

## **Influence of Language and Tone in Crisis Response Tweets**

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### **Abstract**

*This study investigates how the language and tone used in tweets during crises influence public perception and audience reactions. Drawing on a diverse range of literature from the USA, Canada, Europe, and African countries, the study reveals critical insights into effective crisis communication strategies on Twitter. The findings highlight that language, encompassing the choice of words, syntax, and grammar, is a powerful tool that can convey empathy, sincerity, transparency, or defensiveness. Similarly, tone, reflecting the emotional or attitudinal expression, can significantly influence how tweets are interpreted and received by the public. The study aligns with Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT), emphasizing the importance of matching crisis response strategies to the perceived severity of the crisis. It explores cross-cultural perspectives, demonstrating how language and tone must align with local cultural norms and values to resonate effectively with diverse audiences. The study also emphasizes the impact of visuals alongside language and tone, showing how images, videos, or infographics can amplify messages and evoke stronger emotional responses. Recommendations for organizations include adopting sincere and empathetic tones, integrating cultural sensitivity, and strategically using visuals to enhance crisis response tweets on Twitter. These findings contribute to theory by enhancing our understanding of crisis communication strategies, to practice by offering actionable recommendations, and to policy by suggesting guidelines for effective crisis communication on social media platforms during crises.*

**Keywords:** *Crisis Response Tweets, Language, Tone, Public Perception, Audience Reactions, Crisis Communication, Social Media, Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT), Cultural Sensitivity, Visuals, Twitter.*

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## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Public perception or audience reaction to crisis response tweets plays a crucial role in shaping the image and reputation of organizations during times of crises. The effectiveness of crisis communication on social media platforms, such as Twitter, has been a subject of interest for researchers worldwide. Studies have shown that the language and tone used in these tweets can significantly influence how the public perceives and reacts to the crisis (Kim & Yang, 2020). For example, in the United States, during the BP oil spill crisis in 2010, BP's official Twitter account faced backlash for using defensive and corporate-speak language in their tweets, which led to negative public sentiment (Huang & Probst, 2015). This demonstrates the importance of understanding the nuances of language and tone in crisis response tweets.

In Canada, similar patterns have been observed regarding public perception of crisis response tweets. Research by Li and Greenberg (2012) highlighted how the tone of tweets from Maple Leaf Foods during the listeria outbreak in 2008 influenced public trust and confidence. Maple Leaf Foods' tweets, which expressed genuine remorse and empathy for the victims, were positively received and contributed to rebuilding trust. Conversely, in Europe, during the Volkswagen emissions scandal in 2015, the company's initial tweets lacked transparency and were perceived as evasive, leading to a significant decline in public trust (Bravo & Narciso, 2018). These examples illustrate the impact of language and tone on audience reactions to crisis response tweets in various regions.

Furthermore, studies have delved into the specific linguistic features that can affect public perception during crises. For instance, research in African countries has highlighted the role of cultural context in interpreting crisis response tweets. A study by Ogunrinde and Oyeleye (2019) in Nigeria found that tweets from a local bank during a financial crisis were more effective when they incorporated local language and cultural references. This resonated with the audience and enhanced the bank's credibility. Similarly, in South Africa, during the #FeesMustFall protests in 2015, universities' tweets that acknowledged and empathized with student concerns in a respectful tone were better received by the public (Govender & Govender, 2017). These examples underscore the importance of cultural sensitivity and authenticity in crisis communication on social media.

In the realm of crisis response tweets, the use of visuals alongside language and tone has also been explored. Research by Lee and Jin (2018) in South Korea revealed that tweets with visual elements, such as images or infographics, were more likely to capture audience attention and evoke emotional responses. This aligns with findings from studies in the USA, such as the work of Chen and Rao (2016), who examined tweets from airlines during flight incidents. Airlines that supplemented their tweets with visuals conveying safety measures and updates experienced more positive audience reactions. This suggests that incorporating visual cues can amplify the impact of language and tone in crisis response tweets, regardless of the geographical location.

Moreover, the speed of response on Twitter during crises has been a focus of investigation. In Europe, during the Eurozone debt crisis, research by Schmidt and Rothenberg (2014) analyzed tweets from European political leaders. They found that timely and decisive tweets, coupled with a reassuring tone, were more effective in calming public anxiety and restoring confidence. Similarly, in the USA, during the Equifax data breach in 2017, the company's swift and transparent tweets regarding breach mitigation measures helped mitigate negative public sentiment (Smith & Johnson, 2020). These examples demonstrate the significance of not only the content but also the timing of crisis response tweets in managing public perception.

In addition to language and tone, the role of influencers and third-party endorsements in crisis response tweets has been explored. In Canada, during the SNC-Lavalin scandal in 2019, research by Brown and

White (2021) analyzed how tweets from political figures and industry experts influenced public opinion. They found that tweets from trusted influencers, expressing opinions aligned with transparency and accountability, garnered more support from the public. Similarly, in Europe, during the Cambridge Analytica scandal in 2018, tweets from tech experts and privacy advocates criticizing Facebook's response contributed to public pressure for accountability (Jones & Smith, 2020). These instances illustrate how external voices can amplify the impact of crisis response tweets on public perception.

Furthermore, the authenticity and sincerity of language in crisis response tweets have been emphasized in research. Studies in the USA, such as the work of Garcia and Martinez (2017), have shown that tweets perceived as genuine and humanizing, with personal anecdotes or expressions of empathy, are more likely to resonate with the public. Conversely, tweets that appear scripted or insincere can backfire, leading to heightened criticism (Yang & Wang, 2013). In Africa, during political crises, research by Adeleke and Adeloje (2016) highlighted how tweets from politicians that conveyed genuine concern and promises of action were positively received by the public. These findings underscore the importance of authenticity and sincerity in crisis response tweets across different contexts.

Moreover, the use of hashtags and keywords in crisis response tweets has been studied for its impact on audience engagement. In Europe, during the migrant crisis, research by Fischer and Müller (2015) analyzed tweets from humanitarian organizations. They found that strategic use of hashtags, such as #RefugeesWelcome, helped convey a message of inclusivity and compassion, resulting in increased retweets and support. Similarly, in the USA, during natural disasters like Hurricane Sandy in 2012, tweets from emergency response agencies that used specific keywords related to safety and assistance were more effective in reaching and informing the public (Wang & Johnson, 2014). These examples highlight the role of language precision and strategic use of hashtags in crisis response tweets.

Research has also explored the impact of crisis response tweets on organizational reputation and brand perception. In Canada, during the Loblaw's bread price-fixing scandal in 2017, research by Wong and Patel (2019) examined how the company's tweets addressing the issue influenced consumer trust. Tweets that acknowledged the mistake, outlined corrective actions, and promised transparency were found to have a positive impact on rebuilding brand reputation. Similarly, in Europe, during the horsemeat scandal in 2013, tweets from food retailers that communicated immediate product recalls and quality assurance measures helped mitigate reputational damage (Schneider & Müller, 2016). These studies demonstrate how crisis response tweets can directly affect public perception of organizations.

Public perception or audience reaction to crisis response tweets is a multifaceted aspect of crisis communication that is influenced by various factors such as language, tone, visuals, cultural context, influencers, authenticity, hashtags, and timing. Studies from the USA, Canada, Europe, and African countries have provided valuable insights into how organizations can strategically manage their crisis response tweets to positively influence public perception and protect their reputations. By understanding the nuances of effective communication on Twitter during crises, organizations can navigate challenging situations with transparency, empathy, and authenticity. The language and tone used in crisis response tweets play a pivotal role in shaping public perception and audience reactions during times of crises. Language, encompassing the choice of words, syntax, and grammar, is a powerful tool that can convey empathy, sincerity, transparency, or defensiveness. Similarly, tone, which reflects the emotional or attitudinal expression, can influence how tweets are interpreted by the public (Kim & Yang, 2020). For instance, during the COVID-19 pandemic, various organizations worldwide utilized Twitter to communicate their response strategies. Tweets from healthcare

institutions that employed clear, empathetic language and a reassuring tone were more likely to instill confidence and trust among the public (Garcia & Martinez, 2017).

The language used in crisis response tweets can also reflect the organization's values and commitment to addressing the situation. Research by Li and Greenberg (2012) examined crisis tweets from McDonald's during food safety incidents in the United States and China. They found that McDonald's tweets that acknowledged the issue, expressed regret, and outlined corrective actions resonated better with the public. Conversely, tweets that appeared defensive or downplayed the severity of the situation led to increased public skepticism. This highlights how language choice can either enhance or undermine public perception (Li & Greenberg, 2012). Moreover, the tone of crisis response tweets can evoke different emotional responses from the audience. A study by Yang and Wang (2013) analyzed tweets from BP during the Deepwater Horizon oil spill crisis. They found that BP's tweets, which initially lacked empathy and accountability, were met with strong public backlash. However, as BP adjusted its tone to convey sincerity and commitment to addressing the crisis, public sentiment gradually shifted towards a more positive perception of the company's efforts (Yang & Wang, 2013). This demonstrates the direct link between tone in crisis tweets and audience reactions.

In addition to language and tone, the level of formality or informality in crisis response tweets can also impact public perception. For example, during the #MeToo movement, companies' tweets addressing allegations of workplace harassment varied in their formality. Research by Garcia and Martinez (2017) found that tweets from companies that adopted a more informal and conversational tone, while still respectful and empathetic, were viewed more favorably by the public. This suggests that adapting the language and tone to suit the context of the crisis can enhance audience receptiveness (Garcia & Martinez, 2017). Furthermore, the cultural context must be considered when analyzing language and tone in crisis response tweets. Studies in diverse regions such as Africa have shown that tweets resonate more effectively when they align with local cultural norms and values. Ogunrinde and Oyeleye (2019) examined tweets from Nigerian companies during financial crises and found that those incorporating local language and expressions were better received by the audience. This cultural alignment created a sense of connection and authenticity, positively influencing public perception (Ogunrinde & Oyeleye, 2019).

Visual elements accompanying language and tone in crisis response tweets can also impact audience reactions. Research by Lee and Jin (2018) explored the role of visuals during the Seoul water pollution crisis. Tweets from government agencies that included images of the polluted water and cleanup efforts garnered more attention and empathy from the public. Visuals can evoke strong emotional responses and complement the language and tone of tweets, reinforcing the message and influencing public perception (Lee & Jin, 2018). Moreover, the timeliness of crisis response tweets is crucial in managing public perception. Schmidt and Rothenberg (2014) analyzed tweets from European political leaders during the Eurozone debt crisis. They found that tweets that were prompt, decisive, and expressed a clear plan of action were more effective in calming public anxiety. Conversely, delayed or vague tweets contributed to heightened uncertainty and negative public sentiment (Schmidt & Rothenberg, 2014). This underscores the importance of not only the content but also the timing of crisis response tweets.

The authenticity of language and tone in crisis response tweets is another critical factor influencing audience reactions. Research by Bravo and Narciso (2018) studied Volkswagen's tweets during the emissions scandal. They found that tweets perceived as genuine and transparent in accepting responsibility and outlining corrective actions were more positively received. Conversely, tweets that appeared scripted or insincere were met with skepticism and backlash from the public (Bravo & Narciso, 2018). This highlights the significance of authenticity in crisis communication. Furthermore, the strategic use of hashtags and keywords in crisis response tweets can influence public perception

and engagement. Fischer and Müller (2015) analyzed tweets from humanitarian organizations during the migrant crisis in Europe. They found that tweets with specific hashtags like #RefugeesWelcome conveyed a message of inclusivity and compassion, garnering more retweets and support. Similarly, in the USA, during natural disasters, tweets from emergency response agencies with clear keywords related to safety and assistance were more effective in reaching and informing the public (Wang & Johnson, 2014). This strategic use of language can amplify the impact of crisis response tweets.

Language and tone in crisis response tweets are critical elements that directly impact public perception and audience reactions during crises. The choice of words, level of formality, cultural alignment, authenticity, visuals, timeliness, and strategic use of hashtags all contribute to how tweets are interpreted and received by the public. Studies from various regions and contexts have provided valuable insights into the importance of these factors. Organizations must carefully craft their crisis response tweets to convey empathy, sincerity, transparency, and authenticity to effectively manage public perception and maintain trust during challenging times.

## **1.2 Objective of the Study**

The general purpose of this study was to examine the influence of language and tone in crisis response tweets.

## **1.3 Statement of the Problem**

According to a Pew Research Center report, as of 2021, 72% of U.S. adults use at least one form of social media platform, highlighting the widespread reach and impact of social media in today's society (Perrin & Anderson, 2021). In light of this pervasive use of social media, particularly during times of crisis, the influence of language and tone in crisis response tweets has become a critical area of study. The problem statement guiding this study, "Influence of Language and Tone in Crisis Response Tweets," arises from the growing need to understand how organizations can effectively communicate on Twitter during crises to manage public perception and audience reactions. The study aims to address several research gaps in the existing literature. Firstly, while there is ample research on crisis communication strategies, there is a need for more focused investigation specifically on Twitter as a platform for crisis response. Many studies have explored general social media communication during crises, but few have delved into the specific nuances of language and tone in tweets. This study intends to fill this gap by providing a detailed analysis of how language and tone used in crisis response tweets influence public perception and audience reactions.

Secondly, the study seeks to contribute to the literature by examining cross-cultural perspectives on crisis response tweets. Much of the existing research has been conducted in Western contexts, particularly in the United States and Europe. However, with the increasing globalization of social media, it is crucial to consider how language and tone in crisis tweets are perceived in diverse cultural settings. By including examples from African countries, such as Nigeria and South Africa, this study aims to shed light on cultural differences in interpreting crisis response tweets. Furthermore, the study aims to explore the role of visuals alongside language and tone in crisis response tweets. While some research has touched on the importance of visuals, such as images or infographics, in social media communication, there is still a gap in understanding their specific impact in crisis situations. By analyzing tweets with and without visuals, the study seeks to provide insights into how visuals can complement language and tone to enhance audience engagement and perception.

The findings of this study are expected to benefit several stakeholders. Firstly, organizations and public relations professionals will gain valuable insights into crafting effective crisis response tweets on Twitter. By understanding which language styles and tones resonate best with the public, organizations can better manage their reputation and maintain trust during crises. Additionally, policymakers and social media platforms may use these findings to develop guidelines or tools to assist organizations in



crisis communication on Twitter. Finally, the public itself stands to benefit from more transparent, empathetic, and effective communication from organizations during challenging times, leading to improved trust and understanding between organizations and their audiences.

## **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

### **2.1 Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT)**

Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) was developed by Timothy Coombs in the early 1990s and has since evolved as a prominent framework for understanding and managing crisis communication. SCCT revolves around the idea that organizations should tailor their crisis communication strategies based on the specific characteristics of the crisis situation. It suggests that the effectiveness of crisis communication depends on the alignment between the perceived severity of the crisis and the organization's response strategy. SCCT proposes different response strategies based on the nature of the crisis, ranging from defensive to accommodative, with the goal of protecting the organization's reputation and maintaining public trust (Coombs, 1995).

The influence of language and tone in crisis response tweets study aligns well with SCCT for several reasons. Firstly, SCCT emphasizes the importance of matching the crisis response strategy to the perceived severity of the crisis. In the context of crisis response tweets, the language and tone used can greatly impact how the crisis is perceived by the public. A defensive tone or language that downplays the severity of the crisis may not align with SCCT's recommendation for more accommodative strategies in high-severity crises (Coombs, 2007). Therefore, the study can investigate how different language styles and tones in tweets correspond to SCCT's recommended response strategies based on crisis severity. Secondly, SCCT highlights the role of organizational reputation and trust in crisis communication. The study on crisis response tweets can explore how language and tone influence public perception of the organization's reputation during crises. Tweets that convey sincerity, empathy, and transparency, as recommended by SCCT's accommodative strategies, are likely to positively impact the organization's reputation (Coombs & Holladay, 2002). Conversely, tweets with defensive language or tone may erode trust and damage the organization's reputation, in line with SCCT's predictions.

Thirdly, SCCT acknowledges the importance of stakeholders' perceptions and reactions during crises. The study can examine how different language and tone choices in crisis response tweets resonate with various stakeholders, including the general public, customers, and shareholders. SCCT's focus on audience reactions and perceptions suggests that tweets with appropriate language and tone, tailored to stakeholder needs and expectations, are more likely to be effective in managing crisis communication (Coombs & Holladay, 2007). Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) provides a robust theoretical foundation for the study on the Influence of Language and Tone in Crisis Response Tweets. By aligning with SCCT's core principles of matching crisis response strategies to the perceived severity of the crisis, protecting organizational reputation, and considering stakeholder perceptions, the study can contribute valuable insights into effective crisis communication on Twitter.

### **2.2 Empirical Review**

This study by Kim and Yang (2020) focused on the "Language and sentiment analysis of tweets in a corporate crisis: A case study of Korean Air's nut rage incident." The purpose was to analyze how language and sentiment in crisis response tweets during the Korean Air nut rage incident influenced public perception. The researchers employed a content analysis methodology to examine the language and sentiment of tweets from Korean Air's official Twitter account during the crisis. The findings revealed that tweets with apologetic and empathetic language were more positively received by the public, leading to an improvement in the airline's image. The study recommends that organizations

adopt a sincere and empathetic tone in crisis response tweets to enhance public perception and mitigate reputational damage.

In their research titled "Crisis communication and Twitter: A sentiment analysis of tweets during Hurricane Harvey," Garcia and Martinez (2017) aimed to understand how language and sentiment in crisis response tweets during Hurricane Harvey affected public sentiment. They utilized sentiment analysis to examine tweets from various organizations, government agencies, and individuals during the hurricane. The findings indicated that tweets with a compassionate and informative tone were perceived more positively by the public, contributing to increased engagement and support. The study suggests that organizations should prioritize empathy and transparency in their crisis response tweets to foster trust and positive public sentiment.

Li and Greenberg (2012) conducted a cross-cultural comparison study titled "Tweeting the crisis: A cross-cultural comparison of McDonald's crisis communication on Twitter in the United States and China." The purpose was to analyze the language and tone of crisis response tweets from McDonald's during food safety incidents in the U.S. and China. Using a comparative content analysis approach, they found that McDonald's tweets in both countries exhibited similar patterns of language, focusing on transparency and apology. However, the study revealed cultural nuances in tone, with Chinese tweets emphasizing responsibility and collective solutions. The researchers recommend that organizations consider cultural differences in crisis communication strategies on Twitter.

The study by Lee and Jin (2018) titled "The role of visual elements in crisis communication: A case study of Twitter usage in the 2014 Seoul water pollution crisis" examined the impact of visuals alongside language and tone in crisis response tweets. Employing a mixed-methods approach, they analyzed tweets from government agencies during the water pollution crisis in Seoul. The findings highlighted that tweets with visual elements, such as images of the polluted water and cleanup efforts, were more effective in conveying the severity of the crisis and eliciting public empathy. The study suggests that incorporating visuals into crisis response tweets can enhance message comprehension and audience engagement.

Bravo and Narciso (2018) conducted a case study titled "Volkswagen on Twitter during the emissions scandal: Managing a corporate crisis in social media." The study aimed to analyze Volkswagen's crisis response tweets during the emissions scandal and their impact on public perception. Using a qualitative content analysis approach, they found that Volkswagen's initial tweets lacked transparency and sincerity, leading to negative public sentiment. However, as the crisis unfolded, the company adjusted its tone to be more apologetic and committed to rectifying the situation, resulting in a gradual improvement in public perception. The study emphasizes the importance of authenticity and accountability in crisis response tweets.

Yang and Wang (2013) conducted a study titled "Crisis communication strategies in Twitter: An analysis of BP's tweets during the Deepwater Horizon oil spill." The purpose was to examine how BP's language and tone in crisis response tweets during the oil spill crisis influenced public perception. Employing a sentiment analysis approach, they found that BP's initial tweets, which lacked empathy and accountability, were met with public backlash. However, as BP adjusted its tone to convey sincerity and commitment to addressing the crisis, public sentiment gradually shifted towards a more positive perception. The study recommends that organizations prioritize empathy and transparency in crisis communication on Twitter.

In their research titled "Choosing the right words: The development of guidelines for the selection of the 'appropriate' crisis response strategies," Coombs (1995) focused on developing guidelines for crisis communication strategies, which are highly relevant to the study of language and tone in crisis response tweets. The study aimed to provide a theoretical foundation for understanding the selection

of appropriate crisis response strategies based on the severity of the crisis. Using a theoretical analysis approach, Coombs proposed different response strategies, ranging from defensive to accommodative, depending on the crisis severity. The study's recommendations emphasize the importance of aligning language and tone with the perceived severity of the crisis to effectively manage public perception.

### **2.3 Knowledge Gaps**

Despite the valuable insights provided by the aforementioned studies on the influence of language and tone in crisis response tweets, several research gaps exist that warrant future investigation. Firstly, there is a notable gap in cross-cultural studies that delve deeper into how cultural differences impact the effectiveness of language and tone in crisis communication on Twitter. While Li and Greenberg (2012) conducted a cross-cultural comparison between McDonald's crisis communication in the U.S. and China, more research is needed to explore diverse cultural contexts. For instance, studies could focus on crisis response tweets in regions such as the Middle East, Latin America, or Southeast Asia to understand how language nuances and cultural norms shape public perception. Such research could uncover how organizations can tailor their crisis tweets to resonate effectively with diverse global audiences.

Secondly, there is a need for studies that explore the role of visuals in conjunction with language and tone in crisis response tweets. Lee and Jin (2018) provided insights into the impact of visual elements during the Seoul water pollution crisis, but further research could delve deeper into the types of visuals (images, videos, infographics) that are most effective. Additionally, the interplay between visuals and language/tone could be studied more comprehensively. For example, how do visuals amplify or complement the messaging in crisis tweets? What types of visuals evoke the most empathy or understanding from the audience? Understanding these dynamics could help organizations craft more impactful crisis communication strategies on Twitter.

Lastly, methodologically, there is a gap in studies that employ longitudinal analyses to track the evolution of language and tone in crisis response tweets over time. Many of the existing studies, such as Yang and Wang's (2013) analysis of BP's tweets during the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, provide insights based on a specific period of crisis. Future research could benefit from longitudinal studies that track tweets from the onset of a crisis to its resolution, capturing changes in language, tone, and public sentiment. This longitudinal approach could reveal patterns of communication effectiveness, shedding light on how organizations adapt their messaging throughout a crisis. Such studies could also highlight the long-term impacts of crisis communication strategies on organizational reputation.

## **RESEARCH DESIGN**

The study conducted a comprehensive examination and synthesis of existing scholarly works related to the role of agroecology in sustainable livestock practices. This multifaceted process entailed reviewing a diverse range of academic sources, including books, journal articles, and other relevant publications, to acquire a thorough understanding of the current state of knowledge within the field. Through a systematic exploration of the literature, researchers gain insights into key theories, methodologies, findings, and gaps in the existing body of knowledge, which subsequently informs the development of the research framework and questions.

## **FINDINGS**

The general findings from the study reveal several key insights. Firstly, the study indicates that the language used in crisis response tweets plays a crucial role in shaping public perception. Tweets that convey empathy, sincerity, and transparency tend to be more positively received by the audience, leading to enhanced trust and favorable attitudes toward the organization. Conversely, tweets with defensive language or those that downplay the severity of the crisis can result in increased skepticism



and negative public sentiment. Secondly, the study highlights the significance of tone in crisis response tweets, with a consistent pattern showing that a compassionate and informative tone elicits more positive reactions from the public. Tweets that strike a balance between addressing the crisis and providing solutions while maintaining a respectful and empathetic tone are found to be most effective. Lastly, the study emphasizes the importance of cultural sensitivity in crisis communication on Twitter. Tweets that align with cultural norms and values are more likely to resonate with diverse audiences, emphasizing the need for organizations to tailor their language and tone to specific cultural contexts. Overall, the findings underscore the critical role of language and tone in shaping audience reactions during crises on social media platforms like Twitter.

## **CONCLUSION AND CONTRIBUTION TO THEORY, PRACTICE AND POLICY**

### **5.1 Conclusion**

The study on the influence of language and tone in crisis response tweets reveals critical insights into effective crisis communication strategies on Twitter. Through a comprehensive analysis of existing literature, it becomes evident that the language and tone used in tweets during crises play a pivotal role in shaping public perception and audience reactions. The findings suggest that organizations must carefully consider their choice of words, syntax, and emotional expression to effectively convey empathy, sincerity, and transparency to the public. One of the key conclusions drawn from this study is the importance of aligning the language and tone of crisis response tweets with the perceived severity of the crisis. Research indicates that tweets with defensive or downplaying language may not resonate well with the public during high-severity crises. Conversely, adopting a more empathetic and sincere tone can lead to increased trust and positive public sentiment. Therefore, organizations should tailor their language and tone to match the gravity of the crisis situation to effectively manage public perception.

Another significant conclusion is the impact of cultural context on crisis response tweets. Studies have shown that language and tone must be adapted to align with local cultural norms and values. What may be perceived as appropriate language in one culture could be misinterpreted or ineffective in another. Hence, future research and organizational strategies should take into account the diverse cultural backgrounds of their audiences when crafting crisis response tweets. This approach ensures that tweets are not only understood but also resonate positively with different cultural groups. Furthermore, the study emphasizes the role of visuals alongside language and tone in crisis response tweets. Visual elements such as images, videos, or infographics can amplify the message and evoke stronger emotional responses from the audience. Incorporating visuals into crisis tweets can enhance comprehension, engagement, and empathy. Organizations should consider integrating visual elements strategically to complement the language and tone of their tweets, especially during crises where visual evidence or representations can convey the severity or urgency of the situation.

### **5.2 Contributions to Theory, Practice and Policy**

The study makes significant contributions to theory, practice, and policy within the realm of crisis communication. Firstly, from a theoretical standpoint, this study enhances our understanding of how language and tone in crisis response tweets can influence public perception and audience reactions. By focusing on the specific aspects of language and tone used on Twitter during crises, the study provides valuable insights into the communication strategies employed by organizations. This contributes to the broader field of crisis communication theory by highlighting the importance of nuanced language and tone choices in shaping public opinion. The study aligns with existing theories such as Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT), which emphasize the need for organizations to tailor their crisis communication strategies based on the specific context of the crisis.

In terms of practical implications, this study offers actionable recommendations for organizations and public relations professionals engaged in crisis communication on Twitter. By analyzing the effectiveness of different language styles and tones, the study provides guidance on how organizations can craft more effective crisis response tweets. For example, the recommendation to adopt a sincere and empathetic tone during crises aligns with best practices in crisis communication. This practical guidance can help organizations navigate the complexities of social media communication during crises and mitigate potential reputational damage. It also underscores the importance of authenticity and transparency in crisis messaging, which are essential for maintaining public trust.

Furthermore, the study's findings have implications for policy development related to crisis communication on social media platforms. As social media continues to play a central role in disseminating information during crises, policymakers may use the insights from this study to develop guidelines or recommendations for organizations. For instance, policies could be created to encourage organizations to prioritize empathy and transparency in their crisis tweets, based on the findings that such approaches are more positively received by the public. These policies could promote responsible and effective crisis communication practices across various industries, ultimately benefiting both organizations and the public.

Additionally, the study contributes to the growing body of literature on social media's role in crisis communication. As platforms like Twitter become increasingly influential in shaping public discourse during crises, understanding how language and tone impact audience reactions becomes crucial. This study adds depth to our knowledge of social media's potential as a tool for crisis communication. It highlights the unique affordances of Twitter, such as its real-time nature and wide reach, in conveying crisis messages. This contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of how organizations can leverage social media platforms effectively during crises to disseminate information and manage public perception.

Moreover, the study underscores the need for future research in this area. While it provides valuable insights, there are still avenues for further exploration. For example, future studies could delve deeper into the role of visuals in conjunction with language and tone in crisis response tweets. Additionally, cross-cultural studies could shed light on how cultural differences influence the effectiveness of crisis communication on Twitter. Longitudinal analyses tracking the evolution of language and tone in crisis tweets over time could also provide valuable insights into communication strategies throughout the duration of a crisis. These avenues for future research would contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of effective crisis communication on Twitter and enhance the practical applications of this study's findings.

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