Using the Situational Q-sort to construct the Crisis Message Preference Model

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PERCEPTION OF CRISES

Q-SORT METHOD

- A research method that allows the reliable quantification of subjective first impressions
  - Results using a standard set of attributes allows for comparison across targets
  - Like a Likert scale, but with forced priorities
- Two types we have used in our research
  - Personality q-sorts (e.g. California Q-sort)
  - Situation q-sorts (Riverside Situational Q-sort)

Procedure of the Situational Q-sort

- Scenario presented to participant to focus on for this situation

- Asked to sort 89 attributes into 9 categories

- Only certain number of categories allowed in sort

	Extremely Uncharacteristic (3 items only)	Quite Uncharacteristic (6 items only)	Fairly Uncharacteristic (11 items only)	Somewhat Uncharacteristic (15 items only)	Relatively Neutral (19 items only)	Somewhat Characteristic (15 items only)	Fairly Characteristic (11 items only)	Quite Characteristic (6 items only)	Extremely Characteristic (3 items only)
1	74. Potential romanti	55. Situation includes	77. Affords an oppo	13. Affords an opportu	85. People who a	8. Talking is expe	25. Rational thinking is	2. Situation is complex.	20. Things are happe
2	76. Situation is basic	88. P is being complin	80. Affords an oppo	5. Someone is trying to	7. Talking is pern	43. Situation conta	11. Minor details are im	10. Someone needs help	71. Situational demar
3	49. Affords an oppor	72. P is being abused	89. Affords an oppo	19. Introspection is pos	9. P is being aske	67. Situation make	3. A job needs to be don	15. Another person (pre	14. Situation is uncer
4		31. Physical attractive	17. Someone is atter	32. It is important for P	6. P is counted or	59. Situation inclu	24. A decision needs to	45. A quick decision or quick action is called
5		70. Situation includes	23. P is being blame	28. Affords an opportu	41. Affords an op	48. Situation entai	83. Situation is potentia	42. Situation contains physical threats.
6		18. Situation is playfu	46. Situation allows	44. Situation raises mo	35. Situation mig	34. Situation inclu	64. Situation includes b	26. Situation calls for self-restraint.
7			4. Someone is trying	57. Situation is humor	82. Independence	75. Situation has	33. Situation would make some people tense and upset.
8			16. P is being critici	53. Situation includes i	78. Situation invo	66. Situation is po	29. Others are present who need or desire reassurance.
9			58. P is the focus of	38. Someone else in thi	1. Situation is po	40. People are dis	21. Someone (present or discussed) is unhappy or suffering.
10			37. It is possible for	84. Affords an opportu	61. Success in thi	52. Someone othe	73. Members of the opposite sex are present.
11			65. Situation includ	86. P is being pressured	47. Others presen	79. Situation raise	63. Others present a wide range of interpersonal cues. (e.g., body lang
12				12. Situation evokes va	30. Situation enta	36. A person or ac	87. Success requires cooperation.
13				68. Affords an opportu	51. Close persona	54. Assertiveness is required to accomplish a goal.
14				39. Situation may caus	22. A reassuring	62. P controls resources needed by others.
15				11. Minor details are in	69. Situation mig	81. Others may need or are requesting advice from P.
16					56. Social interaction is possible.
17					27. Situation involves competition.
18					50. Situation has potential to arouse guilt in P.
19					60. Situation is relevant to bodily health of P. (e.g., possibility of illness; a medical visit)

Preliminary Results

- Seven crisis managers viewed one of two scenarios (natural disaster or workplace violence)

- The Riverside Situational Q-sort (RSQ) was used to evaluate perceptions of the crisis.

- The response of the experts to the two scenarios did not differ statistically.

Crisis Managers Agreed That the Crises Feature…

- Someone needing help
- Another person under threat
- A complex situation
- An uncertain situation
- Things happening quickly
- Physical threats
- Someone being unhappy or suffering
- The need for a quick decision or quick action
- A situation that makes people tense and upset

DIAMONDS = Best friend for Crisis Managers?

- Rauthmann et al. (2014) conducted an elaborate factor analysis of the RSQ and identified 8 key attributes of situations with the acronym DIAMONDS.
  - Duty, Intellect, Adversity, Mating, Positivity, Negativity, Deception, and Sociality
  - Four factors seem particularly relevant to the perceptions of a crisis by crisis managers: **Duty, Intellect, Adversity, and Negativity**

- Sample RSQ items
  - 3. A job needs to be done.
  - 6. P is counted on to do something.
  - 11. Minor details are important.
  - 25. Rational thinking is called for

Important to Note

- In the RSQ, 1 = least characteristic and 9 = most characteristic.

  - Expert responses to crisis scenarios were analyzed using DIAMOND factors.

  - Duty items had a mean ranking of 7.

  - Intellect items had a mean ranking of 4.25.

  - Adversity items had a mean ranking of 5.5.

  - Negativity items had a mean ranking of 7.

Experts' sense of <u>duty</u> and <u>negativity</u> were quite salient in responding to the crises.

Adding Hazard + Outrage to RSG for Crisis Preference Model

- Hazard and Outrage
  - Sandman (2003) argued that Risk = Hazard + Outrage.
  - Lachlan and Spence (2007) argued that hazard and outrage also characterize a crisis.
  - Lachlan and Spence constructed an instrument specific to Hurricane Katrina, and argued for "other instruments for measuring these responses to include items general enough to be consistent across events" (2007, p. 119).

The RSQ does exactly what Lachlan and Spence recommend.

Hazard in Our Crises

- Hazard: Technical seriousness of a crisis, Worry, Potential harm, Willingness to act

- Sample RSQ items: A job needs to be done.

- Research

  - 11 items out of the 89 on the RSQ were judged relevant to definition of hazard

  - Mean rankings by crisis experts for these 11 items was 7.64

Outrage in Our Crises

- **Outrage** = Emotional responses
  - Sample RSQ item: Situation would make some people tense and upset.
- **Research**
  - 10 items out of 89 on the RSQ were judged to be relevant to the definition of outrage.
  - Mean rankings by crisis experts for these 10 items of 6.7.
  - This is consistent with previous data, in which crisis experts were less emotional than laypersons in responding to a crisis in previous research.

Future applications and research

- **DIAMOND Factors**
  - The DIAMOND factors are closely related to personality (duty = Big 5 trait of conscientiousness).
  - How does personality predict an expert's response to a crisis?
  - What personalities are attracted to crisis management?
- **Hazard Outrage**
  - Experts and laypersons do not see hazard and outrage in similar ways.
  - The RSQ allows the expert to "see" the crisis through the eyes of the audience.
  - Experts can proactively test-drive responses to crisis scenarios using the RSQ.

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS?

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