

Demystifying Source Credibility (SC) in Social Sciences: An Inescapable Construct towards Effective Communications

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Abstract

Source credibility is multifaceted in social sciences. In marketing and crisis communication, source credibility leads to fact-based positive behavior and message adherence. The believability of information can be indubitable by the credibility of its source. If the source of an organization's information is not trustworthy, it can lead to the spread of false information, also known as infodemic. It is not easy to keep someone's attention for a long time, but some leaders and speakers manage to do it efficiently. The key to their success is source credibility (SC) which is determined by how the public perceives them. In crisis/marketing communication SC is very useful. Crisis communication from a trustworthy source builds public trust, promotes effective crisis response strategies, and safeguards reputation. This paper explains the applicability and how important it is to have source credibility in public speaking, advertisements, politics, religions, crisis communication, media communication, and organizational reputation. Fake news on social media during crises has damaged reputations and caused harm. Organizational information source credibility (ISC) is one salient

aspect in determining an organization's survival during crises. The perceived trustworthiness of the messages can either strengthen or worsen an organization's esteem and reputation. Despite the indispensable role of ISC in organizations' survival during a crisis, it is still underexplored in crisis communication. This paper is significant because the most inherently complex form of management is human and mind management, and being perceived as a credible source is the key. The concept of source credibility is an essential element in communication within the social sciences branch of knowledge.

Keywords: Public Speaking, Source Credibility, Communications, Crisis Communication, Marketing Communication.

Introduction

Living in an infodemic-dominated world requires reliable message sources for solving humanity's problems. Credible sources of health information can shape patient behavior and impact confidence in developing health messages. In the bailiwick of social sciences, Source Credibility (SC) is a crucial concept that plays a vital role in ensuring effective communication. It refers to the degree of trustworthiness that people attribute to the source of information, which can significantly impact the acceptance and effectiveness of the message conveyed. Establishing trust and reliability in communication is inescapable. The subsequent two paragraphs define the key concepts in the article.

Public speaking involves delivering structured information to a live audience to inform, persuade, or entertain. Marketers use marketing communications (marcom) to reach target markets through various channels, including advertising, direct marketing, social media, presentations, and sponsorships. Furthermore, crisis communication involves communication technologies, systems, strategies, and protocols used by organizations to effectively manage communication during a significant threat to their business or reputation (Coombs, 2010; Dominic et al., 2023).

The definition of a credible source can vary depending on the discipline. However, in academic writing, a credible source must be unbiased and supported by evidence. Source credibility explains the extent to which individuals have faith and trust in the information provided by others or organizations regarding a specific product, crisis, or service. The concept states that individuals are more likely to be convinced or swayed if the information source appears trustworthy and credible (Hovland et al. 1953; Ohanian 1990; Qiu et al., 2023).

Source credibility is multifaceted in social sciences. When it comes to public speaking, the concept of source credibility or ethos is essential to the acceptance of a message. Recent research has supported the idea that source credibility is a crucial element in communication, whether the aim is to persuade or to generate understanding (Dominic et al., 2023; Cohen, Atad, & Mevorach, 2023).

The multidimensional nature of this concept has been recognized since ancient times. For instance, Aristotle suggested that ethos comprises three dimensions: intelligence, character, and goodwill, which are the three sources of influence on the message receiver (McCroskey & Young, 1981; Ihlen, 2020; Pishghadam et al., 2023). Source credibility is salient and ineluctable in communication as it enhances message acceptability and compliance. The purpose of this article is to demystify the relevance of source credibility in the field of communications.

Haiman's classic study on the effect of credibility on persuasion viewed source credibility as a combination of reputation and competence, which are similar to Aristotle's character and intelligence (McCroskey & Young, 1981). In health and medicine, the concept of source

credibility or ethos plays a significant role in patients' perceptions of confidence in medical professionals (Molloy, 2019; Ma, Wang, & Kim, 2023). During the COVID-19 pandemic, reliable sources were crucial due to the high volume of misinformation. Effective emergency management requires trustworthy information sources.

The source credibility model (in marketing) explains how an information source's characteristics can affect users' acceptance and use of the source message (Hovland & Weiss, 1951). Source credibility theory explains how the perceived credibility of the source affects communication persuasiveness. The concept of source credibility was first introduced by Hovland et al. (1953) and Hovland & Weiss (1951) in the field of social sciences. Later on, Ohanian (1990) advanced this concept which was further developed by Erdogan, Baker, & Tagg (2001), Wheeler (2009), Ananda, & Wandebori (2016), and Yılmazdoğan, Doğan, & Altıntaş (2021), Jayawardena et al., (2023), Brinson & Lemon, (2023). Initially, this concept was used for marketing communication, with three main dimensions: attention to expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness.

However, the dimension of trustworthiness has recently been incorporated into crisis communication research to study the relationship between crisis management and stakeholders' behavior during a crisis (Lim & Brown-Devlin, 2023). When crisis communication is carried out through a trustworthy source, it develops public trust in organizations, promotes crisis response strategies, and protects reputation. The concept of response source credibility (RSC) is crucial for achieving desirable results of crisis response strategies (CRS) during crisis situations (Zhang et al., 2023).

During a crisis, the credibility or trustworthiness of the source of information is of utmost importance. This is because stakeholders' trust in the crisis response strategy employed by an organization to protect its reputation is directly linked to the credibility of the source (Aladhadh, Zhang, & Sanderson, 2019). In other words, if the source is deemed trustworthy, stakeholders are more likely to believe and adhere to the crisis response strategies (Chatterjee et al., 2023).

Source credibility has a significant impact on stakeholders' perception of the crisis response during a crisis, and a credible source is more likely to positively influence an organization's reputation than an unreliable source (Van der Meer & Verhoeven, 2014). Moreover, the effectiveness of crisis management can be determined by the trustworthiness of the response source and the choice of crisis communication strategy (Badu, Kruke, & Saetren, 2023).

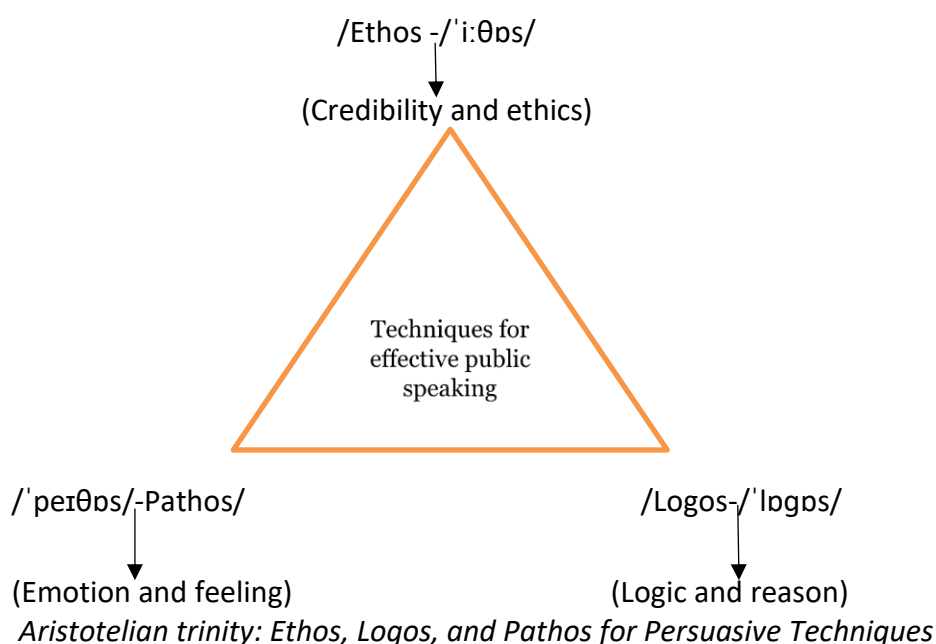
Aristotelian Source Credibility (Public Speaking)

According to Aristotle, source credibility, or ethos, is based on the sender's common sense, virtue, and trustworthiness (Dubuisson, 2023). The concept of source credibility was first introduced by Aristotle in his work, 'The Rhetoric'. In this book, Aristotle divided the means of persuasion into three categories: ethos, logos, and pathos. According to Aristotle, ethos plays the most significant role in influencing the audience's thoughts and beliefs (Cope, 1877; Bitzer, 1968; Rapp, 2002).

Ethos refers to the communicator's knowledge, understanding, moral authority, and expressed goodwill towards the message receiver (Whitehead, 1968). It is a contributing factor to the communicator's credibility and trustworthiness. Baudhin & Davis (1972) and McCroskey (1966) also agreed that the communicator's ethos is crucial in effectively persuading the message receivers (Zhuang, 2023). Source credibility plays a significant role in message persuasion.

There are many ways to establish source credibility in a speech. An upstanding public speaker should dress appropriately for the topic, introduce himself, and include all credentials and qualifications to speak, ensure strong and confident delivery, relate to the audience, and pay attention to ethos, pathos, and logos (Fassett & Nainby, 2021). The Aristotelian trinity consists of three persuasive techniques: Ethos, Logos, and Pathos. It is a judgment that the audience makes about how believable the communicator is in public speaking. The Fig.1 below demonstrated that Logos appeals to the audience's reason via logical arguments. Ethos appeals to the speaker's credibility/trustworthiness. Pathos appeals to emotions (Walker, 2023).

Fig.1 Ethos, pathos, and logos: Effective persuasive communication techniques



Explication of Terms

A credible source is unbiased and evidence-based. Source credibility refers to a communicator's positive characteristics affecting message acceptance. This applies to all forms of communications, including spokespersons, written communication, and message flow (Schmidhuber, Willems, & Krabina, 2023). However, concerning marketing communication, the degree to which individuals trusts what others and organizations say about a product or service is known as organizational information source credibility.

Applying to crisis communication, the trustworthiness of the response source is critical in maintaining stakeholder relationships and the organization's reputation. The credibility theory posits that people are more likely to be persuaded by sources they perceive as credible (Hovland, 1951; Dominic et al., 2023). A credible or reliable source provides trustworthy information that begets facts (Rusdiana et al., 2020; Umeogu, 2012).

Source Credibility and Advertising

It's interesting to wonder why companies spend lots of money on endorsement deals with models and celebrities for their advertising purposes. It's because these models, stars, and celebrities have become role models in the eyes of consumers who aspire to be like them. If they mention a particular product that they use, it can turn the product into gold. This is the

relationship between source credibility and a product's attractiveness, which often leads to higher sales.

So, how do we define credibility in advertising? As stated earlier in this paper, credibility refers to a person's perception of the truth of a piece of information, concerning calling the attention of the public to a product or service. It's a multi-dimensional concept that allows the receiver of the information to evaluate the source of the communication and determine its truthfulness (Hussain et al., 2020). This evaluation affects the receiver's willingness to believe the information. Using high source credibility helps lower risk perception and improves effectiveness of product ads with high consumer involvement (Soliha & Widyasari, 2020).

The correlation between source credibility and attitude has been established in marketing research. A study conducted by Ohanian (1990) found that perceived expertise and trustworthiness positively influence attitude change in celebrity endorsement advertising. Spokespersons' source credibility predicts consumer's loyalty and purchase intention (Chatterjee et al., 2023). Source credibility is a foremost characteristic of social marketing campaigns, as it conveys relatively complex messages in a simple argument.

The public's perception of a message can be influenced by the credibility of the person delivering it. This applies to both commercial advertising and political campaigns. Studies have shown that speakers who possess more credibility are more likely to affect people's attitudes than those who possess less credibility. When a credible personality endorses a product, it validates it to the end consumer. The perceived credibility and attitude have a positive impact on consumer behavior towards a product acceptability, purchase intention and loyalty. The credibility of the source has an impact on the buying behavior of consumers (Chavadi et al., 2021).

Relationship between Source Credibility and Political communication

Political communication refers to the interactions and relationships between citizens and politics through various communication channels (Perloff, 2021). Political communication goes beyond politics and includes reputation building, trust creation, and shaping public perception towards the government. The public's perception of a message can be influenced by the credibility of the person delivering it. This applies to both commercial advertising and political campaigns. Studies have shown that speakers who possess more credibility are more likely to affect people's attitudes than those who possess less credibility.

In politics and public administration, charisma and credibility have become highly valued qualities. What role does source credibility play in politics? For example, what made Americans vote for Barack Obama? Some people believe it was due to his confident and credible appearance, while others attribute it to his well-coordinated campaign plan (Pusparini, Suastini & Jayantini, 2020; Obama, 2021). Those who understood the rules of the game, however, recognize that it was his additional performative qualities, such as rhetoric, timing, appropriateness, charisma, eloquence, responsiveness, and vision that won him the election.

Citizens around the world are becoming increasingly less accepting of political decisions and promises, leading to a global paradigm shift. Trust in governments has been on a steady decline, with U.S. citizens' trust dropping from 77% in the 1960s to 54% in 2001 and then plummeting to 17% in 2019. This trend is not unique to the U.S., as European and Asian countries have also experienced a nosedive decline in government trust among their citizens. Nigeria is no exception, as its citizens have lost trust in the government due to a shortfall of

credibility (Dominic, Mahamed, & Uwadiegwu, 2023). Source credibility is a foremost characteristic of political spectrum and campaigns, as it conveys relatively complex messages in a simple component of coercion as well as the functioning of governance alliances.

Source Credibility and Religious Communication

Religion has a major impact on character development and the formation of cultural values in civil society. The perceived likelihood that a religious leader or a head lives by what he teaches with transparency in character to gain followers' acceptability is referred to as religious source credibility. According to Almeida et al. (2023), religious leaders do not generally meet the credibility criteria.

When it comes to opinion leadership, religious leaders are often prominent on a range of social, economic, and religious issues. Many people often consciously or unconsciously look up to the religious leaders or clergy people on difficult and pressing matters. If that is the case, then they can sway the opinion of their members or followers. How are they able to maintain that opinion leadership status? Why do people of all religions feel more comfortable asking and taking advice from religious leaders? It has only one answer and that is— source credibility. Given that credibility can be seen as a mixture of trustworthiness, expertise, and attractiveness (Dholakia & Sternthal, 1977 in Levine & Stephenson, 2007), it is reasonable to anticipate that expertise should increase the credibility of a messenger (Umeogu, 2012).

Religion employs various forms of communication to reveal reality and foster community. These include prayer and preaching, worship and witnessing, reading and listening to sacred texts, singing and sharing, prophetic discourse, ritual practice, and theological reflection. The success of these communication practices relies on the credibility of the sources and their ability to ensure compliance and effectiveness among congregations.

The credibility of the source can greatly enhance the persuasiveness and conviction of religious leaders when communicating with their members. Religious discourse often relies on persuasion as a key tool to convince the audience of the truth of the doctrine being presented (Adam, 2017; Hoogeveen & van Elk, 2019). While persuasion can be found in many types of writing, it is particularly important in religious communication (Yusof, 2016).

Source credibility is a foremost characteristic of religious, sacred, doctrinal, pontifical, and canonical campaigns, as it conveys relatively complex messages in a simple component of coercion and influences the acceptance of a particular belief, attitude, behavioral intention, and actual behavior.

Source Credibility and Crisis Communication

The purpose of this study is not to focus on how often crisis response is used to build credibility but rather to investigate how trustworthiness, as defined by the Ohanian Model of Source Credibility (1990), enhances the effectiveness of crisis response strategies and impacts reputation.

Every organization may face a crisis at some point. Crisis response strategies refer to the communication and actions taken by an organization during a challenging situation. In other words, the way an organization responds or communicates during a crisis defines its crisis response strategies (Dominic et al., 2021). Without reliable sources, the information during a crisis becomes ineffective and unproductive, leading to poor decision-making strategies.

The notion of source credibility has received attention across various fields such as marketing, advertising, and health information. However, only a few studies have focused on the impact of source credibility on the effectiveness of crisis response strategies in crisis management.

Previous research suggests that source credibility significantly influences the recipients of crisis response strategies, and a lack of it can further damage an organization's reputation (Jamal & Bakar, 2017). Therefore, the credibility of crisis management during a potential crisis is crucial in promoting message trust, a positive attitude, message compliance, and stakeholders' persuasive knowledge by decreasing the perceived message threat and increasing efficacy of the response strategy used by an organization.

Furthermore, source credibility affects how stakeholders react to crisis response strategies used by an organization in a crisis (Tkalac Verčič, Verčič, & Coombs, 2019). Credibility is the extent to which an organization is perceived as trustworthy and reliable as the source of information, and it determines the survival of an organization in a crisis (Jamal & Bakar, 2017). The perceived credibility of the messages will either strengthen or worsen the reputation. Source credibility is the overriding factor that triggers the relationship between crisis response strategies and organizational reputation.

An experimental design by Van Zoonen and Van der Meer (2015) found that the judgments of organizational reputation are not only dependent on the crisis response strategy employed by an organization in a crisis but also on the response source credibility. Moreover, the scholars postulated that source credibility mediates the effect of crisis response strategies and protects organizational reputation during crises. Shah & Wei (2022) also found that source credibility, which leads to quality information, has a significantly positive relationship with perceived message benefit during a crisis. The authors further explained that to improve crisis response strategy, careful selection of response sources should not be overlooked.

Crisis communication scholars have identified that a critical challenge in responding to crises is the swift establishment of a trustworthy source. This is because the reliability of the source has a direct impact on the accuracy and acceptance of the message being communicated (Chu & Kamal, 2008; Jiang, Luo & Kulemeka, 2016). Despite the growing evidence that trustworthy sources can affect public crisis engagement behaviors, improve stakeholders' believability, enhance trust in the crisis response, and sustain reputation, surprisingly few studies have been conducted on the concept, especially in crisis management and maintaining reputation. During a crisis, the credibility of the source plays a vital role in shaping stakeholders' attitudes towards the organization. It has a significant impact on the organization's reputation. A credible source not only makes the message more understandable but also helps maintain a positive reputation during a crisis (Hong & Len-Riós, 2015). Trustworthy sources became a major concern during the COVID-19 pandemic as unreliable sources generated more cataclysms (Dominic et al., 2023). The global crisis spawned by COVID-19 required SC not only for public safety but also for emergency managers' effectiveness.

Source credibility is a foremost feature of crisis communication and management, as it conveys relatively complex crisis messages in a simple strategic structure or technique and influences the adherence, acceptance, and believability of the crisis response.

Source Credibility and Social Media Communication

Fake social media news, messages, or information has caused multiple damage, trauma, and injury to organizations, the public, groups, and individuals' reputations. The extent to which a social media consumer or reader believes that the information provided in social media is reliable, accurate, free from bias, and complete coverage refers to social media credibility (SMC). However, in achieving this in social media, there should be proper regulation regarding subject credibility, source credibility, content credibility, information credibility, and strategically enhance the security of social media (Sun, 2021).

In today's digital age, it's more important than ever to be able to distinguish between trustworthy and unreliable online sources. According to Hu, Chen, and Davison (2019), we are more likely to accept information that comes from a credible source. This means we need to be vigilant when it comes to the information we consume and make sure that we are getting our facts from reliable sources.

The emergence of social media has exposed various crises globally, including those in organizations, politics, religion, and society (Holmes, 2011; Zhu et al., 2017; Dominic et al., 2022). During emergencies, unreliable information and media coverage of threatening content can cause distress, depression, and mental damage, leading to further crises (Siebenhaar, Köther, & Alpers, 2020). Due to information source credibility gaps, there is a global paradigm shift in the acceptability of political decisions, crisis resolution, and political promises, especially in Nigeria (Dominic et al., 2023). Source credibility is a crucial factor in protecting people's physical health during epidemics or pandemic crises.

The trustworthiness of the source mediates the relationship between crisis communication strategies and organizational reputation, making it important to select credible sources to enhance message believability and ensure stakeholders' trust. It's important to note that strategies that work on traditional media may not be effective on social media. However, source credibility can be applicable to them all for effectiveness.

Organizational social media sources have higher credibility than non-organizational sources (Jin, Liu, & Austin, 2014). The ability to uphold reputation during crises is heavily reliant on the trustworthiness of the source. Regardless of the communication medium used, (traditional media, social media, or word-of-mouth) source credibility is essential for crisis response strategies to be accepted. Social media platforms are crucial sources of information during crises, as confirmed by recent research (Hong & Len-Riós, 2015).

However, crisis communication researchers have not thoroughly examined the significance of source credibility in socially mediated crisis communication ((Jiang, Luo & Kulemeke, 2016). The credibility of the information source delivering a crisis message can have a significant impact on the reputation of an organization during a crisis and can intensify its response strategy (Kim & Park, 2017).

Recipients of information during online crisis communication often have preconceived notions about the motives, behavior, and acceptability of message sources. Therefore, it's essential to investigate how source credibility, specifically trustworthiness, impacts the relationship between crisis response strategies and organizational reputation. Managing social media during a crisis can be challenging, as social media platforms have the power to trigger crises and influence traditional news media's coverage.

Social media can be an effective tool for communicating an organization's response and addressing stakeholders' concerns, but it must be used appropriately. Trustworthy social media sources can strengthen the believability and acceptance of messages, ultimately impacting an organization's reputation. Misusing or unverifiable social media sources during a crisis can harm an organization's reputation (Triantafillidou & Yannas, 2020).

During a crisis, the credibility of the information source is just as important as the organization's response strategy in determining its reputation. This is especially relevant in the age of social media where information is widely shared (Van Zoonen & Van Der Meer, 2015). Source credibility extends to social media since people adapt message patterns based on the information source.

Information source credibility is a foremost feature of social media communication as it influences consumer attitude change and behavior toward social media content acceptability

and favorable reception. Unverifiable social media communication/content can mislead the public or consumers, especially during emergencies' inception.

Source Credibility and Organizational Reputation Management

The magnitude to which an organization as the source of messages is considered trustworthy and reliable refers to organizational credibility. It focuses on whether the organization involved is perceived as a credible source of information (Jamal & Bakar, 2017) and can impact reputation. Reputation is the overall perception of an organization by both its internal and external stakeholders.

It is based on the organization's past actions and the probability of its future behavior (Dominic, 2023). These past actions include vision and leadership quality, financial performance and stability, delivery of products and services, emotional appeal, workplace environment, social responsibility, ethical behavior, corporate reliability and integrity, customer focus, and online presence. All of these factors are demonstrated through the organization's services delivery (Dominic et al., 2022). In times of crisis, maintaining source credibility is crucial for preserving the organization's reputation.

According to a study by Spence et al., (2020), the credibility (trustworthiness) of the source is crucial for protecting people's physical health before a risk event. Effective crisis communication not only ensures customers' safety but also safeguards the organization's reputation. A trustworthy crisis communication source promotes brand loyalty and strengthens reputation. It takes years to build an organization's reputation. When a crisis hits, it could take a minute to destroy it if not guided.

Organizational reputation creates organizational value, worth, and relevance in a business world driven by competition (Dominic et al., 2022). During a crisis, a company's reputation is crucial in attracting potential talent when a reliable source of information is available. In organizational communication, reputation management demands a proactive strategic divulgation originating from Information source credibility, especially during emergencies' inception.

Again, to save reputation during a crisis, the crisis management team needs to appreciate the value of source credibility and strengthen the efficacy of crisis response strategies.

Methodology

The article analyzes the concept of response source credibility and scoping reviews through a lexicological approach. It systematically maps the literature on the topic by identifying key concepts and sources of evidence that inform the field of communication research. A scoping review is an initial assessment of the potential size and scope of available research literature (Krekeler, Rowe, & Connor, 2021). Source credibility during a crisis is the trustworthiness an organization displays in its response strategies. A scoping review by Dominic et al. (2021) and Wilson et al. (2012) explored the link between crises, response strategies, and source credibility. The results indicate that source credibility positively affects message acceptance, reception, compliance, and persuasiveness.

The authors decided to conduct a systematic review of the literature to monitor the research conducted on source credibility and crisis response strategy in crisis communication. The aim is to identify and synthesize all scholarly research on the topic. To avoid any potential bias, the PRISMA Framework was used in this review, which involves four stages: Identification, Screening, Eligibility, and Inclusion (Daudt et al., 2013; Pham et al., 2014).

Scopus is a vast database of scholarly literature that offers abstracts and citations for over 22,800 journals from 500 publishers worldwide (Dominic et al., 2022). To find relevant articles, a search was performed using ten keywords such as "source credibility", "communication", "social media", "persuasive communication", "trust", "marketing communication", "risk communication", "crisis communication", "advertising", and "human communication", resulting in a total of 500 matches. The scope was then narrowed down to social sciences, with articles published between 1968 and 2022, resulting in a total of 27 articles.

Proper selection of keywords is crucial to ensure that the topic under study is comprehensively covered. By choosing the right keywords, we can ensure that our research is thorough and our findings are accurate.

Finding

The results indicate that between 2018 and 2022, there has been an increase in research on the credibility of information sources, which may be partly attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic related information/news. The United States of America is the leading country in this area of research, followed by the United Kingdom. The figures 1-3 below provide a visual representation of the results. Furthermore, health communication took the lead in this concept (from 2018 to 2022) in this concept (Fig. 3).

Source credibility positively affects organizational reputation, advertising, and social media information quality. However, the concept of information source credibility towards enhancing message compliance and persuasiveness in (crisis) communication is still underexplored (Jiang, Luo, & Kulemeka, 2016; Dominic et al., 2023).

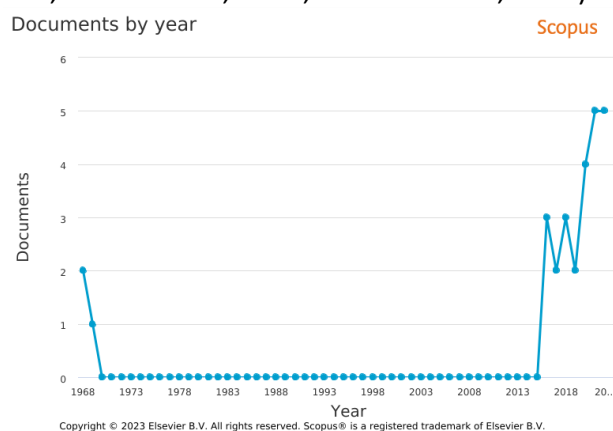


Fig. 2 Document by year

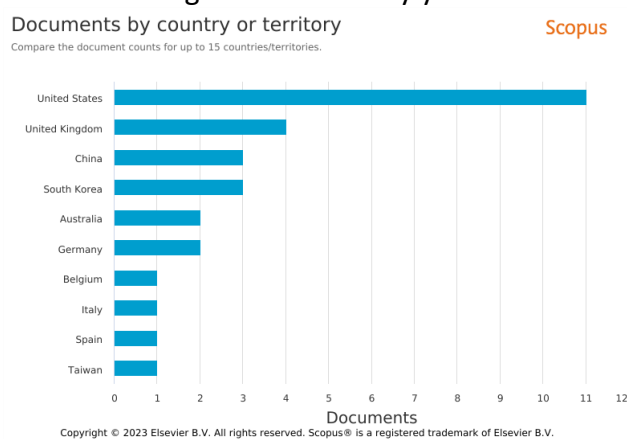


Fig. 3 Document by country

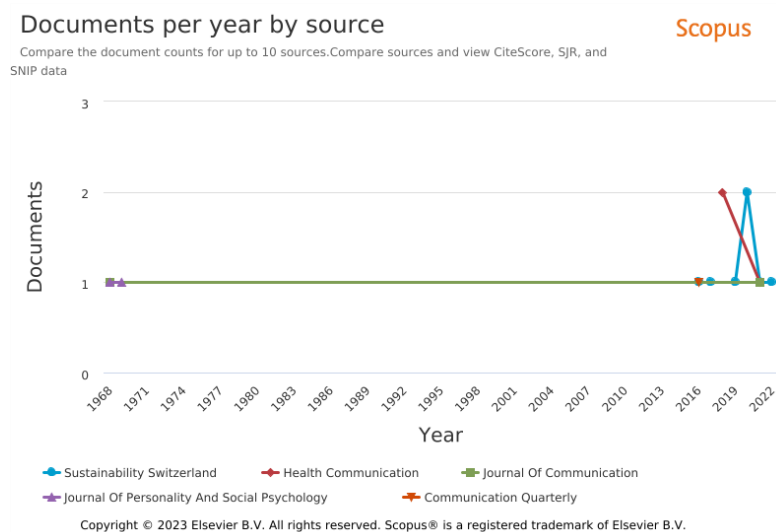


Fig. 4 Document by year

Conclusion

Credible sources can increase the likelihood of people accepting a message and feeling confident in following it. In the field of social sciences, reliable sources are crucial for effective communication. In the field of marketing communication, the credibility of the spokesperson plays a significant role in determining the consumer's intention to purchase a product or service. During crisis situations, it is especially important to establish a trustworthy response quickly, according to a study by Jiang, Luo, and Kulemeka (2016).

Trust is the foundation of any successful organization, and crisis communication from a trustworthy source is the key to building and maintaining that trust. By providing transparent and effective crisis response strategies, businesses can not only protect their reputation but also gain the confidence of the public. Effective risk communication requires trustworthiness. Trustworthiness in turn leads to positive adherence to crisis response messages, while maintaining healthy relationships between stakeholders and the organization.

A lack of trustworthiness can have severe consequences, including negative stakeholder reactions that can harm the organization's reputation and overall success. So, it is crucial to prioritize transparency, honesty, and reliability in all communication efforts. It is important to consider the credibility of information sources in communication. Furthermore, it is worth exploring how source credibility can affect the relationship between crisis response strategies and an organization's reputation.

During a crisis, reputation can be impacted negatively, but using reliable sources of information, can help to maintain a positive reputation and preserve relationships with stakeholders. This is explained in the Fig.5 below. Source credibility links communication persuasiveness to Message acceptability, believability, and compliance.

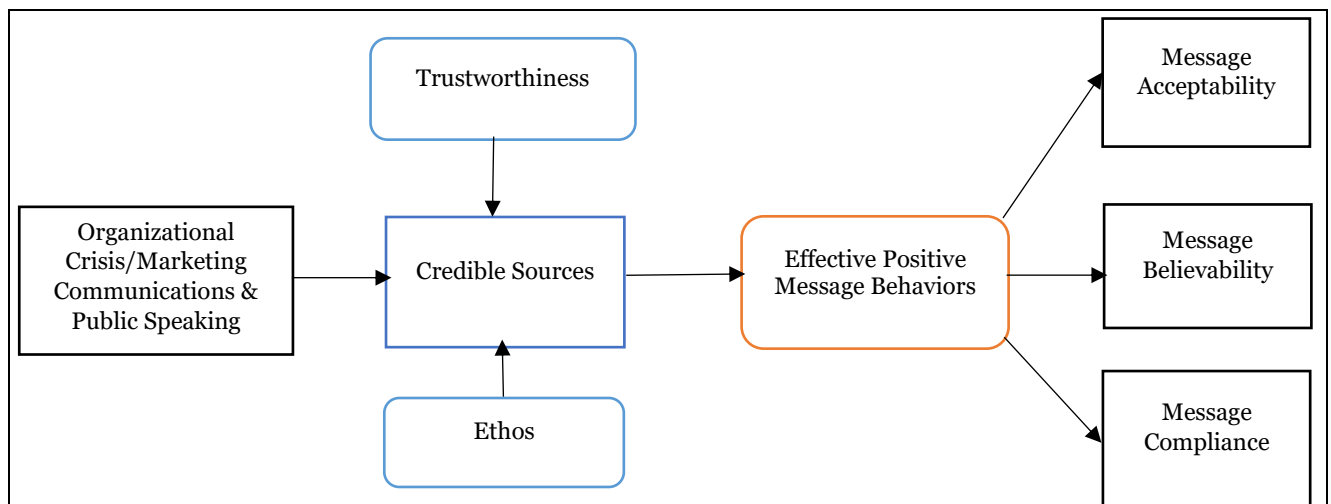


Fig. 5 Effects of communication via credible source (Hovland et al., 1953; Dominic et al., 2023)

According to Hu, Chen, and Davison (2019), people are more likely to accept online information if it comes from a trustworthy source rather than an unreliable one. Prospective researchers have the opportunity to conduct studies on the impact of information source credibility on the relationships between crisis response strategies and organizational reputation. It is recommended to utilize alternative methodologies to assess this concept thoroughly.

This study provides valuable insights into decision-making related to public speaking, marketing, crisis, and advertising communication. It provides significant information on source credibility to communications in social sciences.

As advocated or recommended in this current study, Information Source Credibility (ISC) is the information receiver's perceived trust in the message, which activates information acceptance and compliance. This concept will help solve infodemic issues in communication and can sustain the value and purpose of intended communication. In communication studies, conflicting information emanates from different sources. The information source credibility improves information accuracy. Information is power, more powerful when it comes from a credible source. Thus, information from more credible sources is more likely to generate substantial or significant and efficacious effects than information from less credible sources (Izogo et al., 2023).

To determine whether a message source is credible, we recommend seven ways:

- ✚ Currency: Timeliness of the information.
- ✚ Relevance: Importance of the message for your needs.
- ✚ Authority: The genuineness of the source of response.
- ✚ Accuracy: Truthfulness and correctness of the news.
- ✚ Purpose: Reason the information/knowledge exists.
- ✚ Objectivity: Quality or character of being objective, lack of favoritism, and freedom from bias.
- ✚ Coverage: Ability to describe in full detail.

ISC can shape our message acceptance behavior and build information confidence and reliability. Again, the source credibility influences social media use and intentions to use. Organizational ISC is one salient aspect in determining an organization's survival during crises.

The perceived trustworthiness of the messages will either strengthen or worsen an organization's esteem and reputation.

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Abbreviations

- SC-source credibility
- CRS-crisis response strategies
- ISC- information source credibility
- RSC response source credibility