public relations and management literatures the paper offers a valuable reassessment of our current understanding of the manager's role in the communication/ public relations context.

Keywords

Systematic review, communication manager roles, manager competencies



How Big is Public Relations (And Why Does It Matter)?

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In 2006 the author published in the IPR (Institute for PR) website this paper http://www.instituteforpr.org/wp-content/uploads/Falconi_Nov06.pdf: a 'somewhat awkward' attempt to elaborate a methodological framework to analyse and define the economic impact of public relations by characterizing it as a mostly labor intensive activity, different from advertising defined as a capital intensive activity.

Since then, whatever the sense and the worth of that effort was, public relations has significantly changed, participating to the global status of the world today, also by supporting and integrating the rise and fall of globalization with the rise and fall of social media

in the belief that the path to legitimacy also implied advocating the end of space and time.

The author, in cooperation with Frank Ovaitt, currently President Emeritus of the institute for pr, in this paper revisits and updates the original sources of that article, adding new ones in an attempt to describe and discuss a new approach to evaluate and assess the economic impact and beyond of public relations in the world today, therefore also investigating recent conceptualizations and practical applications of relationship and social capital and how these contribute to that impact across societies.



Erasing the limits. When companies impose themselves

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Carolina Andrea CARBONE, *Universidad de Belgrano (Argentina)*

Introduction and purpose of the study

Some publicly notorious cases such as Odebrecht contracts, fracking for oil in Vaca Muerta or Barrick Gold's Veladero mining operation echoes strongly within the public opinion from different countries in South America. These companies carry out, what it is sometimes called indiscriminately and even immoral exploitation of natural resources.

The cost seems steeper from the environmental and social point of view than from the financial side. Also, there is a growing perception of a weak State and co-opted National and Provincial Governments in the hands of lobbyists and negotiators working for these mega corporations.

From all the voices participating, a question rises as a starting point for large scale discussion: What is the limit that has to be reached, in abuse of the land, resources, social environment and governmental controls, for the State to set a hard limit?

The research focus is set on the case of Barrick gold's operation in the Argentinean province of San Juan. During the last few years, there have been several media reports focusing on abuses over the land and other operational "problems" such as pipeline leakage. This spill, containing highly toxic materials, reached the Jachal river, the main source of water to the mine and to the neighbouring communities.

Methodology

As a sample for this paper, a narrow scope study has been made taking media coverage of the fourth toxic material spill in the Veladero operated by Barrick Gold. Coverage analysis will serve to understand the dynamics in the relationship between the government, Barrick and the people of San Juan.

The time span for the analysis consists of the interval between March 22nd, 2017 and April, 8th, 2017. Selected media (print and online editions) for the analysis lists as follows:

- Diario Clarín
- La Nación
- Los Andes
- Diario de Cuyo
- Mining Press
- Revista El Federal
- Jachal Magazine

The objectives for this research are stated as follows:

- a) Identify every active voice involved in the media discussion and its levels of persuasion
- b) Lobbying activities that sift through the journalistic material
- c) A thorough description of the power struggle between each sector (Government, People and the Company)
- d) What is the role of the media, be it in the development of the story or the social situation and the plurality of voices

Literature review

The results obtained from the research of previous academic work about mining operations in Argentina were not satisfactory. However, there are several similar cases researched in Peru, Ecuador and other South American countries. These cases have been taken into account in order to check if there are behavioral patterns in these kind of operation.

There are cases involving Barrick Gold in other countries, which were made public by local journalists denouncing by publishing very detailed ways how these mining operations go against the right of the people residing in neighbouring areas from the mine.

Anthony Bebbington demonstrates that these exploitations significantly shake the way in which the surrounding communities live and how they are unable to find answers to their claims from the governmental



authorities. The only viable way for them is to revolt or to raise the issue through mass media. These methods, according to Timothy Coombs Handbook of crisis communication, have been well established as the most harmful to public image for companies and state officials.

There is a diverse array of publications about mining and drilling operations in south american countries and in Australia that show remarkable resemblances with the argentinian case. Also some contributions from Communication scholars like James Grunig, Gustavo Coppola, Ruth Sautu and Josep Revolta.

Results and conclusions

Throughout the analysis of every publication, there was a clear confrontation between the company and the Government leaving the social voice muffled.

Regarding the way in which some newspapers take position in favor or against the company, it is notorious how the majority of the nation newspapers is set against the company but when the article is based on

a press release from Barrick, they turn their tendency to favour them.

This study shows some limitations, especially in the temporal frame. However, in redefining it to include all four spills and even a number of years since the mine started in Argentina, the results could be, while maintaining the same research focus, much more explicit in the way this company co-opts the public opinion with lobbying and mass media actions.

Practical and social implications

Social implications may come by motivating to investigate more into these cases and to provide tools that will help to empower those communities that reside adjacent to this exploitations and that many times are not heard in their claims for justice and equality.

Keywords

Lobbying, Public Communication, Public Affairs, Public Relations, Mining



Evaluating Crisis Responses on Twitter: Perspectives from Situational Crisis Communication Theory and Person-Centered Messages

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Introduction and Study Purpose

A growing number of organizations today are facing crisis threats on social media (Coombs & Holladay, 2012). Unfortunately, few guidelines exist that assist crisis managers in creating appropriate crisis response strategies online (Roshan, Warren, & Carr, 2016). Our work bridges research from crisis communication with interpersonal communication competence. Specifically, we focus on person-centered messages (PCM) as a useful strategy in crisis management. Therefore, this investigation evaluates how U.S. based airlines use person-centered messages when responding to crisis on Twitter. We specifically examined the recently highlighted PR crises (e.g. David Dao case of United Airlines). Three research questions (RQs) guide this study:

- RQ1: What types of crises do U.S. airlines encounter on Twitter?
- RQ2: How do U.S. airlines use person-centered messages when responding to crises on Twitter?
- RQ3: How does crisis type (victim, accidental, and preventable) influence U.S. airlines use of person-centered messages on Twitter?

Literature Review

Our study applies situational crisis communication theory (SCCT; Coombs, 2007) to understand the types of crises that U.S. airlines experienced with stakeholders on social media. Situational crisis communication theory (SCCT) examines how an organization's reputation can be protected during a crisis by selecting appropriate communicative crisis response strategies. SCCT posits that crisis types can be grouped into three clusters (e.g., victim, accidental, and preventable) based

upon attributions of crisis responsibility.

Our work extends SCCT by considering Tweet message quality (constructivism; Delia, O'Keefe, & O'Keefe, 1982), with a particular focus on person-centered messages. Person-centered messages vary (e.g., low, medium, high) in how much support they provide to message recipients. Low person-centered messages (LPC), often deny the message recipient an opportunity to express feelings. Moderate levels of person-centered messages (MPCs) recognize emotional distress, but offer distraction as a solution. Highly person-centered messages (HPCs) include high levels of involvement and are listener centered.

Methodology

We conducted quantitative content analyses to investigate our three research questions. Twitter messages were selected as the unit of analysis because Twitter is the key communication channel that organizations have used to respond to crises today (Schultz, Utz, & Goritz, 2011). Data was collected from January 2016 until May 2017 from the top 5 U.S. airlines. A total of 318 tweet responses to 18 different crisis issues were examined. Two independent coders analyzed these messages. Comparison of the two independent coders' agreement yielded a Krippendorff's Alpha of .806.

Descriptive analyses were used to see the crisis types the airlines encounter on Twitter (RQ1) and to examine how the U.S. airlines use person-centered messages to respond to the crises on Twitter (RQ2). Descriptive and chi-squared analyses were employed to test the association between the crisis types and airlines' use of person-centered messages in responding to crises on Twitter (RQ3).



Results and Conclusions

Our first research question (RQ1) assessed crisis types that U.S. airlines encounter on Twitter. Our results indicated that accidental (44%), victim (28%), and preventable (28%) crisis types were represented across all five of the airlines. We also examined how U.S. airlines use person-centered messages when responding to crises on Twitter (RQ2). The airlines reported multiple crisis types, but most frequently used medium person-centered messages (73%). Our third research question (RQ3) examined how person-centered message use varied across different crisis types. All crisis types used medium-person centered messages (MPCs; 73%) most frequently. Low person-centered messages (LPCs; 24.2%) were also implemented, while highly-person centered messages (HPCs; 2.8%) were not often used.

Future examinations that investigate how airlines and other service organizations respond to crisis can be guided by our study's limitations. One limitation is our analyses only reflect the crisis events that were discussed on Twitter. Each of the organizations that we examined provided responses using a variety of formats (e.g., press releases, press conferences, blogs). Future studies can examine the ways in which consumers and organizations make decisions about when and how they respond to crisis on social media.

Practical and Social Implications

Unfortunately, the airlines that we analyzed did not consider how message quality should vary with attention to crisis type. Our findings suggest that corporations ought to pay attention to publics who have been negatively affected by the crisis and generate messages that are centered toward them. The case for PCMs in crisis communication is gaining more importance with the emergence of social media.

This is especially salient given that public relations in the digital age is becoming increasingly two-way and symmetrical. In other words, the affected publics have become direct receivers of communication, somewhat resembling the structure and format of interpersonal dialogue. We hope that these findings on the current state of crisis responses will allow both scholars and practitioners to consider an approach utilizing person-centered messages in crisis management.

Keywords

social media, crisis communication, public relations, person-centered messages

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Activist groups and Public Relations functions: examples from two collapsed banks and their clients

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Introduction

The banking system collapsed in the United States in 2008, with the bankruptcy of Lehman Brothers Bank. However, as we live in a globalized world, the crisis quickly spread to other countries, including Portugal. The country began to be fragile, with the need for external aid to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in 2011, which resulted in a financial bailout for the country. The crisis that affected the country had consequences for the reputation of financial institutions, leading to its disbelief and a decrease in confidence in the banking system, evidenced by the dissolution of the two institutions under study: Banco Português de Negócios (BPN) and Banco Espírito Santo (BES).

The crisis in these banking institutions spread to its clients and became part of the media agenda. The media have published several pieces about BPN and BES, as well as about their victims. In this context, associations are created by former clients who were left without the money invested in commercial paper.

In this investigation, we try to understand how these publics (injured clients of BPN and BES) are organized; highlighting the relationship established between the media, representatives of banking institutions and injured customer groups, highlighting the public relations functions in the claims of these activist groups.

Literature review

In the last decade we have witnessed an increase in activist movements. These groups organize and plan strategies to pressure the dominant groups to solve the cases they consider problematic. It is therefore necessary to use a theoretical framework to understand activism, identify activist publics, as well as to highlight the actions they develop to be heard in the public spheres.

The postmodern view of activism challenges the

normative view of the PR discipline (e.g. Coombs & Holladay, 2012; Ciszek, 2015; Benecke & Oksiutycz, 2015). The postmodern scholars acknowledge that the social environment is increasingly fragmented, with a greater number of active publics, who in turn have become experts in making their voices heard (Holtzhausen, 2000). In an organizational context, the PR must become the activists of the organization, so as to be able to attenuate dominant power structures, contributing to the attendance of different voices and to a consequent deliberative democracy (Holtzhausen, 2000). According to critical theory (e.g. L'Etang, 2005), PR use communication to create power and it is through this power that organizations manage to dominate publics, however, activists with the help of an activist PR (postmodern design) can use power to transform their relationship with the organization.

Method

Starting from a theoretical model of analysis anchored in postmodern public relations theory (e.g. Holtzhausen, 2000), in situational theory of problem solving (Kim & Grunig, 2011) and using the qualitative method (clipping and six in-depth interviews to activist, journalists and negotiators from the organizations and government), this study seeks to identify and characterize the injured clients of the banking institutions under study (BPN and BES) classified as "active publics" (Hallahan, 2000); understand what motivates the media coverage of the actions developed by those activist groups; and to highlight the importance of public relations functions (played by representatives of groups of victims) in the defense, negotiation and promotion of the interests of these groups.

Results and conclusions

From our analysis it was possible to see that the leaders of the activist groups played PR roles. The creation of the associations involved a significant number of people; actions were taken to solve a problem (situation of the injured), including ensuring communication with the



media, and dialoguing with the Government in order to resolve the situation. This publicly active organization has empowered the injured to make them newsworthy and relevant to the negotiation process. It is concluded that the public relations functions are important for communicative action that assures media attention (organization and mobilization of manifestations, information notes, knowledge and instrumentation of the newsworthiness criteria) without its use being effectively developed by professionals in the area.

Limitations and suggestions

The present study is based on a qualitative method, so it would be interesting, in future researches, to try to understand at a more comprehensive level the activist groups way of acting and the organizations' responses to them.

Implications

Besides understanding the role of the media as promoters of participatory democracy and the importance of media relations within this context, we present an alternative vision to the normative approach of public relations where activist publics may be seen as an organizational problem. By adopting a postmodern view, the practices of the activist groups are the same as those used by the PR, and activist publics are to be considered as more than just external audiences of the organization.

Keywords

postmodern public relations theory; activism; Financial crisis; qualitative study



Crisis communication during a national fire disaster

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In this article we combine two of the topics subsumed in the theme of this year's edition for the Bledcom Symposium: government and public crisis communication and the erosion of trust in (public) authorities. We think the topics are interrelated and we couldn't discuss a crisis communication situation without considering its damages and implications to the trust people have in public and governmental institutions. So this will set the tone for our present discussion.

Introduction and purpose of the study

There are several recent studies and analysis that proves we are facing a collapse of trust in government and public institutions (van der Meer, 2017; Edelman, 2017; Randeria in Bradley, 2017). This distrust in democracy and democratic institutions is not a recent subject and has been well identified in a report from 1975 called "The Crisis of Democracy" (Crozier et.al in van der Meer, 2017). Even so this distrust can result from many reasons in different countries.

To start this is also true in Portugal. In a recent study carried out by the Portuguese Society Observatory – Catholic University almost 60% of the Portuguese people were found to distrust the government for solving both national and international problems (Vale & Moreira, 2016).

These distrusting issues have grown in importance mostly due to recent crises at economical and financial level, but also because of the increasing delegitimation of the national political authorities regarding the European Decision Institutions.

Facing this reality we wanted to identify and circumscribe a particular uncertain and severe situation where the government was forced to react and communicate with the public and then conclude about the consequences of that reaction/communication. Mainly we would like to understand if there was a crisis communication that called for a strategy that could be identified in some way. What was the message conveyed to the public arena after the first critics towards the state performance?

What was the formal communication expressed through official news releases? Can we really talk about a communication crisis during the management of the whole process that mediated the period between the availability of resources and assistance and the Independent Technical Commission Report - that does not spare the Government, the Civil Protection Bodies, the Municipalities and even accuses that there were too many "authorities" on the ground? So the main **research question is**: What was the communication strategy followed by the Portuguese Government after the big fires of Pedrógão Grande in Jun 2017 which resulted on the resignation of the Minister of Internal Affairs and several secretaries of state?

Literature review

Some of the authors supporting the theoretical framework of this study are R. Ulmer & T. Sellnow (2002), R. Ulmer, T. Sellnow, & M. Seeger (2011), T. Coombs (2007), T. Coombs & S. Holladay (2010), M. Lee et al. (2012), Heath & O'Hair (2009), P. Anthonissen (2008), L. Kaid (2004), S. Kioussis & J. Strömbäck (2014).

Methodology and corpus of analysis

Our main focus of analysis is the Portuguese official website where we will conduct a research under the theme "Fires" in the time line between 17th Jun 2017 (The beginning of the Pedrógão fires) and 12th October (the day the Independent Technical Commission delivered the Report about the fires). Under this "theme" we can find several official news, videos, public interventions and discourses by government officials, and also 26 news releases posted on the Government's website during the referred period. The methodology used will be the frequencies counting and the thematic content analysis.

Results and conclusions

At the present time we are still conducting a literature review and gathering the materials for the analysis. But the results we are expecting to find will certainly help



us to prove that there are still important limitations in the role that the Government Public Relations represents in Portugal. This study is also part of a bigger research project that we have initiated in 2017 about 'Government PR in Portugal', and that already resulted in a communication in the National Congress of Communications Sciences (SOPCOM - November 2017).

Practical and social implications

Of course we can already identify considerable limitations in this study mainly because of the sensitive issue we are addressing but also due to the lack of availability from official authorities to facilitate the

direct access to eventual goals and strategies behind the public awareness of the communication performance and crisis management in the reported situation.

So we hope to bring awareness to the important role that public relations' function can represent in helping the Portuguese Government to better deal with difficult situations and serve its propose of giving information for to the citizens, listening their expectations and thus contribute to strengthen the social relation valuing the citizen.

Keywords

Government Public Relations; Crisis Communication; Political Trust; Digital Communication Platforms



Openness and transparency practices of social media influencers and their impact on follower trust and relationships: Insights from the United Arab Emirates

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Introduction

Although building relationships between organizations and their publics through authentic, transparent communication is regarded as the touchstone of excellent public relations, the ubiquity of social media channels and the rise of social media influencers add complex dimensions to relationship management. Specifically, non-disclosure of paid endorsements by social media influencers challenges notions of openness and transparency, dragging sponsoring organizations into problematic areas of truth, fairness and disclosure. As legal systems across the world struggle to catch up with these issues, it is imperative for organizations and their public relations practitioners to understand the impact of disclosure, or lack thereof, on followers' relationships with the influencer, brand and ultimately, the organization being promoted.

Grounded within persuasion knowledge model (Friestad & Wright, 1994) from marketing and advertising literatures; within relationship management theorizing from public relations (Hon & Grunig, 1999); and multi-step flow theory from mass communication (Katz, 1957), this study aims to theorize influencer-follower-relationship and examine associations between awareness of paid endorsements by social media influencers and followers' relationships with the influencer and the promoted organization.

We chose to conduct this study in the United Arab Emirates for multiple reasons. First, although user trust in online content varies across countries, there is hardly any literature on online relationship building in the Middle East. Second, 94 percent of inhouse practitioners in the UAE consider social media influencer marketing as very significant and 49 percent engage local social media influencers to promote their brands (YouGov, 2017). Finally, 66 percent of social media users trust recommendations from opinions and 69 percent of these take action on these opinions (Nielsen, 2015).

Literature review

Disclosure and consumers' persuasion knowledge Persuasion knowledge model (Friestad & Wright 1994) deals with consumers' knowledge and beliefs about marketers' persuasion strategies and how they cope through heightened skepticism, resistance, and counter arguing. Research shows that disclosure can positively affect advertising recognition (cognitive persuasion) across different advertising formats; generate distrust towards the ad/brand (attitudinal persuasion) and negatively affect online sharing intentions and purchase intention. However, research that empirically examines these relationships in the context of social media influencers is lacking (Evans et al., 2017).

Influencer-follower-relationship

After reviewing dimensions of organization-public relationship (trust, satisfaction, commitment, control mutuality) (Hon & Grunig, 1999) and multi-step flow theory (Katz, 1957) this study offers theorization of influencer-follower-relationship and posits that awareness of paid endorsement can trigger ad recognition, which can affect influencer-follower-relationship and finally, behavioral intentions such as electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), online sharing intention and purchase intention.

The research question and hypotheses posited to guide the study are:

- RQ: What are the relationships among awareness of paid endorsement, ad recognition, influencer-follower-relationship and behavioral intentions such as eWOM, online sharing intention and purchase intention?
- H1: Awareness of paid endorsement will positively affect ad recognition
- H2: Ad recognition will negatively affect influenc-



er-follower relationship dimensions of trust, commitment, satisfaction and control mutuality

- H3: Influencer-follower relationship will mediate the relationship between ad recognition and (a) eWOM (b) online sharing intention and (c) purchase intention

Methodology

This research will survey a sample of around 500 residents of the UAE using an online questionnaire. Researchers will use convenience and snowball sampling to recruit participants. The online questionnaire contains questions measuring social media usage, social media intensity, ad recognition, influencer-public relationship, eWOM, online sharing intention and purchase intention. SPSS v24 will be used to analyze the results. A pilot study was run to test the validity and reliability of the variables that were measured with existing validated scales (Evans et al., 2017; Hon & Grunig, 1999). Four items measured awareness of paid endorsement. Ad recognition was measured with two items. Perceptions of influencer-public-relationship were measured on four dimensions: trust (six items), commitment (four items), satisfaction (four items) and control mutuality (four items). eWOM was measured using three items and purchase intention was measured using four items.

Implications

Theoretically, the findings of this study will add to emergent empirical insights into follower behavior that could strengthen understanding of drivers of relationships in the context of social media. It will test theories validated within mainstream media in the newer context of social media and extend public relations theorizing, by building upon theories from marketing and social psychology. Findings can add to the body of knowledge on social media-enabled organization-public relationship building in the Middle East. Findings can offer practitioners insights into the drivers of organization public relationships in the emergent context of social media influencers and followers.

Finally, findings from this study can offer insights into social media users' expectations of truth, fairness and disclosure, which can inform public policy that safeguards the interests of publics, followers, influencers and organizations.

Keywords

Social media influencers, paid endorsements, disclosure, trust, relationships



“The people have spoken” - listening to the nation’s voice on corruption and state capture in South Africa

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Purpose of the research

State capture and corruption in South Africa have extensively been covered by investigative journalists in the world media. However, in August 2017 the *Centre for Communication and Reputation Management (CCRM)* at the University of Pretoria commissioned research through partners *Ask Afrika* (South Africa’s largest independent research company) and *Infusion Knowledge Hub* to explore the views of the nation around corruption and state capture.

The research delved into understanding how citizens define themselves within the broader context of the South African population, their views on the most pressing issues within government and business, and the extent to which they perceive corruption and state capture to be prevalent in the country. It also attempted to assess dissatisfaction with political and business performance and to gain a scientifically-verified understanding of how the majority of South Africans believe corruption and state capture will affect the future of the country.

Literature review

The research was informed by the economic downgrading of South Africa to junk status by rating agencies, media coverage on the topic, South Africa’s dire position on the *Transparency International Corruption Index* and current investigations. The concepts of state capture and corruption have been contextually defined.

Methodology

In *Phase One* of the research, 10 focus groups were conducted across three provinces to investigate the way in which ordinary South Africans frame the discourse on state capture and corruption and to inform the interview format for *Phase Two*. Themes were formulated during the focus group settings, and

the interview was designed based on the topics, issues and problems discussed within the group sessions. A nationally representative sample (n=2,600) represented 37 041 778 South African citizens. The 45-minute, face-to-face interviews were constructed in English and translated into five of South Africa’s eleven official languages, although the interviews were administered in other official languages where necessary. A computer-assisted personal interview programme (CAPI) was utilised to conduct the interviews across the country.

Research highlights and results

Citizens used the focus groups as a platform to voice their dissatisfaction with the current state of affairs in the country. The interview items ranged from the current mood of the nation, voting patterns, dissatisfaction with government, corruption, state capture, country reputation and hope for the future.

Some highlights include:

- High levels of distrust and dissatisfaction with the current government, with 77% of people saying they believed the country is heading into a negative direction. The majority felt that their basic needs are not met as a result of state capture and extensive corruption. However, the results revealed a culture of blind following and apathy, which allows leadership to get away with under-performance.
- Of the people interviewed, 89% have heard of the term “corruption” and 99% think it is unacceptable. Half of the respondents know someone who is corrupt.
- 77% have not heard of “state capture” before; but after providing an explanation, 68% think it happens in South Africa and 91% think it is unacceptable and believe that it is a punishable offence.



- The biggest impact of corruption and state capture on the nation is that it creates a personal sense of disempowerment (71%). Citizens believe it reduces trust in the government and discourages foreign and local investment.
- From the highest office in the country through to local government, poor satisfaction levels were reported, with the judiciary in the country rated the best at doing good work. Leadership is failing on the nation's required value system of being *inter alia* trustworthy, honest, listening to the people and competence.
- The national psyche that ties citizens together, irrespective of background or differences, is their willingness to fight against corruption. The overwhelming sentiment is that corruption degrades the fibre of society. The main actors in corruption and state capture are regarded as high level politicians and business people and this has a direct negative impact on the nation.

Practical and social implications

As the data reflected the voice of ordinary South African citizens, the research findings might be used as a catalyst for positive change in South Africa.

Despite some negative findings, the majority of respondents (84%) are *Proudly South African*, with 64% of them choosing to be identified first as South Africans before any other demographic descriptors like race, gender, religion or culture.

The CCRM made this research accessible to the general population and encourages anyone with a willingness to further investigate the concepts and practices, to utilise the research findings. This might be a step closer to the democratisation of research in South Africa.

The findings emphasised the importance of deliberate and continuous communication management by all stakeholders involved.

Keywords

State capture, corruption, listening, nation's voice, reputation



Co-Creating More Citizen Involvement in Mäntsälä Municipality

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Introduction and purpose

Society is looking for ways to better include its citizens in decision making. Project Mäntsälä, of the Laurea University of Applied Sciences, includes a series of student facilitated co-creation workshops of open interaction, which aim to identify useful forms of smoother citizen participation. Multiple actors in the five different areas of Mäntsälä are encouraged to find solutions to involve citizens in the municipality decision making.

This paper finds that positive working models to activate and facilitate citizen involvement in municipal government should be developed to promote positive integration of decision making. All actors, including each individual citizen, are responsible for the conditions in their municipality.

This process draws from the earlier co-creation case project Antura, which worked for greater social responsibility through involving network partner representatives and a voluntarily coordinated arena for citizen participation to co-create forms of smoother immigration integration and open interaction.

Literature review

Collaborative co-creative settings include knowledge transfers, which are best achieved when various stakeholders are included in the co-creation process (Ruoslahti, Tiainen, Kortelainen, & Vesterinen, 2011). Responsibilities become distributed between stakeholders, and decisions decentralized, when participation becomes facilitated.

Collaboration technologies can promote active and open collaboration, which in turn is key to successful co-creation. Such collaboration should be jointly constructed and lead. Co-creation processes require active facilitation (Ruoslahti, 2017).

Value co-creation and citizen participation can be developed by implementing social media concepts for advanced e-government. The authors found that determination and involvement of the municipal

government, an easy to use technology platform that secures the privacy of its users, and a designated community manager, who follows the community of users are needed (Díaz-Díaz & Pérez-González, 2016).

Methodology

The study is completed as student integration, which is the learning method at Laurea University of Applied Sciences. The study includes active cooperation, in the spirit of co-creation, by municipality actors, neighborhood associations, researchers, and students. The time span of the Mäntsälä project is from October 2017 to May 2018.

The research question of the project is: how to identify practical ways for the municipality of Mäntsälä to increase citizen participation in democratic decision making?

The research process is based on the service innovation process, grounded on service design and foresight (Ojasalo & Ojasalo, 2015). First, municipality decision makers are interviewed and second benchmark information collected to serve as the basis for four participatory co-creative workshops held throughout the spring of 2018. There are two idea workshops, which have the aim to diverge and create choices in a wide range of ideas for citizen participation. These are followed by two development workshops, where the focus is to converge and make choices, to select the most practical for the municipality of Mäntsälä. A future roadmap framework structured, 1) reasons; 2) society; 3) solutions; 4a) enablers; 4b) barriers; 5) resources; and 6) benchmark, is used to analyse data from both the interviews and workshops.

This study paves the way for finding best practices, and development suggestions for deeper involvement of the municipality population with shared vision towards greater social inclusion and responsibility in modern society.



Results and conclusions

The study reveals ways to facilitate and promote active citizen participation. There are clear reasons to implement greater citizen participation, which is in line with the current societal development. Some clear solutions that are discussed are open communication, local meetings, and even local budgets. There is an expectation that the decision makers become more present and available to citizens. A strong enabler is that Mäntsälä has many active associations, who also are potential resources for future participatory activities.

Further solutions are sought, in four separate future vision workshops, to activate and help citizens and communities to organize cooperative actions and to bring citizens more involved in democratic decision making. The results open practical steps for how to meet, engage, and integrate people in municipal affairs.

Practical and social implications

This study promotes open communication and understanding in active citizen participation towards a greater involvement in municipal government. Positive co-existence adds trust in authorities and institutions in towns, cities, and suburban areas, and thus increases social responsibility in society. Active citizen participation can decrease uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguousness. Open communication and participation can build trust in public authorities.

Keywords

Citizen integration, Citizen participation, Co-creation, Knowledge transfers

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Integrating Character Assassination into Crisis Communication Curriculum

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Introduction and purpose of the study

In the context of globalization, most reputational risks result from structural transformations occasioned by the development of information technologies. New technological innovations enable agents with malicious intent to cause tangible reputational damage to their targets. Eventually, aggressors resort to various practices of informal influence causing tangible reputational risks, known collectively as character assassination (CA). In the context of mediated complexity, character assassination is becoming a systemic norm. In today's global society, large crises happen more often than in the past, mainly due to the actions of invested stakeholders. Political campaigns containing character attacks (and often not policy issues) grab the attention of journalists and citizens. The creation of scandal news and partisanship in reporting contribute to the slant in the news. Moreover, in the age of social media, verbal or emotional abuse is especially prevalent in online bullying: trolls and other harassers frame journalists, editors, and researchers as unreliable, corrupt, or morally decrepit—often regardless of what they report or publish. The complex nature of highly mediated events often impedes crisis managers from controlling for multiple reputational risks and responding to new emergencies. This presentation advocates for the integration of CA scholarship into public relations curriculum, namely special issue courses in crisis communication and reputation management.

Literature review

Although character assassination appears to be as old as human civilization, there had been little academic interest until the 1950s. The social and political effect of character attacks and defamation practices have been primarily discussed by scholars in propaganda studies and political science (Johnson-Cartee & Copeland, 2004; Schultz & Pancer, 1997), but only episodically in public relations. The widespread use of character assassination in recent years is directly related to the rise of incivility in contemporary politics. In 2014, Shiraev (2014) proposes a CA taxonomy based on several methods repeatedly used throughout the history. The first international conference on issues in public relation took place at

George Mason University in March 2017. A special topic course COMM 386 titled "Character Assassination and Reputation Management in Public Relations" has been offered as an elective to Mason students majoring in communication and government since 2016. Since 2019, it will officially become part of public relations and political communication curricula.

Methodology

The main rationale for special course integration is supported by positive student evaluations and based on end-of-course surveys and individual interviews with students enrolled in COMM 386 and COMM 390 (Issues in Public Relations) during 2015-2018. The obtained findings correspond with course objectives and comply with standards and recommendations of the Commission on Public Relations Education and PRSA Educators Academy.

Results and conclusions

The data demonstrate that students better understand the nature of informal governance and unethical persuasion practices in public relations. The course helped them critically evaluate the effectiveness of character attacks and their impact on public opinion, as well as the methods to defend from them. Students report extracurricular activities based on independent analytics in developing critical thinking strategies. Specifically, they take extra time to learn about the strategic use of today's deceptive strategies and tactics on social media (i.e., blogs, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.) and counter-strategies to defend individual and corporate reputation.

Practical and social implications

The results of pretesting the special topic elective with students majoring in public relations demonstrate a dire need for an interdisciplinary approach to study character assassination. In fact, character assassination is best understood when studied from a variety of scholarly disciplines. An in-depth analysis of the historical context explains the causes and effects of CA events as well as the historical consequences of



key actors' decisions. Rhetorical studies explore how speakers select persuasive strategies to build their own characters and attack those of others. Media studies provide an important insight into mediated politics, such as simplification, personalization, and negative representations of politics favoring conflict. Finally, psychology explains intentions, decisions, personal traits, and mental profiles of victimizers, victims, and multiple audiences passing judgments. Currently, most available courses have been designed for relatively narrow circles of specialists. Our proposed course is not only instrumental for public relations students, but also for those who study political science, campaigning, rhetoric, political psychology, and journalism.

The presentation will showcase a new textbook "Character Assassination: Theory and Applications"

that is currently in press. The goal of this text is to help public relations students become independent, critical, and informed thinkers capable of avoiding the pressure and manipulations of the media. The book consists of sixteen chapters to fit into a standard 16-week course featuring various cases studies. The book is designed to provide consistency in chapter-to-chapter coverage as well as in the use of various ancillaries to enhance learning. The presentation will also address different versions of syllabi that are specifically tailored to meet the education needs of public relations and crisis communication education.

Keywords

character assassination, crisis communication, reputation management, public relations, higher education, curriculum



Climate change and urban youth crisis alertness

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Introduction and purpose of the study

Climate change sceptics claim that anomalies to the climate are still within the range of natural variability. Young people are critically exposed to urban climate change risks. It is essential to build an appropriate level of climate awareness and crisis preparedness within these groups. While children and adolescents are highly vulnerable to the risks of climate change, they will be the ones playing a critical role in driving and taking part in adaptation themselves. It is essential therefore to understand clearly what their perception of climate change is and in what form can awareness raised and possible future actions prompted.

Literature review

Climate scepticism focuses on differentiating along two dimensions – problem and solution definitions (Corry and Jorgensen, 2015). However, public opinion agrees that ‘the balance of evidence suggests that there is a discernible human influence on the global climate’ (Houghton et al. 1996: 5). Urban populations increasingly face a number of climate change related risks, including flooding, flash floods, heat stress, water and air pollution. (Wilbanks et al. 2001; Parry et al. 2007). According to the majority of climate models, this change is accelerating. Climate change hazards together with a range of logistical and operational issues make cities of developing countries especially vulnerable (Tanner et al, 2009). Governance of local authorities is essential in building adaptability and resilience of urban populations. To prevent crisis outbreaks, communication structures are critical in raising awareness in an urban environment.

In cities and rural areas various models prevail for handling climate change related effects on the human environment. Communication structures and raising of public awareness are critical to prepare public adaptation practices and behaviour (Filho et al, 2016). Communication plays a critical role in creating an adaptive environment and attitude.

Methodology

The research builds on a comparative study of Budapest, Hungary and Hanoi, Vietnam to analyse urban climate change crisis alertness. Focusing on children and youth, it provides a critical analysis of awareness and sensitivity regarding climate change, and what it might mean to their lives. The research is interdisciplinary in nature and includes youth population surveys, interviews with selected key opinion leaders, and screening of climate related social media activities both in Budapest and Hanoi.

Results and conclusions

In Hungary, the growing need for preparation is confirmed by a country-wide representative survey (Energiaklub, 2015). The survey reflects a strong contrast of youth awareness and attitude. Youth sensory perception of climate change is below average, and they do not take note of summer heats, sudden variations in temperature or the proliferation of pests in a significant extent.

Of all age groups, they feel least vulnerable to climate change hazards and most in possession of the necessary information to build defence strategies. Young people show the lowest level of concern about climate change problems, as they believe to be aware of the solutions. The survey finally confirms that young people claim to be most open to mobilisation in case of climate change related emergency situations.

Findings of the survey led to ‘Climate Response’, a complex program enabling leaders of Hungarian municipalities to adapt to the inevitable impacts of climate change. Over 140 local government officials and other key stakeholders were trained in the project in measures and opportunities related to municipal climate adaptation.

Practical and social implications

The research can contribute to the understanding of the importance and level of public alertness levels, support the public becoming better prepared for climate change hazards, and through sharing of best practices,



contribute to building a global body of knowledge and practice on urban youth adaptation.

Keywords

climate change, youth alertness, urban environmental hazards

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The impact of emotional crisis communication on stakeholders' empathy with an organization in crisis and post-crisis reputation

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Literature

Social psychological literature on interpersonal relationships stresses that people are more likely to forgive wrongdoers when they experience empathy for them (Riek & Mania, 2012). We propose that stakeholders' empathy with an organization in crisis might similarly reduce reputational damage and that stakeholders' empathy could be induced through emotional crisis communication. Social psychological research indicates that empathy can be aroused relatively automatically when observing another's emotions, as expressed verbally or nonverbally (Blair, 2005). Therefore, this study examines if stakeholders' empathic concern is aroused when the organizational spokesperson expresses his or her underlying emotions over the crisis events instead of communicating in a rational manner. Crisis communication research recently started to examine the impact of expressing emotions in organizational crisis messages and illustrates that reputational damage is indeed minimized when spokespersons communicate emotions such as, for instance, regret, shame and sadness (e.g., Claeys, Cauberghe, & Leysen, 2013). This study aims to explain this positive impact of emotions in crisis communication through an intermediate effect on empathy.

Methodology

A single factor (message framing: sadness vs. rational) between subjects experiment was conducted to causally examine the hypothesis that stakeholders' empathy is aroused when the spokesperson verbally expresses sadness over the events compared to when the spokesperson appears rational, and that empathy subsequently minimizes reputational damage. Message framing was manipulated by means of two fictitious corporate messages in response to a fictitious crisis. The message was the same in terms of content for each scenario. Yet, the emotional message included subjective, evaluative properties and emotional loaded adjectives (e.g., "With sadness we wish to inform you of these unfortunate events"). The rational message was

more direct and presented the same information in a straightforward, objective manner (e.g., "We would like to inform you of the facts") (Claeys et al., 2013). A convenience sample of 129 adults participated in the online study.

Results and conclusions

A mediation analysis by means of the PROCESS procedure in SPSS was conducted to address the hypothesis.

The total effect model indicated that message framing did not affect post-crisis reputation, $B = -.09$, $SE = .09$, $t(127) = -1.08$, $p = .28$, $99\%CI = [-.33, .14]$. Hence, post-crisis reputation was not evaluated differently when the spokesperson communicated sadness compared to when a rational frame was employed. However, an indirect effect of message framing on post-crisis reputation through empathy was established, $B = .15$, $SE = .06$, $99\%CI = [.03, .32]$. Emotional crisis communication induced more empathy than rational crisis communication. Empathy, in turn, minimized reputational damage.

A possible explanation for the non-significant overall effect of message framing on post-crisis reputation might be that spokespersons who communicate rationally are also perceived as more competent (Hareli, 2013). Competence and empathy are likely to be more or less important for reputation repair depending on the crisis stage. During the crisis stage, when the trigger event occurs and the public feels uncertain and needs to be reassured, it is highly important for reputation repair that the organization comes across as competent in handling the problem (Claeys & Cauberghe, 2014). As the stimuli of the current study described a situation that was still ongoing, an additional mediation analysis included both empathy and perceptions of competence as mediators in the path from message framing to post-crisis reputation.



On the one hand, the analysis indicated a positive pathway from message framing to reputation via empathy, $B = .09$, $SE = .04$, $99\%CI = [.02, .20]$. Expressing sadness instead of communicating rationally increased empathy, which reduced reputational damage. On the other hand, a negative indirect effect of message framing on reputation through perceived competence was established, $B = -.11$, $SE = .05$, $99\%CI = [-.21, -.01]$. Emotional framing resulted in lowered perceptions of competence, which translated into increased reputation damage. Further research could therefore verify if communicating emotions and the mediating role of empathy are more beneficial during the aftermath of a crisis, when stakeholders attach less importance to the organizations' competence in controlling the crisis and rather evaluate the organization itself (Claeys & Cauberghe, 2014).

Implications

Organizations should not shy away from expressing emotions when responding to an organizational crisis, as emotional crisis communication arouses empathy with the organization amongst consumers. Empathy, in turn, overcomes negative organizational perceptions. However, the beneficial effect of empathy might, under certain circumstances, be overturned by other factors at play in processes of reputation repair. Nonetheless, the results suggest that crisis communication research should further elaborate on the importance of empathy for facilitating reputation repair.

Keywords

Organizational crisis communication; expressing emotions; empathy; competence; reputation



Critical coverage: The impact of responsibility attribution on attitude, (dis)identification and trust

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Introduction and purpose of the study

On 29 April 2013, the German television network ARD aired a 45 minute long documentary "The Dark Side of Red Bull", in which the death of six extreme athletes, who were sponsored by Red Bull (RB), was broached. The documentary voiced the hypothesis that RB was partially to blame for the athlete's lethal accidents, by exerting pressure to perform dangerous stunts as part of the company's marketing strategy. RB, apart from public condolences towards the relatives of the deceased, remained silent on the issue, pursuing a no-comment-strategy. Essentially, RB refused to publicly take responsibility for the death of its own athletes. Yet, when watching the documentary viewers form their own responsibility attributions, which impact their evaluations of the brand. This study aims to answer the following research questions:

- RQ1: What effects does viewers' attribution of responsibility have on the brand?
- RQ2: What is the effect of RB's communicative behavior as portrayed in the documentary?
- RQ3: Which factors influence viewer's attribution of responsibility?

Literature review

Coombs and Holladay have deemed the perception of responsibility a crucial component in a critical situation (Coombs & Holladay, 2011). Critical journalistic coverage is a sensitive issue for corporate communication. Critical documentaries can have a negative impact on stakeholders if they are handled poorly in terms of communication (Korn & Einwiller, 2013). In the portrayed case, SCCT (Coombs, 2006; Coombs & Holladay, 2001) would suggest to pursue a response strategy aiming at rebuilding reputation (Coombs, 2007). Instead RB apparently settled for a denial strategy, which should result in a negative impact on the audience's attitude towards the company.

Methodology

We devised a quasi-experimental setting ($n=127$, mean responsibility attribution = 51,83; $SD=14,538$; mean Age=22,57; 88,2% female), in which identification (Einwiller et al., 2006) and disidentification (Kreiner & Ashfort, 2004) with RB, and trust (Srideshmukh, Sing, & Sabol, 2002) and attitude (Spears & Singh, 2004) towards RB, served as dependent variables. Participants were surveyed two weeks prior, and immediately after watching the stimulus - an 18 minute long cut version of the original documentary. While watching the documentary, participants were instructed to attribute responsibility for the death of the featured athletes (0 - sole responsibility athlete, 100 - sole responsibility RB) using a real-time rating (RTR) device. RTR-measurement provided second-by-second data on how viewers received the documentary. Unlike post-stimulus surveys, RTR allows for comparing the impact of different sequences within the stimulus. We were thus able to break down the responsibility attribution in relation to six distinct content categories (accidents, portrayal of athletes, expert interviews, friends/relatives, organizational communication, RB-imagery), to determine the categories' distinguishable impact on the outcome variables. Furthermore, participants were asked to write down their thoughts on the documentary immediately after watching the stimulus. A qualitative content analysis will be performed to determine the viewer's reasons to (not) attribute responsibility towards RB (analyses ongoing).

Results and conclusion

Results show significant negative effects of responsibility attribution on brand attitude ($F(1,125)=8,778$, $p=.004$, $\beta=-.256$), consumer trust in RB ($F(1,125)=15,098$, $p=.000$, $\beta=-.328$), and a positive effect on disidentification with the brand ($F(1,125)=5,881$, $p=.017$, $\beta=.212$). To further determine which part of the stimulus had the most impact on the outcome variables we broke down the RTR values according to the six



categories mentioned above. We then performed a series of multiple regression analyses to identify the impact of each category on the four dependent variables. The analyses yielded nonsignificant results for attitude ($F(6,120)=1.616, p=.148$), and identification ($F(6,120)=.599, p=.730$), but proved to be significant ($F(6,120)=2.769, p=.015$, adjusted $R^2=.078$), albeit with no specific factor as significant predictor. The ANOVA for disidentification also rendered the model significant ($F(6,120)=3.678, p=.002$, adjusted $R^2=.113$). This analysis showed that two factors, organizational communication ($\beta=.642, p=.000$) and RB imagery ($\beta=-.429, p=.011$), are significant predictors of disidentification.

Results indicate that the attribution of responsibility during the reception of the stimulus affected the audience's attitudes towards, trust in, and disidentification with RB. Especially the company's communicative conduct, as portrayed in the documentary, contributed to a growing disidentification among viewers.

Implications

First, critical journalistic coverage can have an impact on viewers – thus, it matters. Such documentaries can sway people to change their mind or bolster pre-existing opinions. Second, the communicative appearance of organizations being covered, makes a difference, too. Even though RB's communicative behavior accounted for only 6.2% of the entire stimulus, it had a significant impact on viewers, who seemed angered by RB's refusal to take (at least partial) responsibility for the death of their athletes. Our study suggests that already minor changes in communication could have softened the stance of the audience. If RB would have applied such a strategy, is a different question, of course.

Keywords

Responsibility, attitude, trust, (dis)identification, real-time rating



Implications of the Paracrisises on the Companies' Stock Prices

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Introduction and purpose of the study

In the recent years, the concept of social media crisis has been refined and consequently replaced by the term “paracrisis” (Coombs, 2014). The paracrisises are the topic of numerous research studies, conducted by crisis communications practitioners and academics. However, economic implications of the paracrisises have not been thoroughly researched by now.

The purpose of this study is to identify how companies' stock price is influenced by the paracrisis itself and by paracrisis response strategy. The study provides an answer to the research question: is the paracrisis a critical market event that has an impact on the stock price of the company?

Literature review

Paracrisis, as a social media phenomenon, is described as a “publicly visible crisis threat that charges an organization with irresponsible or unethical behavior” (Coombs & Holladay, 2012, p.409). Nevertheless, in the paracrisis stage, the crisis threat is visible only in the social media, without the spillover towards the traditional media. Revised Situational Crisis Communications Theory – SCCT defined numerous response strategies to mitigate the crisis risk. According to Roh (2017), different message sources and different response strategies towards the paracrisis provided different outcomes regarding the public responses. Various authors, such as Grégoire et al. (2015), Pang et al. (2014) etc. discussed the paracrisises and provided a myriad of practical examples.

Methodology

Based on the considerations in the literature review, the authors examined the influence of the paracrisises on the stock prices of the affected companies. In order to test the hypothesis stating that, regardless of the response strategy, the paracrisis does not have significant impact on the stock price of the company, the research has been conducted. In total, 26 examples

of paracrisises, evolved into the crises, as described by Grégoire et al. (2015), Pang et al. (2014) and other sources, have been examined.

Based on the literature findings and public sources, the accurate moment of transformation of the paracrisis into the crisis has been identified for each observed situation. Stock price oscillations in the period of 72 hours prior to the moment of transformation of a paracrisis into a crisis have been analyzed. These data have been compared with the stock price oscillations for the respective companies under regular market circumstances. In order to eliminate possible biases, public sources have been searched to verify that there were no extreme market events that could affect the stock price during the observed period. Series of the data have been summarized and compared between the companies, by the industry, and by the region.

Results and conclusions

Findings of the research show negligible stock price oscillations during the paracrisis stage. These differences do not significantly vary from the stock price oscillations occurring under regular market circumstances. Therefore, findings of the study demonstrate that paracrisises do not directly influence the stock price of the companies. Also, the findings support the hypothesis that, regardless of the response strategy, paracrisis does not have an impact on the stock price. Moreover, although the paracrisis is an unanticipated event, it should not be taken into consideration as an extreme market event.

Results and conclusions of the study, due to sample limitations, should be taken as indicative. In the future research, an emphasis should be put on confirmation of the indicative findings with the larger sample, as well as on the identification if there are statistically significant differences in findings, in case of companies that are basing their advertising and/or sales on the social media.



Practical and social implications

The findings of the study can help the communication practitioners to understand that, in the paracrisis stage, the focus should be on the prevention of its evolution into the crisis rather than protection of the company assets and stocks. The findings can also help the management to understand and support the paracrisis response approaches that mitigate the crisis threat and reduce the possibilities for the evolution into the crisis.

Keywords

Crisis communications, Paracrisis, Strategic Management, Business, Stock Market

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Rationality and Emotions: A Stakeholder-Oriented Crisis Communication (SOCC) Model in Global Crises

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Introduction and Purpose

Crisis happens every day across the globe. Public relations practitioners have been tasked to employ the most appropriate crisis response strategies on behalf of organizations to minimize damages to organizational reputation and image in these crises. Crisis communication research also has been largely focused on identifying the most effective organizational crisis response strategies and forms (Fraustino & Liu, 2016). A growing number of studies have begun to shift the focus to stakeholders, including their emotions and messaging behaviors (e.g., Jin & Liu, 2010). To contribute to the scholarship on stakeholders' perceptions, emotions, attitudes, and behaviors in crisis, this study proposes a stakeholder-oriented crisis communication (SOCC) model, presenting a comprehensive measurement of stakeholder crisis response strategies, ranging from the least to the most accommodative dimension.

In addition, current dominant theories in crisis communication have either evaluated stakeholders' perceptions of organizations' responsibility, with the assumption of rational audience members (Coombs, 2007) or examined their emotions during a crisis (Jin & Liu, 2010). Our SOCC model is among the first to assess both the rational evaluations as well as emotions of stakeholders in a crisis.

Taken together, we hereby propose a conceptual SOCC model and test it in both Western and Eastern countries such as the U.S. and China.

Literature Review

We drew on literature on crisis communication, relationship management, and stakeholder attitudes and behaviors to develop the SOCC model. We argue that crisis communication research should advance our understanding of stakeholders' voices. Such a re-shifted focus will actually better prepare public relations practitioners to engage with various affected

audiences and manage crises. The SOCC model posits that stakeholders conduct both rational and emotional evaluations of a crisis situation, which contribute to their trust and distrust in the involved organizations in a crisis. Such perceptions of trust and distrust then result in stakeholders' use of various response strategies, ranging from the most to the least collaborative, such as partnering (full engagement with organizations to end a crisis) and mobilizing (using media tools to connect with other stakeholders to fight against the responsible organizations).

Methodology

As a multi-stage large research project, we have collected survey data (N= 579) in the U.S., in the context of the 2017 United Airlines crisis, involving a viral video exposing the Airlines' violent removal of an Asian doctor from flight 3411 in April. Descriptive statistics and two-step structural equation modeling analysis were performed.

Another wave of survey data is being gathered in China, examining the applicability of our SOCC model in an international crisis. The Chinese Internet erupted in outrage as a series of sexual abuse allegations broke out involving a high-end Chinese kindergarten chain during the Thanksgiving holiday in 2017. The Beijing facility of a New York listed educational chain RYB Education was reported to be associated with injecting children with unidentified substances and forcing them to strip naked by "uncle doctors" and "grandpa doctors." To people's dismay, most blogs and posts on various popular Chinese social media platforms were marked as violating state laws and deleted.

Results and Conclusion

Results from our U.S. survey revealed that rational evaluation was a more significant predictor of stakeholders' perceived trust and distrust toward the organization, than negative emotions. Distrust also exhibited a bigger impact on stakeholder crisis response



strategies than trust. Stakeholders were found to employ all of the six response strategies, willing to work with the organization to resolve the crisis.

Practical and Social Implications

We hope to present crisis managers and scholars a fuller understanding of stakeholders' response strategies with the finding that stakeholders were willing to be on the defense as well as in collaboration with involved organizations. Instead of prescribing response strategies for organizations, we seek to continue the conversation on the social role of public relations practitioners in managing global crises. Also, the interplay of stakeholders' rational evaluations and emotional reactions reminds practitioners that they ought to consider resolving realistic problems of significance to affected stakeholders but also their genuine emotions. Lastly, the differing effects of trust and distrust illustrates the complexity of organization-public relationships among multiple parties.

Keywords

Stakeholder-oriented crisis communication, trust, distrust, global crisis

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Public Relations for Peacebuilding: Case Study from Colombia

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Purpose of the Study and Rationale

This study seeks to link public relations to peacebuilding. Although scholarship has discussed public relations as relationship management, the nexus between public relations and peace building has been understudied. To address this deficiency, this research studied the negotiations between the Government of Colombia and the FARC-EP separatist group that led to the landmark peace treaty between the two entities that had fought for over five decades with thousands of deaths. Three research questions addressed the communication factors that contributed to the two sworn enemies – FARC-EP and the Colombian government – finally sealing a peace agreement; the specific public relations strategies and techniques that led to relationship building between the two sides leading to the landmark peace agreement; and the use of the indicators of relationship building proposed by scholarship in the negotiations between the Colombian government and FARC-EP.

Methodology

The case study method was used and a purposive sample of news reports from three national newspapers at specific key dates yielding a final sample consisted of 504 articles were analyzed. A codebook with deductive and inductive categories was developed specially to study the existing communication factors (RQ1), public relations strategies and techniques (RQ2), as well as contributions by relationship indicators (RQ3). Given the sensitivity of the issues, only secondary data could be relied upon for this study.

Results and Conclusions

The results of RQ1 fall within the scope of Grunig (2001), Sriramesh (1992) and Hung (2001) notion of the personal influence model where the leveraging of individuals' network is important to facilitate communication. Indeed, the relations already existing and established with third parties revealed to be fundamental to the success of the negotiation process. The fact that they were part of President Santos and/or FARC-EP's

network made their participation, intervention, support and influence essential in the peace talks. In addition, in this case, the personal influence model is symmetrical as it sought after the personal relationship that benefits both parties (Toth, 2000). These, and other, factors promoted moderation between the two bitter enemies, helped build confidence and trust, and provided reassurance even though each side deciding to pull out of the negotiations more than once during the 6-year negotiations. As for RQ2, findings demonstrate that the Colombian government used third party mediation, principled, and distributive strategies, while FARC-EP mainly used contending strategies. But, results showed that both used compromising during the whole process, and that both transitioned from one-way asymmetrical strategies, such as principled or contending toward compromising along the peace talks. The gradual relationship building that occurred during the six years of the official negotiation resulted in each side willing to compromise more than it initially intended. Therefore, it can be assumed that in the Colombian case, compromising was used as a win-win technique that is typified by the mixed-motives model (Grunig, 2001; Grunig & Huang, 2000; Plowman, 1998; 2007) as described in the literature of public relations. That is, each side realised that perhaps giving something to get something else is more beneficial to them.

Finally, findings demonstrate evidence of the four indicators of the relationship and their link with public relations techniques. The most evidenced indicators of the relationship were trust, commitment and control mutuality. Trust was the indicator of the relationship the most evidenced in the Colombian case. The dimension was built during the whole process and evolved continually. Distrust was total between the two enemies at the beginning of the pre-negotiation. However, as parties entered into a relationship, confidence and trust increased. Trust was linked to the different key moments happening in parties' relationship, but it was also connected to the choice of the communication factors and public relations techniques used. On the one hand, techniques such as third party mediation, compromising, interpersonal confidence-building measures, interpersonal communication participated



in increasing trust. On the other hand, events such as attacks on the battlefield, disagreements and lack of understanding increased distrust between partners, hurting the confidence built. Control mutuality was also fundamental. As both parties were enemies with strong power differences, having a certain balance at the table of conversations was essential. Indeed, the Colombian government was military, politically and economically more powerful due to its status and position. It had more power to influence over FARC-EP. However, it was able to cede of some control to facilitate a more balanced influence and to give FARC-EP a certain power to influence in the negotiation.

Third party interlocutors played a key role in getting the Colombian government and FARC-EP to work through the difficult phases of the rapprochement using the relationship building factors identified in public relations literature. The negotiations were held first in secrecy and then in public leading the two sides

to finally engage in face-to-face negotiations leading up to the final agreement. This study is in some ways longitudinal also as it maps out the evolution of the different communication factors, public relations techniques and outcomes of the relationship building efforts over the six-year period it took for the two sides to make peace.

Practical implications

This study links public relations to a very practical case that is also vastly understudied/underreported – peacemaking/peacebuilding while also addressing communication by governments and civil society in Latin America – largely understudied.

Keywords

Public relations, peacebuilding, PR for peacebuilding, Colombia



A public relations discourse of remote aereality: The case of the UK's Reaper drones

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Introduction and purpose

This project critically analyses the UK government's public relations outreach following the move of operational control of the Royal Air Force's (RAF) remotely-piloted air systems or drones from a United States Air Force base at Creech in Nevada to RAF Waddington in Lincolnshire in late 2013. The paper sets this specific campaign within the deployment of drones in the war on terror and the way this remote aereality has been promoted using public relations (PR), to address the following research question.

RQ: What public relations discourse was used by the UK Government to address what it called the "PR deficit" of its remotely piloted aircraft?

Literature review

The point of departure is Welch's (2016, p.7) definitional insight that the purpose of propaganda in wartime is to keep up morale at home while also influencing opinion abroad. The projection of air power through visual portrayals has a long history in propaganda and public relations outreach, starting with the portraits of flying aces from World War 1, Battle of Britain pilots alongside their planes in World War II and portraits of women pilots by photographer Lee Miller in her *Women at War* series for *Vogue* in 1941 (Roberts, 2015). In the theoretical frame and public diplomacy argumentation of precautionary risk logic, drones have been promoted by state actors such as ex-US President Obama as a low risk option for identifying and bombing targets – including US and UK citizens – in defence of the homeland against what is portrayed as an ongoing crisis of terrorism, allowing states to engage in a "perpetual low-intensity war" (Hippler, 2017).

Methodology

The investigation is based on critical analysis of the public relations discourse and argumentation by the UK's Ministry of Defence, the Royal Air Force and Government Ministers relating to the UK's drone force from 2013 onwards. Press releases, press statements, Ministerial speeches, broadcast interviews, journalists'

accounts of press visits to RAF Waddington on press trips were used as source material alongside the resulting press coverage.

Results and conclusions

Air warfare has its origins as a colonial capability that was deployed to suppress and control territory from above. This aspect of control and killing from above of a remote other in the colonial era is being replayed by Western powers today with the deployment of drones as part of the war on terror in the Islamic Cultural Zones of the Middle East.

In December 2013, UK Secretary of State for Defence, Philip Hammond, undertook what one critic called a "carefully controlled PR exercise" in order to defend and promote the UK's use of drones in the Middle East. Selected journalists were invited to visit RAF Waddington, with some allowed further access to produce feature articles that focussed on pilots and emphasised human oversight of drones operations. Hammond (2013) himself wrote an op-ed in a national newspaper that urged readers to ignore "drone myths" and "wild misrepresentations of reality" such as claims that the weapons systems are indiscriminate killers and instead understand that they are useful assets that keep troops and civilians safe. The PR discourse in defence of drones focussed on pilots to convey the message that bombing errors were less likely than with manned combat aircraft because of the extended lingering time available to establish and verify a target, putting forward the argumentation that drones lower risk of mistakes in targeting.

Practical and social implications

The author is not aware of any other investigation into the public relations and propaganda aspects of Remotely Piloted Air Systems (RPAS) despite the significant recent expansion of capability. So this project advances the study of the role of public relations in a contemporary issue concerning global politics, public diplomacy and international relations. This study has implications in offering an original explication of how the highly controversial modality



of military intervention by drones is being promoted by governments to the public as a human, low-risk capability that makes them safer, with little discussion of the legality of cross border missions nor the effect on the populations in the countries in which they operate.

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Market-oriented relations in the digital era: A study of public relations and marketing professionals in Hong Kong

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Introduction and purpose of the study

Prior literature has highlighted the similarities and differences between the fields of public relations and marketing since the 1990s. Stepping into the digital era, this study revisits the relationship between public relations and marketing by investigating how market-oriented relations performed by professionals affect the perceptions of public relations values, the importance of interactivity, and the benefits of digital media usage in public relations.

Literature review

The nature of public relations and marketing have been studied in terms of their contributions to relationships between organizations and their customers or consumers (Huang & Hagan, 2011), as well as the public relations values perceived by public relations and marketing practitioners (Huang, 2012; Huang & Hagan, 2011). In the digital context, professionals' perceptions of both interactivity (Sundar, Kalyanaraman & Brown, 2003) and benefits of digital media usage in public relations (Triantafyllidou & Yannas, 2014) are two factors that could affect digital media usage in public relations. This study hence proposes a model of market-oriented relations in the digital era to illustrate how market-oriented relations at the workplace could affect the interrelationships among professionals' perceived public relations values, perceived importance of interactivity, and perceived benefits of digital media usage in public relations.

Methodology

An online survey study on 204 professionals who have engaged in coordinating public relations activities in Hong Kong was conducted from July to September 2017. An email invitation to participate in an online survey was sent through professional associations in Hong Kong.

Results and conclusions

The results indicate that, no matter in which type of organizations, customers or consumers are still a significant group of stakeholders for professionals who have involved in organizing public relations activities. Structural equation modeling analyses show that the degree of market-oriented relations had significant positive effects on professionals' perceptions of public relations values, the importance of interactivity, and the benefits of digital media usage in public relations. Professionals who contribute more to market-oriented relations favor contingency interactivity more, in which involving target stakeholders in the digital platform is the most important way to establish and maintain relations with stakeholders. On the contrary, professionals who contribute more to market-oriented relations concern less about functional interactivity which focuses on enhancing stakeholders' liking towards the digital platform. Clients' profitability appears to be the most significant perceived benefit of engaging digital media in public relations practices. Despite the insightful research implications, a larger sample size is definitely more favorable in obtaining more robust effects among the variables. Future research may further validate the proposed model in different countries and cultural contexts, as well as extend the investigation of market-oriented relations to other stakeholders, such as suppliers and wholesalers.

Practical and social implications

The results provide useful guidelines to practitioners in formulating effective digital media strategies to manage the relationship between the organization and its stakeholders.

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Keywords

market-oriented relations; public relations values; digital media; interactivity



Seeking Shared Meaning of NPOs' Reputation in the Post Period of a Social Crisis

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This study focuses on exploring individual's free associations with NPO reputation in the period of social crisis in Turkey, in order to identify collective meanings addressed by society. The study acknowledges political and social environment in which these associations have been formed in the period following the coup attempt on 15 July 2016 in Turkey.

Literature review

An extensive review of literature on NPO reputation (e.g. Bennett and Gabriel, 2003; Schloderer et al, 2014) reveals that no study focuses on a specific period of social turbulence characterized by uncertainty and anxiety due to political, economic, social, and technological factors. This is unfortunate because it is critical for NPOs to understand how organizational values are threatened by the increasing pressure on institutions in such circumstances. When the reputation of the NPO sector is harmed, and public confidence is undermined, donations and volunteer support are jeopardized (Sisco, Collins, and Zoch, 2010). Therefore, capturing social meaning of NPO reputation in the period of social crisis will enable NPOs to "test the waters", and thus take action to avoid irreparable damage to their reputation. Accordingly, this study specifically addresses following research question:

What are individuals' associations with the social meaning of NPO reputation in the period of social crisis in Turkey?

Methodology

This study utilizes semantic network analysis to derive shared interpretations by analyzing the word clusters which refer to the cognitive structure representing NPO associations. To authors best knowledge, as no existent NPO reputation study has yet employed the network analysis approach, this study suggests a methodological contribution to exploration of further insights on the topic. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a convenience sample of 212 Turkish citizens

over a two-month period. Themes were derived from the interview data and simultaneously coded by two coders. Two separate networks emerged, i.e. reputable and disreputable associations for NPOs. The collected data were analyzed using Pajek, a software package for Windows designed for the analysis and visualization of large networks.

Results and conclusions

Research results reveal the semantic content of NPO reputation, while also obtaining associations of individuals related with this notion. Reputational research is insufficient in the prevailing literature on Turkish NPO reputation (e.g. Çabuk, 2017). Therefore, the association map derived from the interviews is expected to shed light on how individuals regard NPOs, especially in the period following the on 15 July 2016 coup attempt in Turkey, during which time 550 NPOs were forced to close by the government (Resmi Gazete-Official Newspaper of the Turkish Government, 2016), resulting in a loss of public trust and damage to the reputation of all NPOs. This study was carried out in an effort to explore the true reflections of NPO reputation in terms of public attitudes and opinions.

139 and 126 vertices emerged in reputable and disreputable networks respectively. Both networks have low density (0,08% reputable and 0,05% disreputable), revealing that the connections between the associations are relatively low, i.e., respondents cite a wide range of free associations in the interviews. The most important associations in the reputable network are: supporting education, being transparent, helping the needy of all description, ensuring that aid is delivered, and NPOs with a worthwhile cause. For the disreputable network, the most important associations are: dishonesty, being greedy, spreading bad news, exploiting emotions, and operating outside of the organization's intended purpose.

Employing convenient sampling method is one of the factors limiting generalizability. Another limitation is examining an NPO crisis within a single context;



further studies could involve different national and environmental characteristics.

Practical and Social Implications

This is the first study to map out the semantic content of NPO reputation from a social crisis perspective. Our research contributes to the literature by analyzing social meaning of NPO reputation, leading to implications to provide NPOs with guidance on developing proactive strategies, and addressing those aspects which can lead to the resolution of related issues. The findings of this study enable NPOs to uncover the meanings in the authentic public discourse, rather than relying on pre-defined measures of NPO reputation.

Keywords

NPO reputation, social crisis, semantic network analysis, shared meaning

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Adoption and Impact of Internal Social Media use in Organizations

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Introduction & Purpose

The implementation of new technology in organizations is usually accompanied with high expectations, which are often left unfulfilled (Orlikowski & Gash, 1994). Increasingly, internal social media (ISM; also 'enterprise social media') supplement and replace the more static intranets. Although ISM are often applauded for their ability to contribute to internal communication and organizational performance (Jue, Marr, & Kassotakis, 2009; Ellison, Gibbs & Weber, 2015), there is hardly any empirical evidence backing up such claims (El Ouiridi et al., 2015). Therefore, the purpose of this project is twofold: first, we aim to contribute to insight into the adoption of ISM in organizations. Second, we want to improve our understanding of the extent to which, and the ways in which ISM can contribute to internal communication and organizational performance. By doing so, we improve the ground for muchneeded theory development in the field and provide an evidence-based approach to ISM management.

Literature review

First of all, despite efforts by management and communication professionals (e.g., training, tutorials, ambassadorship programs etc.), employees do not always use the platforms to their full potential. While social media adoption is usually conceptualized as the proportion of the population that (at least occasionally) uses the platform, frequency of use, task performance, and platform are usually ignored. We propose four dimensions of ISM use, as ISM may only prove useful for organizations when (1) many employees use (2) appropriate ISM platforms, (3) frequently enough, (4) for appropriate tasks. By incorporating the multiple dimensions of ISM use (i.e., proportion employees, frequency of use, task attainment, and platform), we aim to clarify the role of ISM in organizational communication and PR. Secondly, while it has been theorized that the affordances of ISM might improve internal communication (e.g., knowledge sharing, communication efficiency and satisfaction;

Ellison et al., 2015), and organizational performance (employee alignment, organizational effectiveness, and innovativeness), such impact is hardly supported with empirical data (El Ouiridi et al., 2015). Furthermore, insight into the contribution of the different dimensions of ISM use to organizational performance might improve our understanding of the processes underlying these effects.

Methodology

In the course of February of 2018, an online survey will be distributed to more than 200 communication professionals of organizations that have adopted ISM. These respondents will be recruited among clients of an ISM consultancy firm. As adoption factors, we included: division of responsibilities for ISM management, accessibility of the platform, training & support efforts, ambassadorship programs, activity by senior management, and integration in business processes. To confirm the value of ISM for organizational performance, we will also empirically check how the different dimensions of ISM use (i.e., proportion of employees, frequency of use, task performance, and platform) relate to internal communication and organizational performance.

Results, Conclusions & Implications

By the time of the conference, we will be able to present the all the findings and discuss the conclusions and implications.

Keywords

Internal Social Media, Adoption of Technology, Organizational performance, Employee alignment



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Supporting the evolution of emancipative values: a new purpose for public relations (PR)

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Introduction and purpose of the study

Contrary to popular belief and cultural pessimism of public intellectuals, humanity has made considerable moral progress since the 1980s (Welzel, 2017). All over the world values that endorse emancipation, freedom and democracy have gained support. These emancipative values have two dimensions: traditional versus secular-rational values and survival versus self-expression values. Emancipative values are secular-rational and self-expressive and stress personal autonomy (independence, the desire not to obey to authorities and using imagination), freedom in reproductive choices (abortion, divorce and homosexuality), gender equality (women's equality in politics, education and jobs) and the importance of the voice of the people (more say in local and national politics and freedom of speech). The human desire to live a life free from domination by religion, states or other dominant powers is a universal force around the world (Welzel, 2013; 2014). The growing support for these values indicate that worldwide the evolution of emancipatory values is *not* in crisis, although the distribution varies across and within countries as data from the World Values Survey (WVS) show (WVS, 2015). The resulting value gaps contribute to substantial political and cultural tensions.

Since the 1980s media use and PR have also changed considerably. Virtually nothing is known about the role of the media in the development of emancipative values, let alone the role of corporations and PR-messages. Our research question therefore is: how do media use and exposure to corporations and their PR-messages influence emancipative values? Goal of the study is to explore this empirically and to discuss supporting the evolution of emancipative values as a potential new societal purpose for the PR-profession to bolster the rise of freedom.

Literature review

Welzel's Evolutionary Emancipation Theory (EET) describes and predicts the development of societies into the direction of rising freedom. The EET shows, based on extensive longitudinal data from the WVS,

that societies climb a ladder of freedom in three consecutive phases: access to the sources cool water, urban markets and technology; a sequence of action resources that lead to emancipative values and the quest for democracy, and the contagion of this quest that is pushed by globalization (Welzel, 2013; 2014). It is not hard to conceptualize the role of media and corporations in this process. Corporations are an important part of urban markets, the globalization of these markets and the diffusion of technology through their products and services. The same can be said for the position of media. Without media and communication technology and the use of media, global contagion with emancipation would be much more difficult. The development of emancipative values can be considered a diffusion of a social innovation, with all the communicative behaviour that comes with that (Rogers, 2003). Our hypothesis therefore is that individuals with higher media use, interpersonal communication and higher exposure to corporations and PR-messages have higher emancipative values than individuals that are less exposed to that.

Methodology

A survey will be conducted among millennials and generation Z in The Netherlands, one of the most emancipated countries in the world (WVS, 2015). These generations are chosen because they are accustomed to the new media landscape and have grown up in a world where PR-messages are omnipresent. The dependent variable emancipative values will be measured by the standard questions and items used in the WVS. Measurement of the independent variables about media use and exposure to corporations and PR-messages will be newly developed because the standard way of measuring these is not specific enough for the purpose of this study. A statistical model will be used with media consumption and exposure to PR-messages as predictors for emancipative values, controlling for demographic variables, if theoretically plausible.



Results and conclusions

The survey will be done in the Spring of 2018. At the conference the results and conclusions will be presented.

Practical and social implications

The results of the study will shed light on the link between media use, PR-messages and emancipative values. The results can serve as input for a discussion about a potential positive contribution of PR to support the evolution of emancipative values. If the results show that a higher exposure to corporations and their messages support emancipation and freedom this could be further developed into a new societal purpose for the PR-profession.

Keywords

values, emancipation, PR-purpose

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Jungian Brand Therapy: Could the new model help find brand solutions in a post-branding world?

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Introduction and purpose of the study

The subject of the study is a methodology in pre-test phase that combines contemporary strategic marketing tools with Jungian coaching practice. The idea is to design a system that will overcome two prevalent issues: the time clients devote to strategic brand planning in the world of digital communication and the deteriorating role of consultants in this processes.

Furious digital development pushed the online ahead of traditional communication channels. Beneath the budget split, the digital influences business models and job roles in the communication industry and especially in the foggy niche of brand consultancy. Boundaries between professional services are blurring, and the new landscape will present novel opportunities.

The availability of knowledge, technology and easy DIY tools makes clients feel confident and independent when deciding on creative solutions, while the trust and resources devoted to strategic planning and the branding process are declining. This often results in (1.) a threatened role for consultants, (2.) pale, unrecognizable, purposeless brand communication, and as the final problem (3.) lame business results.

However, brand positioning is still the foundation of communication across all aspects of business and it is more important than ever to keep the brand purpose and tone of voice clearly defined.

Strategic marketing firm devoted to SMEs, searched for a practical method that would help clients to make fast, responsible, long-term decisions that will ensure excellent brand strategy, creative ideas and business results. The starting points: (1.) the contemporary communication public recognizes and rewards authenticity; (2.) SMEs have a clear brand-owner and decision maker; this is the company's owner herself. She has the decision-making power but also the authentic personality that might reflect the core of the personal, but also the company's brand.

The challenge was to articulate the brand-owner's

personality in order to communicate it precisely to all experts in charge of brand – from designers and copywriters, through social managers to PR and media people. The possible solution is offered in Jungian archetypes. Jung (1954.) believed archetypes are intrinsic set of images and feelings that repeat over cultures and generations and shape human collective unconsciousness. In this study we will be using twelve primary types that symbolize basic human motivation. The model we tested helps us identify business owner's core values in order to communicate it effectively to brand communication experts.

RQ 1: Is there a correlation between a prevailed archetype of the participant according to the questionnaire and the archetypal movie character the participant is attracted to?

RQ 2: Could the participant describe characteristics of chosen archetype in a way that the communication expert can recognize as the archetype?

Methodology

When we started using Jungian coaching methods, we hypothesized that the brand owner's taste and decisions are connected to her *ego*, the *persona* every human needs in order to function (including status, garments, ego maneuvers). This *ego* is subject to fast, radical changes and is easily impacted by others. The *persona* does not represent the *inner self*; the archetype that is closest matches the true personality. Our hypothesis was that one's *self* is consistent and close to the core of the brand's purpose.

The first qualitative data was collected during 2 phases: The first phase consisted of 3 one-on-one structured interviews with SME owners and the second phase was an international workshop with 18 participants.

The rationale was to pre-test the model and the tools that were created according to Faber, who states that people resonate and respond to archetypal characters who reflect their personalities.



Results and conclusions

The discussions during the pretest phase helped clarify research questions and framed future research.

However, the results showed high evidence of match between the participant and the film archetype. The descriptions the participants gave to the creative team resonated with the experience of the chosen archetype.

Limitations of the research are related to the representative sample, primarily due to its size and gender ratio. Future phases of the research will be coordinated with research experts.

Practical and social implications

Jungian Brand Therapy (JBT) model will actively involve brand owners in the creative process while brand experts will get the clear mandate for further brand

management. JBT could also be used as a tool for personal branding and media trainings. It will push SMEs' sustainable business growth and re-invent the position of brand communication consultants.

Keywords

Brand Management; Future of brands; Consulting Practice; Jungian Archetypes

Literature review

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Reflexivity on contradictions: Self-definitions of PR-people, journalists, v-/blogger and instagramer facing the climate crisis

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Purpose

What a nice headline: Communicating the Sustainable Development Goals – For Everyone! However, not only the United Nations offer tools, means and workshops like this to communicate sustainability and the related 17 “goals” – and to cope with global crises. National and international consultants’ advice is to tell the “sustainability story”, use “pics more than words” or other strategies to “associate your brand with sustainability”.

Nevertheless, we seem to just begin to get to grips with the gravity of the challenge of communicating sustainability. In our project and contribution for this years BledCom, we put journalists, V-/bloggers and professional communication strategists on the stage and discuss the potential as well as barriers of communicating sustainability – particularly in the media.

Theoretical and methodological approach

There are only a very few bits of literature in the area of sustainability communication (see Dade & Hassenzahl, 2013; Allen, 2016), defined as transdisciplinary research approach (Godeman & Michelsen, 2011). This, in turn, implies critical methods involving future methods like intervention research (Lercheste & Krainer, 2016) and story tracking with narrative interviews (Weder, 2017). In our empirical studies we asked PR-professionals, journalists, v-/blogger and instagramer in Central Europe (n = 25, 2009; n = 25 in 2017) to tell the stories they relate to sustainable development and discuss the potential and barriers in communicating about and for sustainable development.

Results and conclusions

All communicators point out the following barriers in communicating an issue like sustainability – in particular facing environmental, ecological and social crises:

1. Overall: it isn't easy to communicate about an inconvenient truth – in other words:

you don't get readers/views with an inconvenient truth;

2. Contradiction of “green advertisement” (helps to ignore the truth) and the concept

of sustainability (basically, we can't afford our lifestyle);

3. Economic interests of media corporations vs. the concept of sustainability;

4. Short term orientation of the media vs. longterm perspective of sustainable

development;

5. Local, regional and national interest vs. a global phenomenon;

6. Active passivity and ignorance of the public when it comes to climate change as

sustainability related issue;

7. Convergence and the rise of social media as amplifier if the named barriers.

Their stories show that sustainability communication in today's public media needs a deeper reflection and critical communicators with a deeper understanding of ethics. Sustainability related issues show contradictions in our society and comment on our social order. Reflexivity on those contradictions was worked out as the key to build a public discourse on sustainable development.

Discussion and implications

By knowing about the selectivity of the interviewed communicators as the major limitation of our study, the sustainability issue seems to challenge communicators from PR professionals to instagramers. It not only marks a new type of “content” that has to be communicated. Much more, sustainability is a socio-political concept, an intrinsic social value and as such “not made for



public media". However, in the opposite to journalists, which feel "trapped" in the media logic as described above, blogger, vlogger and instagramer realize that with their sustainability communication and by offering reflexivity on existing paradoxes and contradictions they contribute to sustainable development as well.

Keywords

communicators, sustainability, narrative interviews, storytelling

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Computational Propaganda and Social Bots – An Old Dog with New Tricks. First Indications for Algorithmic Public Relations from a European Communicator's Perspective

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Introduction

In 2016 both the US presidential and Brexit political campaigns marked a new era in disinformation and propaganda campaigning on the internet and more explicitly the social web. Compared to former disinformation campaigning, this time the different camps used computational propaganda – also called social (ro-)bots. These software robots, like chatbots or algorithms, and designed to hold conversations with humans, were envisioned by Alan Turing in 1950 nearly 70 years ago. Today social (ro-)bots are defined as “a computer algorithm that automatically produces content and interacts with humans on social media, trying to emulate and possibly alter their behaviour” (Ferrara et al., 2016, p. 96). Following this definition, not all social bots are used for computational propaganda. Some of them are benign and even helpful, like bots that automatically aggregate content from various sources, like simple news feeds. Automatic responders to inquiries are increasingly adopted by brands and companies for customer care (ibid.). Fake social media accounts spread specific messages, beef up website follower numbers, and create artificial trends. Bot generated propaganda and misdirection has become a worldwide strategy causing turmoil and polarizing the public sphere. Unsurprisingly, bot traffic now makes up over 60 percent of all traffic online (Forelle et al., 2015). The question arises, how PR and in particular communication practitioners deal with such new trends within their work environment.

Theoretical approach

Digitization and mediatization through the social web has brought former passive recipients of messaging back into public discourse as prosumers. Communication scientists celebrate this by referring to a power shift to the people. However, the hypothesis that the majority of internet and social web users will become online activists was too positivistic and did

not include theory like uses and gratification theory nor existing media impartiality (Couldry & Hepp, 2016). In contrast, in times of big data and algorithms that continually process and analyse data, “[e]ach of us is now a walking data generator” (McAfee & Brynjolfsson, 2012) and use platforms like Twitter or Facebook that have never been neutral (and they are based on organisation's programmed algorithms to fulfil its goals).

Research gap and questions

From this theoretical point of view, social bots could be programmed and used for different purposes. However, the empirical research regarding social bots concentrates mainly on the political sector and tries to understand the consequences of social bots *prima facie* in political campaigning initiated by the Computational Propaganda Research Project (COMPROP). Other sectors or the views of communication professionals working in PR have not been taken into consideration, even though different kinds of social bots are used in reality. This has stimulated the following research questions:

- RQ1: How do European communication professionals perceive social bots?
- RQ2: To what extent are social bots used by European organisations and PR agencies?
- RQ3: How do European organisations and PR agencies use social bots?

Methods and results

To answer these research questions, a quantitative online survey among $N = 2,936$ communication professionals from 20 European countries was conducted (March 2017). The data was evaluated using descriptive and analytical statistics using SPSS.



Despite growing commercial and political application of social bots, the results demonstrate that the social bots phenomenon is largely neglected by communication professionals in Europe. While the topic is highly debated by German, Austrian and Swiss professionals, others are less engaged with discussions. In this context, social bots are mainly seen as a threat for societies and public debates ($M = 3.50$, $SD = 1.10$, 5-point-likert-scale) and organisational reputation ($M = 3.46$, $SD = 1.07$), although four out of ten respondents (42.9%, $n = 1058$) do also see opportunities arising from them. 74.6 percent of all respondents (strongly) agree that social bots present ethical challenges for the profession ($M = 3.99$, $SD = 0.98$).

A majority of 66.9 percent selected not using social bots, while seven percent don't know and for 15.9 percent this is not relevant. Hence, only four percent ($n = 118$) said that they already use and 6.2 percent ($n = 182$) plan to use social bots by the end of 2018. The usage of social bots is primarily to identify and follow users on social networks as well as respond, reply or comment on posts/tweets. Every third respondent

who's implemented social bots or will implement plan to use them for content creation as well as like, forward or retweet posts/tweets. More depth results (comparisons between countries/organisation type) will be presented at the conference.

Conclusion

This study is the first empirical evidence on communication professionals' perspectives on social bots. The results demonstrate that European practitioners have low interest in such new media technologies and yet most of them stated that they have ethical concerns and see threats for their organisation as well as the public sphere. As this was a first quantitative insight, further qualitative investigation is needed in this field.

Keywords

Social Bots; Public Relations; Algorithmic PR; Automated PR

Strategic Church Communication in Times of Religious Pluralism in Western Europe: Some Comparative Evidence

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Introduction

The decline of traditional mainline church members in Western European countries goes hand in hand with a drop of individual religiosity. That is strongly intertwined with the loss of trust in both, former established religious authorities as well as institutions. However, others refer to religious pluralism and argue that the pluralism fosters new religious groups and movements gaining more attention as well as members through the usage of professional communication strategies (Berger, Davie, & Fokas, 2008). Moreover, empirical results demonstrate an increased competition not only in between religious suppliers that offer religious goods, but also between religious, pseudo-religious and secular suppliers (Stolz & Könnemann, 2016). Less known, however, is how this pluralism and competition might affect the strategic communication of established churches.

Theoretical approach

According to Micelotta, Lounsbury and Greenwood (2017) the study of institutional change "has become a core research area [...] in organization theory [and] disciplines such as sociology, economics, and political science" (p. 1885). While organizational institutionalism portrayed institutions predominantly as durable socio-cultural structures, the attention has shifted recently to understanding how institutional arrangements are created, transformed, and extinguished. This has led to the "growing appreciation that change occurs in pluralistic environments" (p. 1887) and that especially organizations itself are such "agents of change". They use "disruptive strategies" like institutional entrepreneurs or purposeful tactics and strategies highlighted by organizational institutionalists as "institutional work" – a major task for public relations and strategic communication (Sandhu, 2009).

Based on the fact, that institutional change happens more often in pluralistic environments, it is portrayed mainly as "battlefields" or as Ihlen and Verhoeven (2015) put it from a communication perspective: It is

about "how strategic communication constitutes the struggle of actors in a public battlefield of meanings, thereby contributing to the public meaning and as such, to social reality" (pp. 132-133, emphasis in original). As the religious field seems to become more pluralistic in Western European countries, the question arises as to what extent this pluralistic environment and therefore the institutional change fosters public relations and strategic communication activities in traditional-established mainline denominations (as regional and national church bodies) and their congregations.

Research gap and questions

The religious field has been particularly neglected in research fields like strategic communication and public relations from the European perspective. However, as religious sociology also in Europe has experienced a revival in the last decade and profoundly describes an institutional change in the religious field in Western European countries, the PR and strategic communication perspective is totally ignored. This research gap has stimulated the following research questions:

- RQ1: To what extent do the clergy and communication professionals working for the mainline denominations in a specific Western European country perceive a pluralistic environment?
- RQ2: To what extent do ...
 - a) ... congregations have professionalized their PR activities during the last decade?
 - b) ... denominational bodies have professionalized their PR activities during the last decade?

Methods and results

To answer these research questions, a comparative study has been conducted in 15 large German cities, including Protestant and Roman-Catholic congregations, their local church districts, regional and national denominational bodies. After a preliminary qualitative study, a quantitative online-survey was set



up and filled out by N = 204 clergies. To gain more insights in the professional local, regional and national denominational bodies, expert interviews with 47 leading communication professionals were held. The quantitative data was evaluated using descriptive and analytical statistics with the software SPSS. To perform the content analyzes regarding the expert interviews, the software MAXQDA was used.

The results based on the clergy indicate an increased awareness regarding competition especially from pseudo-religious groups (Esoteric or New Age) as well as free churches (Evangelical or Pentecostal). Interestingly, more than 60 percent of the clergy is uncertain towards Muslim communities. The more a congregation setting clear priorities and goals, the more they position themselves towards religious, pseudo-religious and secular providers and invest more money in public relations activities. However, only a small minority of the analyzed congregations have strongly professionalized their PR activities. In stark contrast, some regional denominational bodies have already implemented professional strategic communication,

apparent by fostering membership communication and campaigns, doing research and evaluating the communication output and outcome. As part of the steering committee, communication professionals perceive a growing religious pluralism. However, they associate the professionalization also with the (digital) media shift.

Conclusion

This study is the first empirical evidence on the perspective of communication professionals on the growing religious pluralism in Western Europe. It demonstrates also evidence to the fact that increasing pluralism and therefore institutional change fosters the professionalization and the institutionalization of strategic communication. However, this hypothesis needs to be further analyzed not only but also in the religious field. Moreover, the results indicate an enormous potential for further investigation of strategic communication in non-traditional fields like this or e.g. criminal organizations.



Social Media Research, Measurement, Evaluation in the Public Relations Industry: A Ten-Year Longitudinal Analysis

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Introduction & purpose of the study

The importance of research, measurement and evaluation in public relations has been prominent since Cutlip & Center (1952) authored the first edition of their noted book *Effective Public Relations* nearly 70 years ago. In spite of this, very little scholarly research has measured *if* and/or *how* research, measurement and evaluation actually is being used in contemporary public relations practice.

This study tracks how research, measurement and evaluation have been used in connection with social media and public relations practice in the United States. Following an extensive literature review, the author of this paper is confident indicating the ten-year trend analysis study this paper offers is one of the few pieces of academic public relations research studying these areas.

Additionally, since there are few longitudinal analysis studies in the scholarly literature of public relations, this study's longitudinal analysis of a larger-than-usual number of research subjects also has the potential of enhancing the credibility of scholarly research in public relations. As Boyton and Dougall (2006) explain, the lack of a significant number of panel and trend studies in the public relations literature does not reflect positively on our field when the public relations body of knowledge is compared with research productivity in the traditional social sciences and other professions.

Literature review

According to the Pew Research Center (2018), Facebook is the most active social media platform in the USA with 7.96 million users. This includes roughly eight-in-ten online Americans, up seven percentage points from 2015. Additionally, Pew claims 79% of online American adults (68% of all Americans) use Facebook. Facebook is followed by Twitter (6.37 million users), Instagram (5.41 million), Google+ (4.77 million), and LinkedIn (3.50 million). In terms of social chat applications and messengers, WhatsApp is used the most (8.59 million

users) followed by Facebook Messenger (6.37 million), Skype (4.45 million) and Snapchat (4.41 million).

The Pew research claims most Americans use a multiple array of social media platforms. Additionally, Greenwood, Perrin and Duggan (2016) found a majority of Americans received most of their news about the 2016 presidential election from social media. Wright and Hinson (2017) found social media was being used extensively in public relations practice.

Methodology

The study's methodology consisted of a ten-year trend analysis facilitated by a web-based survey questionnaire. The Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), the world's largest professional society in public relations, participated as a partner in this research and each year invited a random sample of its membership to serve as research subjects.

Given the unique nature of responses to the survey's questions asking about research, measurement and evaluation, a series of personal interviews also were conducted in 2017 and 2018. Subjects of these interviews included individuals from corporations, public relations agencies, not-for-profit public relations entities and several research providers.

The longitudinal analysis reported on in this article is based upon a grand total of 4,586 respondents (n=574 in 2009, n=563 in 2010, n=479 in 2011, n=622 in 2012, n=378 in 2013, n=393 in 2014, n=329 in 2015, n=412 in 2016, n=556 in 2017) and n=284 in 2018) an average of 459 responses per year.

Results & conclusions

The main research finding in this decade-long analysis is that fewer than one half of the subjects in this longitudinal study report that their organizations (or their client's organizations) are measuring social media. Additionally, results indicate that when any kind of social media research, measurement or evaluation



takes place, it is much more likely to focus on outputs and content analysis rather than outcome-based methodologies.

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Keywords

Public Relations, Social Media, Measurement and Evaluation



Difference of CSR activities and communication between B2B and B2C companies

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Introduction and purpose of the study

The aim of our research is to understand the difference of CSR activities and communication, especially for communities, between B2B and B2C companies.

Literature review

Post, Lawrence, and Weber (2002) and Freeman, Harrison, and Wicks (2007) presented the “stakeholder map” which positioned the stakeholders into one map. In the map, stakeholders are positioned as if each stakeholder were independent and companies faced the similar stakeholders. In fact, for B2C companies, “customers” and “communities” are almost same; on the contrary, for B2B companies, “customers” and “communities” are different. From this perspective, CSR activities and communication, especially for communities, might be different between B2B and B2C companies. However, we cannot find the discussion on the difference of CSR activities and communication between B2B and B2C companies.

Methodology

First, we clarify the difference of CSR communication between B2B and B2C companies, by interviewing seven B2B companies and five B2C companies. We asked each company (1) objects of communication, (2) contents of communication, and (3) media used for CSR communication. Second, we clarify the difference of CSR activities between B2B and B2C companies, by interviewing two B2B companies and two B2C companies. We asked each company (1) main target of CSR activities, and (2) contents of CSR activities. We followed the case study method of Eisenhardt (1989), especially the sampling method and sample size (theoretical saturation).

Results and conclusions

On CSR communication, we found differences between B2B and B2C companies as below. The object of CSR communication for B2C companies is sales promotion, whereas the objects for B2B companies

are sustainability of organization and smoothness of operation. One of the contents of CSR communication for B2C companies is environmental protection. For B2B companies, not only environmental protection but also the social value of their own business is also communicated. B2B companies use website, events, or corporate advertising. In addition to those media, B2C companies make good use of social media and publicity. Of course, B2B and B2C companies both have similar objects, contents, or media usage, we found there are many differences of communication between them.

On CSR activities, we found both B2B and B2C companies execute the CSR activities which are connected with their own business. However, B2C companies carry out more customer-oriented activities, and B2B companies carry out more society-oriented activities.

From these findings, as an implication, we can say we should investigate CSR activities and communication carried out by B2B and B2C companies separately, due to their differences. However, we just used the qualitative method, so for the future research, quantitative investigation for the difference of CSR activities and communication between B2B and B2C companies is needed.

Practical and social implications

Especially for B2B companies, they would be asked for draw their own stakeholder map different from that of B2C companies. To do so, B2B companies will be able to reach their important stakeholders effectively and efficiently. Society as a whole will be able to encourage right companies to be involved with right CSR activities, which gives companies the rationale decision-making.

Keywords

CSR activities, CSR communication, B2B, B2C



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Real-time Social Media Engagement and Millennials' Event Experience

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Introduction & Study Purpose

The strategic use of social media in event PR could improve the experience of event attendees. The use of social media is especially notable for Millennials. They play as 'prosumers' (producers + consumers), who don't simply attend the events but also create the experience together (Martin & Cazarre, 2016).

Despite the increasing significance of social media in events, there is a lack of research attention on the real-time social media communication during events. Recent findings (Cummings, 2016) show that 81 percent of millennials shared their photos and 71 percent used the events' hashtags on social media during events. Given the growing importance of social media for events, this study sought to answer the following research questions: How the millennials use event hashtag and social media at events? What are the reasons to engage in the real-time social media communication? What role does the real-time social media engagement play in the event attendees' experience?

Literature Review

Event PR professionals stress that event engagement is an important driving force behind the success of an event. Many research findings also show that engaging with consumers on social media could enhance their overall experience. Some recent studies investigated the role of real-time communication in the event PR. Blaszkowski and his colleagues (2012) analyzed the tweets created with #WorldSeries hashtag. They found that the twitter users used the hashtag to express fanship, interact with the teams and other twitter users, to share game information and also the promotional purposes. Similarly, Highfield, Harrington and Bruns (2013) acknowledged that real-time social media communication plays a huge role in worldwide televised events. Based on these findings, the following three hypotheses were generated:

- **H1.** *The event attendees who use the event hashtag to read the event-related social media contents will have the higher quality of event experience.*

- **H2.** *The event attendees who use the event hashtag to create the event-related social media contents will have the higher quality of event experience.*
- **H3.** *As the event attendees are more likely to create the event-related social media contents, they are more likely to have the positive event experience.*

Methodology

An onsite survey was conducted in March 2016 at a social event in the Northeast US. 100 attendees participated. The survey consists of questions regarding the event attendees' use of event hashtag, their event experience and the demographic characteristics. The event experience scale was adopted and modified from Kaplanidou and Vogt (2010). The social media engagement was measured with three questions that asked whether they used the event hashtag to read event-related contents, created the contents with the hashtag, and how many event-related contents they created. Descriptive analyses, t-tests and ANOVA were performed.

Results and Conclusions

All participants were millennials. Fifty-five percent of attendees used the event hashtag to read the event contents. They used the hashtag to find the event information (39%), to show their support (34%) and to be a part of communal presence (22%). Seventy percent created the event-related contents with the hashtag. The main reasons to use the hashtag is to share event photos/videos (55%), event information (30%) and to engage with other attendees (29%). The mean of attendees' event experience was 6.3 out of 7 which indicates that they had a good event experience overall.

The t-test results showed that the event attendees who read the event-related contents had a higher quality event experience ($M=6.5$) than the non-searchers ($M=6.1$) ($p = .024$). The content creators also reported a more positive event experience ($M=6.5$) than non-creators ($M=5.8$) ($p = .007$). Both H1 and H2 were supported. The ANOVA result also confirmed that the



event experience quality was higher for the groups who were more active on event-related social media content creation ($F(2, 97) = 6.6, p = .002$). H3 was also supported.

This study has some limitations. The data was collected from an event organized by a student-run organization and the sample size was relatively small. This might lead to the somehow inflated results since the college students who were highly involved in the event could participate in this study. This study only focused on millennials in the northeast US. The findings could be different for other generations and in different countries. It would be interesting to further investigate the generational differences and the behavioral outcomes of real-time social media engagement in future studies.

Practical and Social Implications

The findings of this study showed that the quality of event experience was greater for the attendees who used the event hashtag for their social media content search and creation. These findings suggest that the real-time communication might be a must-have strategy to engage the attendees and co-create a high quality event experience with attendees.

Keywords

social media, real-time communication, event experience, millennials

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Fake news and the crisis of public communication: How organizations are affected by false information and prepared to handle it

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Introduction and purpose of the study

Public relations and strategic communication have long been challenged with the perception that they support the wealthy and the powerful. A decade ago, Habermas (2006), in his remarkable speech at the ICA Dresden conference, has argued that “representatives of functional systems and special interest groups enjoy somewhat privileged access to the media, too. They are in a position to use professional techniques to transform social power into political muscle. Public interest groups and advocates tend likewise to employ corporate communications management methods.” (p. 419) However, the public sphere has developed structures and processes on several levels for fostering discourse in mediatized societies. When reflecting on those processes, Bentele and Nothhaft (2010) pointed out that “communication becomes increasingly self-referential in fragmented, self-contained publics” (p. 114) and that democracies rest on the “normative ideal (...) that what is said in the public sphere should be true” (p. 113). Along this line, the popular debate about ‘fake news’ has mostly focused on the negative impact of spreading wrong information for public communication – especially in the battlefield of political campaigns (e.g. Allcott & Gentzkow, 2017; Edelman, 2018, p. 18). Communicators are thus regarded as the source or *creators* of fake news. This study, however, introduces a novel perspective by researching organizations as *targets* of fake news. It argues that fake news are a potential threat for reputation crises. It investigates whether communication professionals are aware of the situation and whether organizations are affected and prepared to react.

Literature review

This study defines fake news as *news in mass or social media that is intentionally and verifiably false or with low*

facticity, intended to mislead recipients. It builds on recent research that has shown that the term ‘fake news’ can be tracked down to six different core aspects: news satire, news parody, fabrication, manipulation, advertising, and propaganda (Tandoc, Lim, & Ling, 2017). In order to distinguish fake news from other forms of information it seems to be relevant to focus “on fabrications that are low in facticity and high in the immediate intention to deceive” (ibid, p. 12). The literature review also reveals that there are no academic publications about the impact of fake news on organizations, and about the readiness of communication departments and professionals to deal with those challenges. This means that the research at hand has an explorative goal – it is intended to outline the field and path the way for future, more detailed research.

Methodology

The research is based on a quantitative survey among communication professionals working in communication departments of companies, non-profits and governmental organizations across Europe. Respondents from agencies/consultancies are not included. The survey will be conducted in spring 2018 and results will be available prior to the Bledcom conference. Participants will be invited via e-mail, based on a qualified database provided by a transnational professional association and national partners. We expect to gather more than 1,500 qualified and useable responses from senior practitioners. Six different instruments, most of them 5-point-likert scales, will be used to answer the following research questions:

- RQ1: To what extent is dealing with fake news perceived as an important strategic issue by communication practitioners?
- RQ2: To what extent is the public debate in the surveyed countries influenced by fake news from



the perspective of communication practitioners?

- RQ3: To what extent have practitioners given attention to the debate about fake news?
- RQ4: To what extent are fake news relevant for the daily work in communication departments?
- RQ5: To what extent are organizations and their reputation affected by fake news?
- RQ6: Where has fake news affecting organizations been published and what was the fake news about?
- RQ7: How are communication departments prepared to identify (potential) fake news?

Descriptive and analytical statistics will be used to evaluate the data and identify significant differences for various types of organizations and countries.

Results and conclusions

Results cannot be reported yet, as evaluation and interpretation of data will be conducted in spring 2018.

Practical and social implications

Research results will shed a light on the relevance of fake news for communication management and crisis communication. The study will show whether fake news are an overhyped or undervalued topic, and whether there are gaps (e.g. regarding the attention for the issue and the institutionalization of measures to identify and

handle fake news) that should be tackled. Furthermore, the study will inform future research and lay ground for more detailed research on various aspects of fake news in public relations.

Keywords

fake news, public communication, public sphere, comparative research, communication management

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Agenda Setting in the Dialogue of Community of Human Shared Destiny

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Introduction

In 2017, President Xi Jinping explicitly stated at the 19th National People Congress that “we should construct a new type of international relations and build community of human shared destiny”. Community of human shared destiny not only absorbs the rational parts of the western theory of international relations, but also transcends the limitations in many aspects. It emphasizes the principle of achieving shared growth through discussion and collaboration. Community of human shared destiny pursues world harmony, which is consistent with seeking harmony but not uniformity. However, how to communicate community of human shared destiny with the outside world? In the research paper, it will research the application of agenda setting of community of human shared destiny in *China Daily*.

Literature Review

Community of destiny is proposed by Chinese and indeed full of Chinese characteristics. Chinese scholars have carried out some researches as below. On one hand, the research focuses on the philosophical significance of community of destiny. Xu Jin in *Identifying the Concept of “Community of Destiny”* held that the concept of “Community of destiny” is vague. “Community of destiny” is a bilateral or multilateral cooperative arrangement featuring political cooperation and security support as the basic characteristics. Cong Zhanxiu, in *Community of Human Shared Destiny: History, Reality and Implication*, proposed that the historical origins of community of human shared destiny are the world city-states and the permanent peace; the actual concern is the globalization and the globalism; the implication is the value, system and culture. Wang Ze put forward in his paper “*The Ethical Essence and Value Trait of Community of Destiny*”, that community of destiny transcends the meaning of general community. In China, the concept of community can be traced back to the idea of a peaceful and harmonious world. In *Discussing the Consciousness of the Community of Human Destiny-plus the Symbiosis Nature of the International Community*, Jin Yingzhong thought that the community of human destiny should take the symbiotic relationship

as its existential form. In the symbiotic relationship, the contradictions and conflicts among the countries are relativistic and will inevitably change with the inter-symbiotic bottom-line optimization and optimization choices. In the multi-symbiotic international community, inclusive development is the best choice for the survival and development of all members of the community of human destiny. Zhang Xizhong, in *The Formation, Connotation and Value Meaning of Xi Jinping's Community of Destiny Thought*, insist that community of human destiny is a new kind of international outlook, new development view and new values, and deals with the philosophical thinking of various relations. On the other hand, the research centers on the construction of community of destiny. In *Building “Community of Destiny”: Exploring Approaches and Construction Routes*, Guo Chu and Xu Jin argued that the diplomatic practice of building “community of destiny” needs the power to promote the interests and shape the notions, and in turn utilizing the concepts to restrict and limit the use of power. Collective common idea can be built by strengthening strategic economic means, deepening political security cooperation and implementing the mechanism of political security cooperation. Liu Zongyi, in *The Connotation and Construction Routes of Asia's Community of Destiny*, proposed the feasibility of building community of Asian destiny. He believed that the attempts and efforts of various community constructions in Asia provide the experience and foundation for constructing community of destiny. In order to build community of destiny in Asia, in economy, it requires to establish unified and open Asian economic space. In security, it is necessary to build a new cooperative and inclusive regional security structure. In people-to-people exchange, it is vital to foster common Asian concept and sense of Asia.

From above, constructing community of human shared destiny not only calls for cooperation in security, politics and economy, but also communicates the idea of win-win cooperation and harmony but not uniformity. Due to different political institutions, respective developmental models, diverse religions and culture, and China's rising especially, international communication is urgently needed. Through international communication, we can



find commonalities in history, culture and philosophy, share the experience of governing state affairs, shelve ideologies and political systems.

Methodology

The paper chooses *China Daily*(2017.10.18-2018.4.18) as a sample, utilizes the text analysis and adopts agenda setting to analyze its report.

Results and Conclusions

First of all, there are insufficient reports on “community of human shared destiny”. Second, there are many themes in economics and security. On the economy issue, the reports stress that interdependence makes economic cooperation among nations necessary. All countries cooperate in the competition and gain win-win through cooperation. On the security issue, it reports that every country needs to jointly cope with traditional and non-traditional security threats. However, themes such as culture and leadership are not adequately set. Finally, the connection between the reports and “community of human destiny” is not significant.

Recommendations

We should increase the number of reports, highlight themes such as culture and leadership. In terms of culture, the reports can attach importance to keeping tolerance and mutual learning and respecting the

diversity of the world. With regard to leadership, China and other countries share the similar aspiration and pursuit, and China shoulders the responsibility of promoting the construction of community of human shared destiny, and can play a “pivotal role”. Besides, it is in need of using in-depth reporting to reinforce the relevance of “community of human destiny.”

Keywords

Community of Human Shared Destiny; Agenda Setting; International Communication; Media Agenda

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