

# Research on the Communication of Opinion Leaders in Public Crisis

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## Abstract

In the era of new media, the information explosion in public crisis events and the reasonable public opinion guidance of opinion leaders play a positive role in turning "danger" into "safety". In crisis events, opinion leaders explain, analyze and guide public opinion, and at the same time make suggestions to communicate with all parties. Therefore, if the society can correctly understand the role of opinion leaders, the public can rationally think about the opinion of opinion leaders, and opinion leaders themselves can continuously improve the media literacy, then the role of opinion leaders will provide a positive role for the more effective and rapid resolution of public crisis events.

## Keywords

Crisis communication; opinion leader; role; role.

## 1. Introduction

Today, crisis events are spreading in the global media at a more amazing speed. Crisis events are not only sudden, but also often bring great threat to the public, so the public often have urgent demand for information in front of crisis events. In the whole crisis communication, opinion leaders, as the backbone of public opinion guidance, have an increasingly important impact on the development and evolution of events.

## 2. The Important Role of Opinion Leaders in Crisis Communication

In the communication of crisis events on various platforms, opinion leaders with strong influence have played an important role from the beginning to the end, and their every move, every word and deed have an important impact on the public. Specifically speaking, from the occurrence, development and end of the whole crisis, opinion leaders play an important role in four aspects.

(1) Agenda setting, causing crisis

In a state of crisis, opinion leaders, as stakeholders or organizers, usually choose to stand on the side of the interest group when facing the crisis. Like the mass media, they choose the information dissemination. They always look for the information with shaping image, gathering strength and facilitating the dissemination in the development of events. As the main body of communication, opinion leaders have a profound impact on the formation of media agenda setting. They influence the audience's "agenda cognition" through their own external communication. As the source of information in crisis communication, opinion leaders usually give full play to their subjective role as the subject of rights and actively provide real and comprehensive information to various media. Therefore, this will enable opinion leaders to take the initiative to intervene in crisis events, choose topics, set agenda, and eventually lead to crisis.

(2) Explain, analyze and guide public opinion

Generally speaking, the occurrence of major crisis events will inevitably cause the fluctuation of public mood and the disorder of social order. Especially with the popularization of mobile Internet, the channels of information transmission are increasing day by day, "information explosion" today, the public has to receive tens of thousands of information every day, the overflowing information flow causes the public to be overwhelmed and difficult to digest. The uncertainty of information may affect the public's interpretation, judgment and decision-making of public crisis events. Information becomes more diverse and complex in content. In the event of a crisis, the public and stakeholders who are lost in confusion and panic will have such and such questions when they do not understand the facts of the crisis: why? What else will happen? What damage might I suffer? Therefore, in order to seek safe "shelter", we will focus on the opinion leaders of various platforms for the first time. In this case, it is particularly important for opinion leaders to explain and analyze events and guide the interpretation of facts. Usually in the state of crisis, opinion leaders let stakeholders and the public have a basic understanding of the facts through the dissemination of information about crisis events. Through this two-way information exchange and communication, they can remove their doubts and puzzles about crisis events.

### (3) Make suggestions and control public opinion

Different from the general information dissemination, in the crisis situation caused by crisis events, the audience is not only the receiver of information, but also the stakeholder to a large extent. Therefore, in crisis communication, the normal information system will be disrupted, and often there will be symbol disorder, meaning distortion, interest damage and other characteristics. Especially with the development of media integration and the continuous expansion of communication channels, the confusion of public opinion in the whole society has been intensified.

The confusion of public opinion is bound to cause social unrest. After explaining and guiding the crisis, it is still difficult to solve it and the crisis continues to worsen, or people still have doubts about the resolution of the event. At this time, opinion leaders should further use their authority to make suggestions to the general public, how to better solve the crisis, so as to control the evolution of public opinion and the stability of the situation.

### (4) Communicate with the public

In the whole social public opinion, if there is no new stimulus, the public mood will gradually decline with the passage of time. However, in many unexpected crisis events, the public comments will not really disappear. In order to achieve a real solution, we must communicate in time. Rogers, a British crisis public relations expert, once put forward an important 3T principle for crisis communication, that is, tell you own talk, tell it all and tell it fast. As the main force of public opinion guidance, this key link falls on opinion leaders.

## 3. Benign Development Strategy of Opinion Leaders in Public Crisis Communication

In recent years, the role of "opinion leader" in crisis events has become more and more obvious. How to give full play to the positive role of "opinion leader" in crisis communication, and how to create a social public opinion environment to actively promote problem solving and reduce irrational negative emotions to the maximum extent is one of the problems to be studied.

### (1) The main body of crisis: a correct understanding of the role of opinion leaders in crisis communication

After the crisis, it is necessary for the main body of the crisis to correctly understand the important role of opinion leaders in the crisis. Through their influence, opinion leaders analyze and integrate the information and spread it again, which makes the public understand and

reflect on the information sent by the media and organizations to a certain extent. They not only carry out simple secondary communication like the general public, but also carry out scientific analysis of the information transmitted by the media and organizers through their own professional knowledge and form a communication behavior. In the process of communication, he will open the information known to the public, add his own opinions and opinions, or directly evaluate the crisis, so as to influence and influence the public's opinions and attitudes.

Therefore, in crisis communication, we must attach great importance to the role of opinion leaders, because their words, deeds and actions have a decisive impact on the change and development of the whole event. The main body of the crisis should strengthen the communication with opinion leaders and influence the public with their influence and credibility, so as to promote the resolution of the crisis and help the organizers to resolve the crisis.

(2) The public: improve the awareness of information identification, learn to think rationally

The diversified development of public crisis communication forms provides more possibilities for public information participation. The intelligent data push and the update of Internet communication technology give the public more efficient channels to understand the process of public crisis events, and the public crisis communication mode of new media and digital platform has changed, so today, the public has become an important part of public crisis events. It is a great help for the public crisis to distinguish the evidence vein and listen to the rational voice rather than being influenced by the passion.

Minority opinion leaders lack the spirit of self-discipline. They are either driven by rights or lured by money and deliberately release false information and extreme speech, which leads to the constant enlargement of social contradictions and the turbulence of public opinion. At present, behind the most harmful rumors, there are almost opinion leaders, in which the public need to improve their awareness of false information.

First of all, when the crisis happens, whether to the media or opinion leaders, the public should learn to weigh the advantages and disadvantages, treat the problem in two ways, neither fully affirm nor totally deny, and learn to think dialectically.

Secondly, we should have a holistic view. For example, in the event of a major public crisis, as the general public, we should not only focus on one's own interests, but also learn to treat the suggestions provided by opinion leaders rationally to see whether they are from the perspective of public interest, and whether their speech is too extreme, etc.

Finally, in the face of crisis and sudden disaster, the public should first have their own value judgment, and consider the performance of organizers, media or opinion leaders in the crisis communication. Do not blindly follow the trend, worship and superstition. We should keep a clear mind for the information with unclear source and content, have a spirit of questioning, ask more why and learn to think rationally. Only in this way, the public will not fall into the "mire" of the crisis and be unable to extricate themselves, and crisis events will reduce their destructiveness.

(3) Opinion leaders: improve their own quality and self-discipline

In crisis communication, the quality of opinion leaders is particularly important. Providing true, comprehensive and reliable information is the responsibility of the public opinion guide, while rational and fair comments are the key for the opinion leaders to play their role.

Today, the information of mobile Internet spreads faster, more widely and has a greater impact. For those big internet fans who have a large number of fans, their random words will be forwarded by fans and followed by reporters. In this case, once the wrong information spreads, the harm to the whole society will be far greater than the general rumors. This makes the opinion leader army more complex and chaotic, and brings great challenges to the resolution of crisis events. Therefore, the self-cultivation of opinion leaders is also very important. In the

process of crisis communication, it is very important to transmit information objectively and comprehensively, that is, to grasp and judge the nature and impact of the crisis as a whole. Only in this way, opinion leaders can guide the healthy development of public opinion, and crisis events can be solved more quickly.

Conclusion: under the Internet environment, the public crisis communication has changed in the subject, path and form. In the Internet era, new media and technology have brought about the diversification of information presentation forms, and the public crisis communication is changing to a more diversified path. Among them, opinion leaders, because of their public opinion influence on a large number of readers, make this role more effective and responsible. Social responsibility. For the healthy operation of the whole society, it is necessary to make good use of the influence of opinion leaders to deal with public crisis.

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