



SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATIONS
MA PROGRAMME IN PR & STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

***INVESTIGATION INTO TRENDS AND PRACTICES OF CRISIS
COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT OF OROMIA COMMUNICATION
BUREAU SINCE 2022-2023.***

BY

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***ATHESIS SUBMITTED TO GRADUATE SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND
COMMUNICATION IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN PUBLIC RELATIONS AND STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATION.***

June, 2024

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

DECLARATION

I, Temesgen Assefa Gerbaba, declare that the thesis titled Investigation into Trends and Practices of Crisis Communication Management of Oromia Communication Bureau Since 2022-2023 and submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Public Relations and Strategic Communication is my original work. I completed it with the assistance and advice of my adviser. And it wasn't offered at any other university; all sources used in this thesis have been acknowledged.

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ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATION

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SIGNED BY THE EXAMINING COMMITTEE

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Chair man _____	_____	_____

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my mother, Sichale Gobena. Thank you for everything you do and sacrifice. I completed my thesis with courage and blessings.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First of all, I would like to thank Almighty God for everything He has done for me throughout my studies.

I am very grateful to my advisor, Anteneh Tsegaye (Ph.D.), whose guidance and support over the years helped me to obtain my master's degree. His confidence, kind words and helpfulness were inspiring. His quick response to my questions is excellent. Overall, his words of wisdom and leadership united this work.

I would also like to thank the faculty and staff of Addis Ababa University Department of journalism and Communication for sharing their knowledge. I am very grateful to the management and public relation experts of Oromia Communication bureau for their willingness to conduct this research. I would also like to thank Alemayew G. , Kasahun T., Abebe Y., and management of oromia urban planning institute for their assistance while, I was in need.

ABSTRACT

Crisis communication managed by Public Relations involves the exchange of information between organizations and constituents before, during and after a crisis. The development of information and communication technology has changed in this field making it more complex. The internet poses both challenges and advantages with social media enabling fast effective communication but also allowing the rapid spread of negative information. The purpose of this study is to conduct investigation in to trends and practices of crisis communication management of Oromia Communication Bureau from 2022 to 2023. The study makes use of qualitative research methodology. The research data were gathered using semi-structured in-depth interviews and focus group discussion analysis. In this study Purposive sampling is used to select responders. Three high officials, six key directorates and six public relations experts from Oromia Communication Bureau have took part in an in-depth interview and focus group discussion. The findings revealed that the bureau has made strides in formulating crisis communication plans and standards, utilizing different communication channels and establishing partnerships with media. The researcher concludes, there is need for improvement in crisis response, communication tactics, community engagement and monitoring and evaluation. By following the conclusions of this study Oromia Communication Bureau can improve its ability to respond future crisis with agility, transparency and empathy preserving public trust and creating resilience during Crisis. The researcher recommends that the bureau can improve crisis communication management trends and practices by strengthening crisis preparedness through regular risk assessment and training public relation experts, developing more targeted and inclusive communication strategies and establishing strong monitoring and evaluation crisis communication management system.

Keywords: *Crisis communication management, Oromia Communication Bureau, trends practices and investigation.*

Table of Contents

	Page
Dedication	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
Abstract	v
List Of Table	x
CHAPTER ONE	1
1. Introduction.....	1
1.1 Background Of The Study.....	1
1.2 Statement Of The Problem.....	3
1.3 Research Objectives	5
1.3.1 General Objectives.....	5
1.3.2 Specific Objectives.....	5
1.5 Significance Of The Study	5
1.6 Scope Of The Study	6
1.7 Limitation Of The Study	6
1.8 Organization Of The Study	6
CHAPTER TWO.....	7
2. Review Of Related Literature And Theoretical Frame Works	7
2. 1 Definition Of Crisis.....	7
2. 2 Stages Of Crisis.....	8
2.3 Types Of Crisis	10
2.5 Communication And Crisis Communication.....	11
2.5.1 Communication.....	11
2.7 Factors Affecting Crisis Communication	14
2.8 Communication Strategy During Crisis	14
2.9 Crisis Communication Management.....	16

2.11 Crisis Communications Plan	17
2.12 Organizational Crisis Communication.....	18
2. 13 Role Of Public Relations During Crisis.....	19
2.14 Public Relations Theories And Models During Crisis.....	20
2.14 .1 Public Relations Theory	20
2.14 .2 Public Relations Model	20
2.14.2.1 Press Agency Public Relations Model	21
2. 14. 2. 2 Public Information Public Relations Model	21
2.14.2. 3 Two-Way Asymmetrical Public Relations Model.....	22
2.14.2.4 Two-Way Symmetrical Public Relations Model.....	23
2.14.2.4.1 Characteristics Of Two-Way Symmetrical Public Relations.....	24
2.15 Public Relations Tools During Crisis.....	25
2.16 Public Relations Practice During Crisis.....	26
2.17 Working With Media During Crisis.....	27
2.18 Working With Social Media During Crisis.....	27
2. 19 Theoretical Framework	29
2. 19.1 Crisis Communication Theories	29
2. 19. 2 Situational Crisis Communication Theories.....	29
2.19.3 Response Strategies Of Situational Crisis Communication Theory.....	30
2.19.4 Image Restoration Theory	30
2.19.5 Renewal Theory.....	30
2.19.6 Chaos Theory	31
2.19.7 System Theory.....	31
2.19.8 Decision Theory	31
2.19.9 Diffusion Theory	32
2.20. Conceptual Framework	32

2.20.1 Crisis Communication Theory.....	33
2.20.2 Organizational Communication Strategies	34
2.20.4 Stakeholder Engagement Models	34
2.20.5 Technological Tools And Social Media	35
CHAPTER THREE	36
Research Methodology	36
3.1 Chapter Review	36
3.2 Research Approach And Design	36
3.3 Population And Sampling Techniques	37
3.4.1 In-Depth Interview	39
3.4.2 Focus Group Discussion.....	40
3.5 Data Analysis Tools	40
3.6 Reliability And Validity	41
3.7 Ethical Considerations.....	41
CHAPTER FOUR.....	42
Findings And Analysis.....	42
4. Overview.....	42
4.1 Findings.....	43
4.2. Demographic Discussion Of Interviews And Focus Group Discussion.	44
4.2.1. Backgrounds Of The Interview Respondents	44
4.2.2. Backgrounds Of The Focus Group Respondents	45
4.3 Analysis Of Data Obtained From Interview And Focus Group Discussion.....	46
4.3.1 Trends Used In Dealing With Crisis Communication Management.	46
4.3.2 Strategies During Crisis Communication Management.	48
4.3.2.1 Tools During Crisis Communication Management.	50
4.3.4 Communication Plans In Dealing With Crisis Communication Management..	53

4.3.5 Approaches In Dealing With Crisis Communication Management.	55
CHAPTER FIVE	57
Summary, Conclusion And Recommendations.	57
5.1 Summary Of Major Findings	57
5.2 Conclusions	60
5.3 Recommendation.....	62
REFERENNCES	65
Appendix I	lxix
Appendix II	lxxi

List of Table

Table 4.1.1	Demographic, Summary of the Interview respondent.	53
Table 4.1.2	Demographic Summary of the Focus group respondent.	54

CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION.

This chapter introduces the study titled Investigation in to Trends and Practices of Crisis Communication Management of Oromia Communication Bureau from 2022 to 2023. The research problem, research objectives, research questions, significance of the research, scope of the research, limitations of the research and research organization are included in this chapter.

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Public organizations that want to accomplish their tasks properly must learn how to communicate successfully with their diverse audiences. This can help save lives reduce casualties mobilize local residents to self-protect and make informed decisions based on reliable up to date information and foster social resilience which is the foundation of a society's ability to respond a crisis. Crisis communication refers to how an organization responds to a problem or incident that affects its reputation.

A crisis communication strategy raises awareness of the threat its implications for the organization and any specific steps that must be implemented to mitigate it. Crisis communication must be planned and practiced in a systematic manner since crisis are systematic in their form and impact. On the other hand, it is impossible to plan for every probable disaster (Mitroff et al. 2006).

With characteristics such as immediacy, ubiquity and availability it has huge repercussions, particularly in the sphere of crisis communications and has significantly altered the corporate communication environment in recent years. A social media platform allows anyone with an internet connection to communicate with thousands if not millions of people from all over the world (Argenti, 2006).

Oromia Communication Bureau is a government organization responsible for managing communication and public relations efforts on behalf of Ethiopia's Oromia Regional State, the country's largest region in terms of population and size. The bureaus objective is to effectively communicate the regional government's policies, programs and projects to the public while also providing a channel for public feedback and interaction.

Oromia Regional State Communication Bureau is currently organized into two branches in head offices, 21 zonal administrations, 19 city governments and 327 districts with in the region. The bureau is made up of six key directorates and four supportive directorates which are further divided into seven departments: publications, documentary film production, public opinion gathering and analysis, media monitoring, social media, government statement preparation and media relations and capacity building.

Oromia regional state Communication Bureau is responsible for information dissemination, media relations, public engagement, crisis communication, strategic communication planning, digital communication, collaboration and coordination and the promotion of cultural diversity and inclusion.

In general, Oromia Regional State Communication Bureau is responsible for managing and organizing regional communication issues with a focus on transparency, public engagement, crisis communication, strategic planning and stakeholder collaboration. By effectively carrying out its mission the bureau helps to build trust, improve governance processes and encourage effective communication practices in the region.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.

Crisis communication management ideas and methods are essential for navigating and addressing difficulties in communication and public relations. Professionals who effectively apply these theories and strategies can mitigate the impacts of a crisis re-establish trust and improve their organization's image.

Developing and emerging countries with clear visions and efficient strategies for the future are often better prepared to deal with any unexpected crisis. Their plans consider all situations and develop the proactive strategies required to deal with each one (Al-Jenaibi, 2018).

Oromia Communication Bureau faces a number of challenges as it deals with the region's ongoing crisis. These problems include political sensitivities, limited resources and crisis coordination during natural crisis phenomena. Coordinating communication among many government departments, local governments and other stakeholders during several crisis can be logistically difficult. Consistency in communications can be difficult especially in constantly evolving situations.

Several organizations and governments have successfully employed Crisis Communication Management strategies to address various types of crisis. Researchers examined these cases to better understand the role of communication strategies in crisis communication management and mitigation.

Here are a few examples of published research that show successful developments of Crisis Communication Management. One of the study is Crisis Communication: A case study of the Integrated Master Plan Crisis in Oromia regional state by Minale Gebeyehu(2018), crisis communication as a Strategy to Protect Reputation: The case of Mirinda, by Fitsum Zerue, (2018), communication strategies of Ethiopian Airlines group: A case study of flight 302 accident conducted by Dawit Temesgen (2019) and An Assessment of Crisis Communication Practices and Challenges: the Case of Federal Police Commission by Jaylan Abde (2020).

Minale Gebeyehu (2018) discovered in her research different media were used during the crisis period organizational culture influenced crisis management and communication and the role of stakeholders was primarily considered from an organization's perspective with stakeholders viewed solely as recipients of organizational messages.

Fitsum Zerue (2018) also discovered in his study Mirinda Company has yet to follow a scientific method of strategic crisis communication to defend its brand and minimize the liability for the disaster. Dawit Temesgen (2019) discovered the airline's communication practitioners and managers do not collaborate with the airline's executives that corporate communication practitioners do not receive regular trainings on crisis communication and management the airline used mortification, bolstering and compensation strategies to respond the crisis and that the post-crisis phase emerged as an opportunity for the airline.

Jaylan Abde(2020) In his investigation reveals Federal Police Commission lacks a crisis communication strategy to use during crucial crisis. Furthermore, the results show that the federal police commission did not adequately interact and consult with its active stakeholders and public opinion was not appropriately controlled through the establishment of media monitoring and public opinion framework.

There is lack of in-depth analysis on the specific crisis communication strategies employed by the Oromia Communication Bureau, as well as a limited understanding of the effectiveness of these strategies in managing and resolving crises within the organization. Additionally, there is a lack of comprehensive studies that focus specifically on crisis communication management in government communication bureaus in Ethiopia, particularly within the Oromia region. This study aims to fill this gap by providing a detailed examination of the crisis communication practices within Oromia Communication Bureau and evaluating their impact on crisis resolution and organizational reputation.

As a result, this study attempts to investigate what are the key trends and practices in crisis communication management employed by Oromia Communication Bureau since 2022-2023.

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1.3.1 GENERAL OBJECTIVES.

The general objective of this study is to examine and comprehend trends, practices and challenges faced in Oromia Communication Bureau's crisis communication management.

1.3.2 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES.

- To identify the bureau's crisis communication management trends
- To investigate the bureau's crisis communication management strategies and tools
- To review the bureau's challenges in crisis communication management

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS.

The study provides responses to the following basic questions.

1. What are the bureau's trends in crisis communication management?
2. What strategies and tools has the bureau used for crisis communication management?
3. What Challenges has the bureau faced in crisis communication management?

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The investigation into trends and practices of crisis communication management of Oromia Communication Bureau since 2022-2023 is important for regional peace and security. By analysing the Bureau's communication strategies and approaches during a crisis, this study hopes to provide practical insights that can have a meaningful impact on crisis response and dispute resolution efforts.

This, study also shining light on the best practices and problems experienced by Oromia Communication Bureau in crisis communication management help to enhance strategic decision-making, policy formulation and capacity-building activities targeted at improving regional peace and stability.

The study's practical contributions include the potential to improve the crisis communication capacities of Oromia Communication Bureau, thereby improving peacekeeping efforts and promoting regional stability. By identifying effective crisis communication trends and practices the study enable the Bureau to fine-tune its tactics strengthen response mechanisms and connect with stakeholders more effectively during crisis. Enhanced communication tactics can help to disseminate information more quickly and accurately establish trust among

communities and de-escalate tensions all of which contribute to conflict resolution and promote long-term peace and stability.

Furthermore, the study's findings can be used as a valuable resource by policymakers, practitioners and stakeholders involved in peace building projects to guide the creation of communication strategies that priorities transparency, accountability and conversation in conflict-affected settings. The findings can also serve as a basis for other studies seeking ground-level information regarding the study's target regional bureaus and public relations practitioners.

1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope this study is to investigate the trends and practices of crisis communication management of Oromia Communication Bureau from 2022 to 2023. This could include investigating trends, practices, tools, challenges, crisis communication plans, crisis communication strategies and crisis communication approaches in order to convey information and manage public perception during a crisis. This study used data acquired through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions from high officials, key directorates, and public relations practitioners of Oromia Communication Bureau.

1.7 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Finding appropriate resources, particularly major local resources for the study is difficult at national or regional level, because; no relevant studies have been conducted on the study area till now. The study constrained itself on exploring trends and practices of Oromia Communication Bureau in dealing with Crisis Communication management since 2022-2023 at regional Bureau level only.

1.8 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

This study has five chapters. The first chapter includes the introduction, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research question, significance of the research, scope of the research and limitation of the study. The second chapter includes a literature review as well as theoretical and conceptual frameworks. The methodology section is in the third chapter, Chapter four deals with the analysis and discussion and the study's summary of findings, conclusion and recommendation are presented in chapter five.

CHAPTER TWO

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

This chapter consists of a literature review section that aims to explore problem-solving and coping strategies offered by the literature. It provides an effective and efficient way to investigate crisis communication management of Oromia Communications bureau when interacting with the community and stakeholders in times of crisis.

2. 1 DEFINITION OF CRISIS

Crisis is defined as an unexpected event that disrupts the basic goals of the organization and requires decisions to be made in a short time. A crisis is something that arises suddenly and must be resolved immediately. It disrupts normal functioning and causes distrust and fear.

It is an increasingly important social, political, economic and environmental issue that creates more change than anything else. The crisis is serious and has the potential to cause further damage through systemic disruption. But they can be a source of good growth and rebirth. They have the ability to rapidly reorganize demographic structures and demographic changes that alter ecosystems, disrupt economic security and distort popular beliefs. The problem can only affect the reputation of the organization if the suspect is responsible for the crisis and stakeholders decide whether it is wrong (Benoit 1997).

Crisis is defined as the perception of problems that hinder the wishes of stakeholders and affect the functioning of the organization. Stakeholders' perception of events is important in determining whether the organization is in crisis or not. Many scholars working in the field of crisis and crisis management organizations agree on the knowledge and ability to prepare or accept that no organization is immune to global crisis (Coombs and Holladay, 2010).

Therefore, different views on the problem focus on the importance of communication problems for effective crisis management while very powerful media, financial and other deceptive global systems and artificial reality increase the pressure on the crisis in different ways.

2.2 STAGES OF CRISIS

Coombs (2010) classified the Crisis management and communication process into three stages: pre-crisis, crisis and post-crisis each with a number of more particular sub stages this phase's aid in the development of successful crisis communication strategies to avoid negative consequences and promote positive outcomes for a company or organization.

PRE-CRISIS STAGE

Solving the problem is quite difficult. For this reason, it is necessary to plan to prevent crisis to be prepared for them and to reduce the risks detected that they may cause. The pre-crisis phase involves developing a problem management strategy, selecting and training a team to solve the problem and conducting an exercise with the team to review the problem-solving plan. The problem-solving process, problem-solving team, spokesperson, pre-programmed messages, communication channels and responses to problems must exist before the crisis occurs.

Watching the news and the internet for potential difficulties can help us deal with issues and disasters more effectively. Risk management is an important tool for organizations to use in crisis communication in order to mitigate the effects of the disaster. Plans are developed prior to a catastrophe. Using risk and crisis management practices the organization strives to prevent or be prepared for any crisis.

ACUTE-CRISIS STAGE

In times of crisis, public relations are important. During a crisis the public and the media are interested in the cause of the problem. Therefore, it is important for public relations professionals to continue educating them about the possible reasons for the intervention steps implemented to solve this problem (Coombs, 2006)

A crisis situation describes what management does and says when a serious crisis occurs. It also solves communication problems during a crisis. To provide accurate information the organization must be able to identify the incident as a problem. At this stage the PR professional needs to respond to stakeholders to remove some of the barriers with a quick response that shows the organization is working and leading.

The crisis stage is also called the acute stage and is defined as the trigger and impact of which the organization works and communicates to solve the crisis. The end of the problem is the

time to learn and solve. One of the main limitations of functional methods is their inability to accurately determine when a phase begins and ends (Thiessen, 2008).

During a crisis a corporation feels that communicating promptly and effectively can aid the situation and protect their reputation and financial losses. Companies must respond quickly to concerns especially within the first hour to avoid third parties from altering the story and harming their brand. Ethical factors such as the spokesman's candor and integrity is crucial during a crisis (Barton, 2002).

POST-CRISIS STAGE

This stage of crisis management focuses on what happens after the incident. It occurs when the crisis has been contained and the organization is attempting to recover its reputation and or losses occur after the crisis has been resolved. Victims are assisted and stakeholder reaction communication is implemented. Other essential factors to consider are repairing trust and learning from the catastrophe. Companies can evaluate their performance and learn from mistakes to improve in the future.

At this stage, the troubleshooting team investigates why the problem occurred. At this point, organizations often worry about the need and responsibility of the PR department to monitor communication and issue resolution. Additionally, updates on the recovery process are provided and appropriate corrective actions are implemented. At this stage the organization returns to normal activities focusing on the problem. Partners must have access to data from previous commitments. Details regarding the nature of the returned products should also be communicated to the relevant parties. It is also important to incorporate lessons learned from the crisis into organizations' crisis management strategies.

Crisis occurs in five stages: detection, prevention, preparation, containment, recovery and learning. Crisis detection occurs when a company's system immediately alerts key personnel to the presence of a crisis. An organization gains a significant advantage if it discovers an issue before the general public particularly the news media does. This gives the organization adequate time to bring in spokespersons, plan a press conference, notify the crisis team and issue a statement (Fearn-Banks 2009).

2.3 TYPES OF CRISIS

Mitroff and Anagnos (2001) classify crisis as economic, informational, physical, labour, popular activities, psychopathic activities and natural disasters. They believe it helps organizations develop strategies to solve at least one problem in the organization thereby improving organizations' ability to solve problems in that organization.

Natural disasters, terrorist attacks, explosions and technological disasters are unexpected crisis situations. The smouldering problem often stems from management issues with the quality of reporting or consumer criticism of the process. On the other hand, some types of crisis are easy to understand and apply, but do not exhibit the usual complexity. Multiple species on the other hand, are more complex and less likely to exist (James and Wooten, 2005).

2.4 EFFECT OF CRISIS

A crisis can produce or contribute to both positive and negative effects. The essential idea is that if the crisis is managed well it can benefit the organization or business such as improving its reputation. In the interim if things are not handled effectively the organization or business will be in a worse position than before and may go bankrupt. Not all crises are dreadful or destructive events. It could be a substantial change that is good or bad.

A crisis can have one of three possible outcomes: the organization is bankrupted, destroyed, may face legal action and key executives may face criminal charges; the organization survives but suffers reputation and financial hardship; or after a hard-fought fight valiant effort the organization can regain public support and possibly improve its reputation. Crisis is not necessarily awful. It could be a significant change that has both positive and negative consequences. If a crisis is not managed properly it can damage an organization's reputation. (Fearn-Banks 2009)

2.5 COMMUNICATION AND CRISIS COMMUNICATION

2.5.1 COMMUNICATION

Communication is derived from the Latin words *com* and *cum* which means to build a community, commonality or to share. Communication is the cornerstone of all we do and an essential part of our existence. Man cannot acquire knowledge if he does not communicate. Communication is described as the process of conveying thoughts, ideas, facts and feelings and so on from one individual to another.

Communication is essential to human survival without it life would be meaningless and human connection is impossible. Communication is a tool for social interaction it allows us to understand ourselves maintains contact with others and grasps events. It is a tool for gaining, exercising and keeping power as well as building, expanding and maintaining connections.

Wherever there is a man communication must occur and it must be planned. It must be organized to be effective and it encourages cooperation and understanding. It is critical to recognize that the purpose of any organization or country is to ensure that all parties involved both external and internal have a better understanding of the institutions policies and strategy (Touitou, et al. 2016).

2.5 .2 CRISIS COMMUNICATION

Crisis communication is a set of communication techniques and activities intended to promote safety and organizational stability when normal operations are disturbed by a crisis. Crisis communication refers to any communication that takes place outside of an individual's normal routines. This type of communication occurs in a number of situations including a legal dispute, theft, accident, fire, flood, hurricane or other natural disaster.

A crisis can generate unfavourable exposure from the media and outside parties such as shareholders, politicians and environmental activists. If not handled properly crisis can disrupt a company's usual operations and ultimately to its demise (Regester, 2008).

Communication is the foundation of crisis management. Crisis communication is critical for managing public relations and maintaining an organization's reputation during a crisis. It evaluates an organization's ability to effectively respond to and interact with groups at risk of communication breakdown (Doorley J. & Garcia, H. F. 2015).

Crisis communication refers to a variety of techniques used to manage crisis and mitigate actual damage. The goal is to protect the company its employees and the industry by preventing or mitigating the negative impacts of the recent crisis. Crisis communication discusses how to cope with a crisis as well as how to avoid one from occurring and how to prepare for it. Crisis communication is a method for dealing with problems that arise. When things go wrong, it's part of the process to make them better. It entails establishing strategies to shield the organization and or its stakeholders from the negative repercussions of the crisis (Coombs 2007; 2010)

The most crucial thing during a crisis is to communicate clearly. Who we communicate with, what we talk about and how frequently we talk all influence how quickly we can leave an uncomfortable situation without causing too much harm. PR professionals must be included on any organization's crisis management teams and personnel with specialized expertise should be in charge of handling communications during a crisis. Crisis communication is a distinct branch of public relations within a firm (Fearn-Banks, 2002).

In a crisis effective communication is critical to calming individuals and preventing negative public reactions. When communicating during a crisis public institutions may behave inappropriately in order to benefit themselves rather than others.

A company's bad reputation as a result of previous troubles and scandals can increase its chances of getting into trouble again. The three groups that determine whether an organization is accountable for a crisis are the victim group, the inadvertent group and the deliberate group. When a crisis occurs, people's lives and the reputation of a corporation or organization may be jeopardized. The ability to communicate effectively with people who have a stake in the event may determine if lives are saved and the organization grows with its high notoriety good reputation in propriety (Reynolds 2005).

The most crucial aspect of crisis communication is how we utilize communication to manage information and its meaning during a crisis. Good communication is critical while dealing with crisis. The purpose of crisis communication is to maintain a positive image or restore a damaged image among stakeholders and influence public perceptions of the organization (Coombs 2015).

During a crisis it is critical for a firm to communicate with its stakeholders about how it is handling the situation. When we talk about crisis communication we're talking about how to convey information to solve a problem. Organizations must exercise caution and prepare to prevent or mitigate crisis. Finding a solution is equally crucial as persuading stakeholders that we can handle the current situation.

Crisis communication differs from other types of communication in that it requires greater adaptability and trustworthiness. Furthermore, crisis communicators must have access to broader knowledge bases and enough information about the external environment to support both senders and recipients of crisis communication (Combs, 2006).

Crisis communication is the dialogue between an organisation and its audience before, during, and after a terrible incident. The discourse includes ideas and methods aimed at minimizing damage to the organization's reputation. One purpose of crisis communication is to impact key stakeholders' thoughts and feelings as well as their knowledge and actions. Controlling the communication agenda and not allowing media enemies or rumours to define a company's standing is critical (Fearn-Banks 2007).

2.6 PRINCIPLES OF CRISIS COMMUNICATION

Effective crisis communication principles are divided into six criteria (Tucker WT, Ferson S. 2008).

Be First: Crisis must be dealt with swiftly. Getting information out quickly is critical. People prefer to receive their knowledge from the first source they come across.

Be Right: Being accurate builds trust in an organization. Accuracy determines credibility. Information can describe what we know, what we don't know and what we're doing to learn more.

Be Credible: In times of crisis, it's important to always be honest and tell the truth.

Express Empathy: Problems cause pain and we must recognize and discuss the people who are suffering. Understanding how others feel and the challenges they face helps to build a good relationship and trust between them.

Promote Action: Providing people with meaningful activities can assist to decrease tension, restore order and provide a sense of control.

Show Respect: When communicating with people who are feeling vulnerable it is critical to be nice and polite. Polite communication allows people to work together and get along.

2.7 FACTORS AFFECTING CRISIS COMMUNICATION

There are seven things that affect a crisis. These include pre-crisis preparation, organizational perspective, stakeholder perception, uncertainty, stress, involved groups and decision-making (Ray 1999).

Pre-crisis planning is the way a corporation deals with a crisis and the severity of the crisis depends on how effectively they planned for it in advance. Organizational perception is the degree to which decision makers are certain or uncertain about something. Stakeholder perception refers to people's opinions about how trustworthy an organization is which can influence how effective they believe the organization's reaction is in a given situation. Uncertainty or not understanding what's going on is a major component of a crisis and can influence how the crisis unfolds; the crisis produces a great deal of tension because individuals are concerned about losing their lives, money and reputation.

During a crisis stress can make it difficult for managers to communicate and handle it efficiently. Involved groups: Several individuals and groups could be engaged. Persons who have been injured, persons in control of the government, people chosen to lead, politicians and crisis management teams must all learn to change and interact with one another. Decision making is a scenario or setting in which there are few possibilities and immediate decisions must be made.

2.8 COMMUNICATION STRATEGY DURING CRISIS

A communication strategy must be selected from among a number of communication techniques based on the individual conditions. In other words strategic communication revolves mostly around message design. So, strategic communication is all about generating messages.

During crisis public relations professionals must carefully craft a message to convey to the media. The purpose is to communicate knowledge in a way that will benefit the organization. When developing a statement during a crisis; organizations typically have five options: make amends, evoke compassion, ingratiate the organization with its stakeholders, hedge responsibility and deny responsibility (Ray 1999).

Deny responsibility; refuse to accept any connection or culpability for causing something. There are four ways in which people avoid accepting responsibility: A direct denial that they did not do it, Expansion of denial or making the denial bigger Redirecting responsibility

blaming others or acting aggressively. A direct denial is a clear rejection of responsibility for the incident. Expansion denial occurs when an organization claims it is not responsible for the incident and provides explanations why. To avoid culpability, blame someone or something else. When the accuser erroneously allocates responsibility utilize confrontational techniques such as confronting or battling them.

Hedge responsibility: It may be wiser to avoid accepting blame for what occurred. Avoiding accountability allows the organization to keep out of the problem or avoid accepting blame. People evade accountability in four ways: creating excuses, bragging about getting away, pretending not to know and denying proof.

An organization can explain why something happened or why they did something. Scrape-goading allows the organization to transfer the major liability to another entity. An organization may claim they didn't know because they lacked sufficient information about the circumstance. The organization may be able to submit conflicting arguments or facts to reduce accountability.

Ingratiation: Intended to reduce negative opinions of the corporation and attract stakeholders to the organization. Focusing on the positive aspects is one technique to win people over or ingratiate you.

Organization needs to identify and promote its strengths. The second strategy is to foster a feeling of identity among the company's stakeholders. Organizations desire to be identified with institutions, ideologies or symbols that enjoy widespread popular support. A third technique involves positively recognizing and acknowledging others. Giving someone a compliment typically makes them feel good and it may also make others think positively of the organization.

Make amends: Organizations may choose to apologies in order to ask forgiveness for what has occurred. Companies may provide victims money or other benefits in order to make them feel better about the company. Finally, by rectifying the matter the organization exhibits compassion and regret over what went wrong. Negative feelings can be reduced if an organization delivers good service to crisis victims.

Elicit sympathy: The third strategic option is to make people feel sorry for us or express sympathy. This method creates the impression that the organization did nothing wrong. Sympathetic stakeholders are less judgmental and the organization is more likely to be seen favourably. Expressing regret, remorse or sadness and asking for forgiveness is one way to get forgiven. If a company apologizes for a mistake people are more likely to forgive them and their negative attitudes towards the situation disappear.

Effective communication prior to, during and following a crisis can help stakeholders sympathize with the organization and offer aid during a difficult time. Crisis communications refers to the discourse that takes place between an organization and the broader public before, during and after a crisis event.

2.9 CRISIS COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT

There is little doubt that poor communication frequently leads to a severe crisis whereas excellent communication mitigates the effects of a crisis event. Crisis communication is a type of public relations that seeks to protect and defend an individual corporation or organization whose reputation is being attacked.

Crisis communication management is a technique for minimizing or mitigating the damage that a crisis might cause to an organization and its stakeholders. Crisis management consists of three stages: pre-crisis, crisis response and post-crisis (Coombs 2007).

Crisis communication management is a professional approach to coping with all types of crises. It's one of the quick's of the public relations field. It encompasses crisis prevention appraisal and resolution. It comprises preventing and maybe mitigating the damage that a crisis might cause to an organization.

Crisis is systematic in nature and impact crisis communication must be approached and practiced in a systematic manner. On the other hand, planning for every possible disaster is impractical; however, any organization worth its salt should always have a crisis communication strategy in place (Mitroff et al, 2006).

This is crucial because any corporate body be it a corporation, a social organization or a government bureaucracy can only succeed if it operates in an orderly and conducive environment. Public relations as a management technique ensure that organizations many publics are in agreement (Coombs, 2007).

A multitude of challenges may occur in an organization especially as technology improves. This unknowingly increases the risk of failure, human mistake and crisis. As a result, an organization's ability to effectively manage a crisis through planning, preparation, training, and decisive action to protect its image is critical to ensuring its survival and sustenance during a crisis.

Crisis management is a method designed to prevent crisis and reduce the harm they cause to the organization and the people involved. Crisis management may be defined as a method of dealing with and the strategies that an organization takes to prevent or mitigate the damage caused by a crisis. The organization's approach to crisis entails incorporating crisis communication into various planning and operational methods. It arose from emergency preparedness and consists of four interrelated factors: prevention, preparation, response and revision (Coombs, 2015).

Crisis management is an on-going process that entails detecting and addressing elements associated to a potential or present crisis, as well as developing a solution. It refers to the activities that occur prior to, during and following a crisis.

Crisis Management comprises five stages: detection, prevention preparation, containment, recovery, and learning. Crisis detection occurs when a company's system immediately alerts key personnel to the presence of a crisis. An organization gains a significant advantage if it discovers an issue before the general public, particularly the news media, does. This gives the organization enough time to send in spokespersons, plan a news conference, notify the crisis team, and issue a statement. (Fearn-banks 2009)

2.10 CRISIS COMMUNICATION TEAM

Oromia communication bureau head of public relations, the leaders of important operational divisions, the head of human resources, the person in charge of the workers, the safety or security officer and the corporate counsel and lawyer may make up a crisis communication team depending on the size of the company. A communications manager should also be hired to oversee correspondence with investigators first responders and other parties requiring access to firm data. (Coombs, 2010)

2.11 CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Crisis planning entails anticipating and addressing any weaknesses in order to prevent or mitigate the negative effects of a crisis. It examines what we should do before a crisis occurs (Hough, 2005). It is critical to have a communication plan in place for when there is a crisis disaster or accident. Every organization regardless of size or type requires a current plan for communicating during a crisis. Every group large or small should have a strategy for communicating amid a crisis.

There are no exceptions to the premise that every firm regardless of size must have a crisis communication strategy; the differences are purely in scope. The following are the essential aspects of a crisis communication plan.

Crisis communication plan for public relations includes positioning a designated spokesperson, media policies and procedures, practicing tough questions, prepared statements, a sample news release, collateral materials, key audiences, a contact log, speaker presentations and handling media interviews (Fink, 2000).

A crisis communication plan is critical for a corporation to recover and continue operations. The crisis communication plan delivers the correct message to the right people at the right time. It is essential for every organization large or small and enables everyone involved in a crisis to collaborate even if they are unable to think clearly due to shock or emotional distress.

2.12 ORGANIZATIONAL CRISIS COMMUNICATION.

Crisis communication in corporations is a sub-set of the bigger interdisciplinary subject of crisis reaction and emergency which includes organizational communication, public relations and strategic communication, issues management, organizational rhetoric crisis management and management science. Chaos theory has been presented as a paradigm for explaining crisis and their impact on ordinary organizational operations (Seeger, 2002).

Organizational learning should be a continual and reflective process that involves soliciting, noting and documenting feedback in order to impact change. Scholars agree that failures particularly minor or near-misses are critical windows into the organization that can draw attention and generate important organizational action.

Safety is a primary concern in crisis communication theories it is frequently an underlying assumption with the emphasis shifting to other important organizational communication processes such as decision-making, risk awareness and management crisis and emergency response processes and outcomes and renewal processes.

Organizations not only understand learn from and communicate about risks but they also communicate during and after a crisis. Organizational rhetoric entails organizational representatives usually leaders developing messages about the organizations involvement in the crisis and it is especially studied in relation to crisis and post crisis communication.

Crisis leadership allows organizational communication specialists to manage meaning and practice communication skills during the course of a crisis. Crisis leadership leverages opportunities in organizational rhetoric image management, issue management and corporate social responsibility. Overall, during a crisis organizational leaders should speak openly, honestly, ethically, adaptably and specifically in order to foster collaboration and positive outcomes.

2. 13 ROLE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS DURING CRISIS

A public relations position is a multidisciplinary management function that helps to establish and maintain communication, understanding, acceptance and cooperation between an organization and its community. It entails managing problems or challenges. It helps management stay educated and responsive to the public reinforces management's commitment to serve the public interest and helps management remain aware of change and use it effectively (Harlow, 1976).

Public relations, is a form of communication used by companies, individuals and organizations to establish positive relationships with the public. Public relation professional develops and maintains a positive brand image and strong relationships with the target audience by developing a specific communications plan using media and other direct and indirect methods in times of crisis.

A crisis is a significant occurrence that can have a negative impact on a company or organization's reputation, administration, products or services. A crisis occurs when something goes wrong and makes it difficult for a corporation to continue operating. It may potentially put the company in risk. Public relations professionals deal with problems by either solving them or preventing them. (Fearn-banks 2009)

Public relations are a crucial management function that fosters communication, understanding, acceptance, and cooperation between an organization and its public, utilizing research and ethical communication to adapt to changes (Cutlip, S, Center, A, & Broom, G., 2006).

The black public relation refers to the use of negative tactics to make others look bad in public. It's similar to spreading false rumors or running malicious advertisements to make people think negatively about another person or company. These behaviors are unethical and unfair. In terms of compliance risk we can distinguish between lawful and criminal public relations efforts. It is incredibly effective, yet hazardous (J.Stiglitz, 2010).

2.14 PUBLIC RELATIONS THEORIES AND MODELS DURING CRISIS.

2.14 .1 PUBLIC RELATIONS THEORY

A theory predicts the relationship between events and actions and theories predict how things will work or happen. They provide information about the relationship between acts and occurrences. When considering how to build successful relationships with their consumer's public relations professionals consider a variety of factors.

On daily activity public relations practitioners use six types of theories: relationship theory, persuasion and social influence, mass communication, roles models and conflict resolution strategies. Systems theory evaluates links and structures in light of the larger picture; Situational theory asserts that situations define relationships. Theories of cognition and behaviour Social exchange theory predict group and individual behaviour based on perceived advantages and costs.

The social learning theory states that people use information processing to explain and anticipate behaviour. Theories of mass Communication according to the Uses and Gratifications Theory; people are active media consumers who pick media based on its pleasure to them. The framing theory suggests that humans use pre-existing interpretations to make sense of information and events. Agenda setting theory, the media content that people read, watch and listen to sets the agenda for societal conversation and interaction.

2.14 .2 PUBLIC RELATIONS MODEL

The term model refers to a set of principles and a behavioural schema used by public relations practitioners and departments to organize their initiatives and campaigns. The models are still used today because they effectively convey a certain message from the sender to the receiver which is the organization to its audience. There are four models of public relations to conceptualising and implementing crisis communication management. These four models are: press agency, public information, two-way asymmetrical and two-way symmetrical model.

2.14.2.1 PRESS AGENCY PUBLIC RELATIONS MODEL

The press agency model was the first public relations model. The press agency paradigm is used when a communication programme seeks good exposure particularly in the mass media. This paradigm of communication focuses on sending messages from the source to the receiver

The press agency model is one-way communication meaning that information flows from the sender to the recipient also known as source to receiver communication. People who send out messages rarely consider the responses, comments, points of view of others. Press agents strive to influence the actions of the public while having no aim of changing the behaviour of organisations. Public relations professionals who work for press agencies aim to gain media attention in any manner they can.

This model is essentially in one-way communication in which communications are transmitted from the source to a beneficiary with the explicit purpose of gaining favourable media attention. This model was characterised by manipulation exaggeration and dishonesty (Seitel 2011).

2. 14. 2. 2 PUBLIC INFORMATION PUBLIC RELATIONS MODEL

This model is another basic form of communication that aims to inform rather than impress. Public information model is one of the four types of public relations. This model revolves around partial truth and behaviour.

The purpose of this model is to disseminate information that has a legitimate purpose. Public relations specialist informs the public about the organization. Unlike the mass communication model, mass media focuses on the dissemination of information rather than the creation of information.

Although, the public information model was first used by governments, non-profit organizations and commercial organizations have built on for other companies such as media companies that use the public information model.

The main purpose of the public information model is to provide information to the public. However, some companies have unique goals. Product promotion, brand image etc. They want to promote their businesses, products and services by increasing their own business, products and services.

The main purpose of public relations is to provide information and this type of communication is one of the most important and is used by non-governmental organizations and organized companies. Oromia Communications Office uses public information systems to inform the public in critical situations as the public prepares to prevent emergencies

2.14.2. 3 TWO-WAY ASYMMETRICAL PUBLIC RELATIONS MODEL

This third model of public relations model is called the advertising and persuasion model. This is also the time when social science research such as factor sampling and opinion polls were introduced into general practice.

The two-way asymmetric model is a very complex technique because it uses research to convey a message that can persuade the target audience to take action in the way the organization wants. However, our findings suggest that two-way communication, such as press releases and public information are less effective than two-way asymmetrical.

With a one-size fits-all approach no research is done to determine how the public perceives a particular organization. But the organization does not change, but wants to control and persuade people to support and behave according to the wishes of the organization. An unstructured two-way approach, often called verification science uses social science methods to promote persuasive communication.

The method of the two illegal methods is the general method, which appears to be more complicated than the two previously mentioned models. The concept of two-way asymmetrical was developed as a result of the need to convey information which is considered part of communication. However, the purpose of receiving feedback was not to change the family's attitude; rather, the ideas would be used to provide other persuasive tools for the public to accept the interests of the organization (Seitel, 2011).

This model generally focuses on changing behaviour and attitude of the audience in the short term. According to this paradigm, communication is a two-way street where feedback comes from both the organization and the community. The main purpose of two-way asymmetrical is to help the organization present its message in a way that is acceptable to the public.

Some people do not believe in public relations practitioner because they believe that persuasion in today's propaganda is unreliable and unnecessary. Political campaigning for elections uses two different methods by which a candidate tries to persuade voters to support his or her views.

The primary purpose of two-way asymmetrical public relations methods is to verify the science, knowledge and structure of communication and the two methods are incomparable in-depth studies examining attitudes and conducted in competitive business organizations. Oromia Communications bureau uses two - way asymmetric public relations model to develop communities and stakeholders during crisis communication.

2.14.2.4 TWO-WAY SYMMETRICAL PUBLIC RELATIONS MODEL.

One four models of public relations is the two-way symmetrical model which is the best and ideal model among the other three types. The symmetric models advocates for free and equitable information sharing between an organization and its stakeholders based on mutual understanding. This public relations model will offer practitioners with a balanced interaction with the public to whom they will operate as a mediator for their organization. The term two-way symmetrical refers to a research-based public relations technique that employs communication to manage conflict and improve understanding with strategic audiences.

The two-way symmetrical model emphasizes discourse completeness and accuracy in two-way communication. The primary goal is to foster mutual understanding between organizations and the general public such that communication benefits both parties. It focuses on public relations activities that are constructed on the foundation of study and communication in order to resolve problems with public strategies through the transmission of public relations models. Some public relations departments use a two-way symmetrical model instead of a two-way asymmetrical model to carry out their public relations activities.

A successful two-way symmetrical model is to allow others to recognise the presence of self-interest in the material and persuade them while also using each other's mutual interests to persuade them. The two-way symmetrical model describes the interplay of two factors that influence each other in order to reach a balanced state in society.

2.14.2.4.1 CHARACTERISTICS OF TWO-WAY SYMMETRICAL PUBLIC RELATIONS.

It is a two-way street for the government and the media to preserve mutual cooperation and moderation. It means that the government should actively use mass media public resources to deliver government information that is true, fair and proactive in order to comprehend the ideal of mass media dissemination and value orientation and therefore sustain the relationship between the government and the public. The two-way symmetrical approach is utilized in the media to improve the interaction between the government and the people while also attaining societal peace. Two-way symmetrical is the greatest method to get the government and the media to work together to preserve the public interest.

According to James E Grunig, the two-way symmetrical model can contain the core path to persuasion. The central route to persuasion is to be persuaded by the arguments or message substance. To resolve dispute public relations professionals adopted the two-way symmetrical model. Furthermore, public relations improve organisational effectiveness by maintaining independence between the organisation and the public. For example, organizations manage independence by establishing long term effects and maintaining a solid relationship between the organization and the public.

Public relations professionals employ a two-way symmetrical approach to communicate their organizations shared mission. The two-way symmetrical model is most commonly used to maintain relationships between organizations and the general public, as well as to negotiate with them. It will make the organization more accountable to their clients and the public.

The two-way symmetrical model can even characterise the ethics of public relations as a process rather than an outcome. The two-way symmetrical paradigm increases organisational effectiveness. It demonstrates that the two-way symmetrical model is the most ethical approach to public relations, and the ethics of public relations, as well as the effectiveness of the models, will aid in the achievement of public relations objectives.

2.15 PUBLIC RELATIONS TOOLS DURING CRISIS.

Public relations are a purposeful, organized and continuous endeavour to build and maintain mutual understanding between an organization and its target audience (Jefkins 2006). According to the definitions provided above public relations is a deliberate, planned and persistent attempt to foster and sustain beneficial understanding between two individuals, organizations and all others who are impacted by that person or organization.

When dealing with crises, public relations professionals increasingly rely on a combination of digital technologies and offline media. Through various media, public relations experts can immediately notify and update stakeholders who support their goals for crisis resolution

Businesses and individuals utilize a variety of public relations tools and tactics to better understand and address client issues. A public relations team could create a website that contains all of the relevant information and resources on a certain issue. This centre might include press releases, bulletin boards, blogs and social media integration. These public relations tools and approaches assist the organization in solving difficulties, improving its reputation and managing crises. Using the correct public relations tactics can encourage individuals who have only purchased once to return.

Organizations use different ways crisis communication tools to provide information or convey facts during a crisis. The information may pertain to the company's future goals, its policies, its goods, a change in management or maybe even some past controversy that the business or a specific person want to move behind. This information is distributed with the public and media using many different ways like modern and old-fashioned public relation techniques. The public relations department is in responsibility of the organization's reputation among a diverse variety of audiences, including internal and external stakeholders. The following platforms can help with good public relations during crisis communication management.

Social networking site: Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Whatsapp have matured into valuable tools for communicating with and building strong relationships among business stakeholders during crisis communication management.

Newsletter: A newsletter is a periodic periodical that incorporates current events or the like either generally or on a specific theme, in which an organization publishes stories about its services or products and keeps the public aware of upcoming events.

Flyer: A flyer is a paper tract that captures the attention of the intended audience while also alerting them about new services and their benefits.

Brochure: is an effective communication tool that an organization may use to promote its services and provide relevant information about its activities.

Conference: This is an event that is typically arranged by an organization in order to interact with stakeholders have face-to-face communication disseminate information about on-going projects and if necessary answer questions about its activities.

Internet: This is a large network where information is acquired and exploited.

2.16 PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICE DURING CRISIS

The concept of modern public relations emerged when man realized that he could not remain in isolation and that one's standing in the eyes of right-thinking members of society was determined by how one thinks, says, or does things.

Public relations must focus its efforts on meeting the organizational goals established by the bureau administration. Furthermore, all bureau workers particularly those in leadership, management, and supervisory positions must participate in public relations activities coordinated by the public relations department.

In each given situation the fundamental function of public relations is to communicate with the organization's internal and external audiences. Internal publics are employees of the organization whereas external publics are those who are not directly related to the organization but may be impacted by its activities and policies (Seitel, 2004).

A media relation is a public relations position that engages directly with the press allowing the press to positively publicize the bureau in order to maintain community support and goodwill. An employee relations officer interacts with an organization's internal public and offers management, staff and stakeholders with current information regarding policies that influence their well-being and the institution's future. In contrast, community connections positively reinforce the bureau's message and help it build a positive image within the community in which it operates.

The goal of public relations is to change unfavourable attitudes, enhance favourable ones and convey information impartially in order to support an organization's objectives. It also hopes to foster positive attitudes towards the organization by spreading information (Fearn-banks, 2009).

Customers, employees, investors, regulators and the media all have a big impact on a company's reputation and its success is heavily influenced by its perception inside the commercial centre or other enterprises (Carney, A, &Jorden, A, 1993).

2.17 WORKING WITH MEDIA DURING CRISIS

Communication with media is also critical in avoiding major consequences and maintaining control of the crisis situation. During a crisis the conventional media; Radio, Television and Newspapers seek out all available information about the problem from the organization in order to cover a news story. Bad news is really beneficial to the media since it captures the attention of readers and audiences. A crisis is known to elicit criticism. Furthermore, all groups associated with the organization are concerned and any unfavourable attitude will drive the target audience to become aggressive and hostile accusing the organization of disinterest.

The mass media has become widespread due to rapidly growing technology and now reaches around 10% of the world's population allowing it to draw the public's attention to a disaster or crisis anywhere in the world more quickly than predicted. Thus, before information and news about any undesirable event or crisis reach these channels it is critical to quickly notify the target audience about all aspects.

The last thing an organization in crisis wants is to lose public support and provoke a reaction. Thus, planned communication is seen as the foundation of success in crisis management. Traditional mass media can be an excellent communication tool for providing immediate remedies when an organization faces a crisis. It can also be used to spread the word about the organization exchange information and conduct public opinion polls.

2.18 WORKING WITH SOCIAL MEDIA DURING CRISIS

The role of social media in crisis communication is evident. Organizations and government agencies have invested considerably in modern social media technologies such as Twitter and Facebook. Furthermore, many businesses have long recognized that a strong internet presence is necessary for competitiveness and effectiveness (Sell now and Seeger 2013).

Social media plays a crucial role in crisis communication since crisis information generation and transmission are required for crisis readiness, response and recovery. Communication is a unique and relevant addition to the field of crisis communication.

Digital communication technology such as social media and mobile devices has transformed the landscape of crisis communication. According to some scholars new technologies have repositioned those at the centre of the problem as active suppliers and senders of information rather than passive recipients. The rise of social media has changed how warnings are conveyed and current warning theories fail to account for this dynamic, interactive and highly networked style of communication.

Social media enables audiences and the general public to create warning messages as well as send and receive them. The general public gets its information about a crisis primarily from the media. A negative article was considered more noteworthy than a positive one while your happy news was deemed puffery by the media.

The information generated by the public and shared with others in the public sphere is especially important and the public is already using social media to share and modify information. The public's increased use of social media during crisis and disasters puts them at the centre of a crisis or disaster transmitting important information and responding to needs.

Social media has changed the communication environment during a disaster or crisis and it can be used to refute myths and rumours. As a result, citizen journalists are playing an increasingly important role in disaster media coverage and response.

Citizen journalists with their local and in-depth knowledge of local communities can provide comprehensive and detailed information about crisis affected areas for official first responders. It is possible to spread knowledge to the general population utilizing modern communication technology. Social media enables you to communicate with a big number of people through Twitter, Facebook, e-mail, blogs, websites and any other ways that have evolved.

Because of the increasing importance of social media in crisis communication crisis managers must be conscious of their social media choices and usage during a crisis and they must incorporate social media into their crisis communication efforts. In terms of social media management; having guidelines in place makes it easier for communications staff to decide whether or not comments are acceptable and having specific regulations to refer to when informing users that their comments will be deleted is beneficial.

Social media makes it difficult to communicate during a crisis because everyone may share news and information. The Internet allows consumers to easily get news on a variety of

devices and platforms. Many people utilize the Internet to accomplish this. Reading and sharing the news is becoming increasingly commonplace on the internet. (Landau 2011)

During times of crisis, social media can influence people's thoughts, actions, and overall reactions to information and events. During a crisis, social media is an essential communication tool. Social media can influence how people think and behave during a crisis. It's a crucial way for individuals to communicate in an emergency (Wang, Y. (2015).

Facebook, Twitter, and other social media platforms provided organizations with a means to reduce the effects of a disaster. Today, social media platforms such as Facebook assist organizations in spreading information to a large number of people while also soliciting views and reactions from the general public. This signifies that a corporation employs social media tools to communicate with customers all over the world.

2. 19 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2. 19.1 CRISIS COMMUNICATION THEORIES

A theory is used to make predictions and decisions about what will happen and how things are connected. It is a forecast derived on historical past events. Since we learn from our past experiences as well as those of others theory-based practice is ideal in most areas of life. Theorists have analysed the behaviours of many practitioners and condensed their research into brief hypotheses. Different theories suggest features and qualities of programs that can either stop crisis from happening or help organizations bounce back from crisis faster than organizations without those qualities.

Different communication concepts offer different solutions to communication problems. Messages and information form the basis of communication. Concepts used in crisis communication management include the following: situational communication theory, image retrieval theory, innovation theory, chaos theory, systems theory and stakeholder theory

2. 19. 2 SITUATIONAL CRISIS COMMUNICATION THEORIES

The basic idea of communication theory is that the organization should solve the problem based on how stakeholders view responsibility. Therefore, coping strategies need to be adapted according to the goals and conditions of the organization. Communication theory divides crisis into three parts: pre-crisis, problems and post-crisis. How issues are

communicated is determined by family-level issues and responsibilities. To correctly identify the risk, the problem must first be defined (Theresa, 2021).

2.19.3 RESPONSE STRATEGIES OF SITUATIONAL CRISIS COMMUNICATION THEORY.

According to situational communication theory, the organization will use the following tactics after learning the types of problems and threats. When an organization uses denial techniques, it is trying to move away from the problem. An organization using mitigation measures attempts to reduce the harm caused by an excusing problem. A restructuring program helps the organization restore its image and protect its reputation by accepting responsibility. Implementing strengthening measures can help an organization leverage its past performance and reputation to protect its image. It is important to find a balance between responsibility for solving problems and known risks.

2.19.4 IMAGE RESTORATION THEORY

Image restoration theory, focus on the communication that an organization employs to recover its image. The strategy places a major emphasis on post crisis measures for recovering organizational image. The theory's main weaknesses are its lack of relationship building with stakeholders and its asymmetrical components (Swart 2010).

A preventive and restorative crisis response strategy keep an organization safe; that an organizations image will be retained if its key stakeholders do not believe it is accountable with a focus on stakeholder perception and accountability levels (Benoit 1997).

2.19.5 RENEWAL THEORY

The renewal approach emphasizes responding to a problem in a timely and natural manner. Renewal theory varies from previous theories in that it focuses on growth rather than improving an organization's image and reputation. The renewal concept focuses on how the occurrence might be eliminated in new ways rather than rationalizing the origin of the issue.

To resolve a crisis renewal theory applies an organizational rejuvenation technique. Renewal theory contains four main characteristics. The renewal idea emphasizes the role of leaders in maximizing renewal. The renewal approach focuses on leaders characteristics and how they hope to inspire and serve as a bridge while communicating for renewal (Seeger, & Sell now, 2007)

2.19.6 CHAOS THEORY

The interdependence and complexity of an organizations structure make it more sensitive to crisis. An organization cannot forecast the outcome of a crisis but it can weather it by restructuring and self-organizing. Communication power must form in Chaos theory. As a result, communication can contribute to long term structural improvement which aid in crisis management by rejuvenating the organization and nurturing strong stakeholder relationships.

2.19.7 SYSTEM THEORY.

System is an organized collection of interconnected components each of which affects the others. System theory is divided into four parts: inputs incoming information problems which help to identify a crisis in a message as fast as possible, process which involves processing information and interpreting the message and outputs which refers to the organization's response.

System theory recognizes the necessity of communication in an organization as well as the feedback system which are both essential to the survival of any organization. System theory can help public relations practitioners understand the relationship between an organization and its stakeholders as well as the role of public relations inside an organization

System theory provides a framework within which modern organizations can increase their potential for success and survival in difficult times by operating as an open system gathering information from their environment and internal units which helps to improve their ability to adapt to change and respond effectively to crisis.

2.19.8 DECISION THEORY

The theory is useful in many management domains, especially in public relations management and crisis communication. The theory is particularly useful for managing concerns and attempting to avert/ stop crisis (Benoit, W.L. 1997).

Decisions are made under many settings. The outcome could be apparent, confusing, middle ground, or dangerous. According to the notion, the decision-maker should maximize or consider the possible benefits of each option. This is known as maximization. How useful is one option relative to others. Making the best decision benefits the organization the most. Many times, decision-makers fail to select the optimal option. Instead, they choose the one that is satisfactory. This is usually due to a lack of appropriate data to enable decision-making.

2.19.9 DIFFUSION THEORY

This idea, also known as the diffusion of innovations theory, examines how businesses and individuals adopt, embrace and accept new things by utilizing innovative products, processes, practices and behaviour's.

The diffusion theory follows a five-step process: awareness The idea is introduced to the body's interest; the body becomes interested in the idea; evaluation; the benefits and drawbacks are identified and considered; trial; the idea is put into practice, possibly for a short time to see how effective it is; adoption or failure to adopt; acceptance or rejection of the idea; change or innovation

2.19 .10 STAKEHOLDER THEORY

Stakeholder theory is an organizational management and corporate ethics theory that addresses morals and values in organizational management also analyses how an organization interacts with its internal and external environments.

Stake holder theory emphasizes the importance of organizations developing stakeholder competencies such as committing to monitor their interests, developing strategies to effectively deal with stakeholders and their concerns dividing and categorizing interests into manageable segments and ensuring that organizational functions address stakeholder needs.

In 1983, Edward Freeman created the stakeholder concept which covers almost everyone affected by the firm and its activities as opposed to stakeholder's which believes that stakeholders are the only ones the organization should care about.

As of Freeman, without stake holder the organization would not exist. This concept presents the corporate environment as an ecosystem of interconnected groups all of which must be examined and fulfilled in order for the organization to be healthy and successful in the long term during crisis time.

2.20. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework guiding the analysis of trends and practices in crisis communication management of Oromia Communication Bureaus from 2022 to 2023 encompasses a comprehensive array of central conceptual concepts and practical considerations. These foundational pillars form the bedrock upon which the study's investigations and interpretations rest. At its core the framework is predicated on robust

theoretical underpinnings that seek to elucidate the dynamics of crisis communication within the specific context of Oromia Communication Bureaus. By delving into the intricacies of strategic communication, stakeholder engagement, risk assessment and response strategies, this framework aims to provide a nuanced understanding of how crisis situations are navigated and addressed within the bureau landscape. Through a synthesis of theoretical models and empirical insights the study endeavour's to shed light on the efficiency of current crisis communication practices and to offer actionable recommendations for enhancing communication resilience and responsiveness in the face of adversity.

The conceptual framework serves as a comprehensive structure that integrates various theoretical perspectives related to crisis communication, organizational strategies, public relations, stakeholder engagement and technology. Its primary objective is to offer a systematic approach for examining the current trends and practices pertaining to crisis communication management of Oromia Communication Bureau. By amalgamating these pivotal themes the study aspires to present a comprehensive overview of the Bureau's endeavour's in crisis communication, highlighting their influence on crisis dynamics and the potential efficiency of employing effective communication strategies to bolster crisis communication management. This framework plays a crucial role in guiding the empirical analysis, facilitating in-depth discussions and formulating recommendations based on the study's findings, thereby making a valuable contribution to the broader dialogue surrounding crisis communication management.

2.20.1 CRISIS COMMUNICATION THEORY

Drawing from crisis communication theory which places a strong emphasis on the ever-evolving nature of crisis the conceptual framework of this study delves into the strategies employed by Oromia Communication Bureau in navigating and effectively managing crisis communication situations. Central to this approach is the recognition of the vital role played by proactive communication methods, swift response mechanisms and active engagement with stakeholders in the realm of crisis management. By exploring how these elements are integrated into the Bureau's practices, this research seeks to offer valuable insights into best practices for crisis communication management within context of Oromia communication Bureau.

2.20.2 ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

Utilizing organizational communication theory as a foundational framework the study delves into the intricate processes through which Oromia Communication Bureau formulates and executes its communication strategies. This analytical approach underscores the critical role played by both internal and external communication channels, crisis messaging protocols and the overarching organizational culture in shaping effective crisis communication strategies within the bureau. By centring on these key elements the research aims to elucidate how the interplay between internal dynamics and external factors influences the bureau's overall approach to crisis communication thereby shedding light on the nuanced strategies employed to navigate challenging situations and uphold the bureau's reputation amidst tumultuous circumstances.

2.20.3 PUBLIC RELATIONS CRISIS MANAGEMENT

The conceptual framework centred on public relations crisis management concepts provides a structured evaluation of the Bureau's crisis response strategies in relation to established public relations tactics including crisis planning, crisis messaging and crisis team coordination and reputation management. By employing this theoretical perspective an in-depth analysis is conducted to gauge the effectiveness of the Bureau's crisis communication efforts in mitigating potential risks and fostering trust among stakeholders. This methodical approach serves to identify areas of strength and areas needing improvement within the Bureau's crisis management practices, thereby guiding the development of more robust and proactive crisis communication strategies.

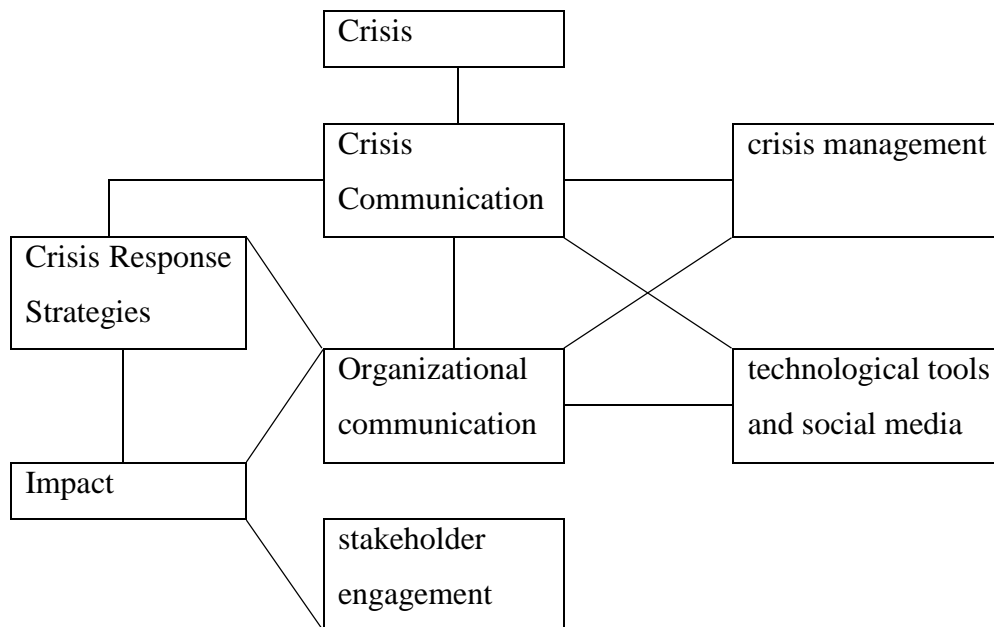
2.20.4 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT MODELS

The framework will be meticulously designed to incorporate various stakeholder engagement approaches paying particular attention to the strategies employed by Oromia Communication Bureau in interacting with a wide range of stakeholders, including government agencies, the media and local communities. This pivotal aspect will underscore the paramount importance of employing inclusive communication techniques in the realm of crisis communication management. By delving into how the Bureau effectively navigates communication with such diverse stakeholders the framework aims to underscore the vital role of inclusive practices in fostering transparent, effective and mutually beneficial collaborations during times of crisis. Furthermore, the emphasis on engaging with different sectors of society showcases a commitment to ensuring that crisis communication strategies are not only effective but also

resonate with the various groups impacted by the crisis, thus underlining the Bureau's dedication to holistic and empathetic communication practices.

2.20.5 TECHNOLOGICAL TOOLS AND SOCIAL MEDIA

The conceptual framework delves into the pivotal role of technology tools and various social media platforms in facilitating effective communication strategies of Oromia Communication Bureau. Through a comprehensive analysis, the framework sheds light on how the Bureau harnesses digital communication channels to optimize its crisis communication management practices. By leveraging these platforms, the Bureau demonstrates a proactive approach in monitoring public sentiment during times of crisis enabling swift responses and tailored interventions to address emerging issues. Moreover, the strategic use of social media channels not only ensures effective dissemination of critical information but also fosters robust audience engagement, creating a dynamic feedback loop that enhances the Bureau's crisis communication efforts.



CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 CHAPTER REVIEW

The initial stage in the research process involves the crucial task of determining and choosing the most suitable research design, approaches and methods that align with the objectives of the study. This careful selection lays the foundation for the subsequent empirical phases of the research. Consequently, within this chapter, a comprehensive examination is conducted to delineate the research design, approaches, methods, procedures and techniques that will be utilized to acquire the necessary empirical data essential to address the research questions as detailed in Chapter One. The exploration delves into an assessment of the prevalent paradigms, elucidating their fundamental principles and underlying assumptions which are then succeeded by a rationale for the specific research design chosen for this particular study. Subsequently a detailed discourse on the research approach and design is presented, encompassing considerations such as participant selection, the tools of data collection and methodologies for data analysis and interpretation. Furthermore, the critical aspects of ensuring the reliability and validity of the research findings as well as an examination of ethical considerations are thoroughly scrutinized in the concluding sections of this chapter.

3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH AND DESIGN

When exploring the trends and practices of crisis communication management of Oromia Communication Bureau from 2022 to 2023, it is imperative to employ a qualitative research design. This approach is deemed suitable for providing a thorough and nuanced comprehension of the Bureau's strategies for handling crisis. To conduct a comprehensive analysis of the subject matter the research design must encompass several key elements. Firstly, the qualitative research methodology should allow for in-depth interviews with key stakeholders of Oromia Communication Bureau, including communication specialists, high officials and key directorates. These interviews will provide valuable insights into the decision-making processes and actions taken during crisis situations.

Qualitative research methods play a crucial role in delving deep into the intricate facets of crisis communication practices and trends of Oromia Communication Bureau. By conducting interviews with key stakeholders, such as high officials and key directorates of the bureau, it becomes possible to acquire invaluable first-hand accounts of various aspects related to crisis

response strategies, the obstacles encountered and the perceived efficiency of communication endeavours. Furthermore, the incorporation of focus group discussions serves as a valuable tool for fostering comprehensive dialogues surrounding stakeholder viewpoints, communication preferences and the profound impact of crisis communication on community trust and resilience. Through these qualitative research approaches a nuanced understanding of crisis communication dynamics of Oromia Communication Bureau can be effectively attained, enabling strategic insights and informed decision-making processes.

Employing a longitudinal study approach proves to be highly advantageous when it comes to mapping out the progression of crisis communication trends and practices throughout the specified timeframe of 2022-2023. Through meticulous comparisons and analyses of communication tactics, messaging nuances and resultant consequences at various intervals, this methodology adeptly captures the shifts, recurrent themes and reactions to crisis that unfold. By doing so, it facilitates the discernment of enduring patterns, the on-going evaluation of efficiency across time and the appraisal of the Bureau's agility and responsiveness in navigating the realm of crisis communication. This comprehensive approach enables a thorough examination of the evolution of communication dynamics amidst crisis offering invaluable insights into the organization's adaptive prowess and the effectiveness of its crisis management strategies over the course of the designated period.

By examining real-life scenarios, communication tactics and outcomes, this design allows for a deep dive into the complexities of crisis communication management offering valuable lessons insights and actionable recommendations for improving future crisis responses in similar contexts.

3.3 POPULATION AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUES

The target demographic for this research encompasses high-ranking officials, key directorates and public relations experts from Oromia Communication Bureau. To facilitate a comprehensive understanding of crisis communication management a purposive sampling approach is employed. This method will involve selecting individuals who possess relevant expertise or practical involvement in handling crisis communication scenarios. Through conducting a series of in-depth interviews and focus group discussions insightful qualitative data will be collected to glean valuable insights and perspectives from participants. By engaging with individuals who have first-hand knowledge or direct engagement in crisis communication management, this study aims to generate rich and nuanced findings that can

contribute to the enhancement of strategic communication practices within the targeted bureau(Cress well 2014).

Purposive sampling is a strategic method employed in research to deliberately select participants who possess detailed information pertinent to the study's objectives. By specifically targeting individuals or groups that are deemed as information-rich sources, researchers aim to gather in-depth and insightful contributions that will effectively address the research questions at hand. This meticulous approach to participant selection increases the likelihood of obtaining valuable and relevant data, thereby enhancing the overall quality and reliability of the research findings. Through purposive sampling, researchers can focus on engaging individuals who can offer unique perspectives and meaningful insights ultimately enriching the depth and breadth of the study outcomes (Kothari 2014)

Purposive and convenience sampling strategies play a pivotal role in the process of gathering data from participants during both interview sessions and focus group discussions. Purposive sampling is a deliberate method employed by public relations practitioners to select participants who possess specific characteristics relevant to the research objectives. This strategic approach ensures that the chosen individuals are able to provide valuable insights and perspectives that are aligned with the study's focus. By incorporating both purposive and convenience sampling techniques in the recruitment process, researchers can effectively gather diverse data from participants across different stages of the interview and focus group discussions, thereby enhancing the depth and breadth of the research findings (Wilson2014)

3.4 DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

This study utilizes a combination of primary and secondary data sources to gather comprehensive information and insights on the subject matter at hand. The primary data is collected directly from authoritative figures including high-ranking officials, key Directorates of the bureau and experienced public relations professionals affiliated with the bureau. Through interviews, surveys and consultations with these individuals, valuable first-hand perspectives and exclusive insider knowledge are obtained (Bryman2012)

In addition to primary sources, secondary data sources serve as crucial references to complement and enrich the study. Recent publications, scholarly articles from reputable journals and official documents provide a broader context, historical background and comparative analysis to support the findings derived from the primary data.

3.4.1 IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW

In-depth interviews serve as a crucial qualitative research method aimed at obtaining comprehensive insights into the interviewee's behaviour, attitude and perspective. By delving deeply into a specific topic or issue this data collection strategy offers a wealth of detailed information that is invaluable for gaining a thorough understanding of the interviewee's thoughts, feelings and experiences. Through open-ended questions and engaging discussions, in-depth interviews facilitate the exploration of nuanced viewpoints and complex narratives, illuminating the depth and richness of the interviewee's responses. This approach enables researchers to uncover subtle nuances, underlying motivations and personal stories that may not be easily captured through other data collection methods. The depth and richness of information obtained through in-depth interviews can provide valuable context and meaning to the research findings, offering a deeper understanding of the complexities and intricacies of the interviewee's perspectives and contributing to the development of more nuanced and insightful analyses (Patton 2002).

The interview scheduled for the research project titled Investigation into Trends and Practices of Crisis Communication Management of Oromia Communication Bureau is strategically designed to gather valuable insights and perspectives directly from vital stakeholders actively engaged in the bureau's crisis communication management initiatives. This comprehensive study will encompass top officials from Oromia communication bureau, as well as key directorates and experienced practitioners involved in crisis communication management. The methodology employed in this study will involve the use of unstructured, open-ended questions that are deliberately kept concise in number aimed at extracting in-depth views and opinions from the participants. This approach has been selected due to its ability to yield a rich and detailed source of information essential for gaining a comprehensive understanding of crisis communication management practices of Oromia Communication Bureau.

During the interview process, participants are carefully informed through an explanatory statement regarding the research's purpose and the significance of their involvement. This statement is shared with participants at the beginning of each interview to ensure transparency and clarity. Should participants request it, they are also given a copy of the explanatory statement for their records. Prior to the interview, individuals receive a version of the explanatory statement to review in advance, allowing them to familiarize themselves with

the study's objectives. Face-to-face interviews are conducted either at the participants' workplace or other public venues to ensure convenience and comfort. Throughout the interview, participants are asked one question at a time, encouraging thoughtful and detailed responses. Furthermore, participants are given the autonomy to conclude the interview at any point or retract any information shared, thus prioritizing their comfort and agency in the research process.

3.4.2 FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

A focus group discussion serves as a valuable mechanism for eliciting diverse perspectives and insights regarding crisis communication management from a broad spectrum of stakeholders. By convening a focus group, participants are afforded the chance to actively participate in candid conversations, exchange their real-life encounters and analyze differing viewpoints related to the topic at hand. In the present investigation a focus group session was organized involving senior public relations specialists from Oromia Communication Bureau. The primary aim of this session was to delve deeper into the prevailing trends, tools, and obstacles encountered within the realm of crisis communication management. Through this interactive forum a more comprehensive comprehension of the strategies and challenges inherent in effective crisis communication was sought drawing upon the wealth of expertise and first-hand experiences of the participating communication professionals.

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS TOOLS

To effectively pinpoint potential deficiencies in the execution of current crisis communication management trends and practices, critical themes extracted from available literature serve as the framework for interpreting and conducting a comprehensive analysis of the results obtained from interviews and focus group discussions. The initial step involves accurately documenting the interviews and focus group discussion with meticulous detail. Subsequently, these recordings are transcribed with precision to enable a thorough examination of the perspectives and interactions shared by participants. By following this meticulous methodology a deep-seated comprehension of the strengths and limitations inherent in crisis communication practices can be acquired. Such an approach lays the groundwork for targeted enhancements and advancements in bureau response strategies.

Data collected through the thorough process of in-depth interviews and focus group discussions is subjected to qualitative content analysis data collection methods, involving

transcription and coding. Following the initial phase of coding, topics that exhibit similarities or are interconnected are amalgamated and categorized into broader themes, enhancing the depth and significance of the findings. Concurrently, themes that do not align with the research objectives or are deemed irrelevant are systematically eliminated during the second stage of the coding process, ensuring the focus remains on the core aspects of the study and its objectives.

3.6 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

Researchers must ensure the accuracy of the data in terms of form and context through regular comparison either alone or with peers as a type of triangulation. The major technique for determining the validity of this study is to recruit a qualified moderator from the profession, Practitioners and moderators will help participants overcome personal biases.

To verify the validity of the responses, all potential participants are checked and selected according to recruitment procedure discussed above. Qualified participants are then asked preliminary questions to confirm the requiring procedure standard. Unqualified participants are prompted to leave the survey or their submissions are removed from the final assessment.

3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

By carefully selecting what to research and how to go about it, researchers uphold the rights of study participants enhance the validity of the research outcomes and ensure the overall credibility and trustworthiness of the scientific or academic endeavours. It is imperative that respondents and informants are fully informed and provide explicit consent for their participation in the study, thus emphasizing the importance of voluntary involvement and respect for individuals' autonomy.

Moreover, the ethical implications extend to ensuring that the study's findings serve a purpose that is beneficial to both the organization conducting the research and the broader public relations community all the while safeguarding the well-being and rights of the respondents and participants involved. Any violation of the rights of respondents or informants is not only a breach of ethical standards but also a legal offense, subject to accountability under both national laws and the oversight of research ethics bodies. Upholding ethical standards in research is not only a moral obligation but a necessary foundation for maintaining the trust and integrity of the scientific community as a whole.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

4. OVERVIEW

This chapter delves into the outcomes of a comprehensive qualitative study that examined the prevailing trends and practices employed in crisis communication management of Oromia Communication Bureau during the period spanning from 2022 to 2023. The researcher meticulously carried out an extensive exploration by means of conducting in-depth interviews and facilitating focus group discussions, during which a series of open-ended questions were posed to the participants. The primary objective was to gain insights into the crisis communication approaches and methodologies utilized by Oromia Communication Bureau when dealing with crisis, with a specific focus on their effectiveness and efficiency in mitigating and resolving crisis situations. Moreover, the study aimed to uncover the underlying principles and best practices that have guided the Bureau in its crisis communication efforts, shedding light on the strategies that have yielded positive outcomes and those that may require enhancement or modification for future crisis scenarios.

And also this chapter examines the research questions as guided by the primary research objectives. It meticulously unravels the findings and robust discussions that have been meticulously categorized into three distinct phases. The first phase, the interview phase serves as a fundamental pillar in the data collection process offering invaluable insights directly from the participants. Following this, the focus group discussion phase emerges as a pivotal juncture where collective opinions and perspectives intertwine providing a more holistic view of the subject matter. Each phase contributes uniquely to the depth of understanding and sheds light on different facets of the research inquiry. The structured presentation of the findings and discussions in these phases not only elucidates the core themes but also underscores the nuanced intricacies inherent in the research outcomes.

The interview phase of the research process is crucial and consists of two distinct parts. The initial segment focuses on gathering demographic information from the participants, encompassing details such as their educational background, ages, job titles and levels of experience in crisis communication along with any relevant qualifications they may hold in the field. This essential data sets the foundation for understanding the profile of the

individuals contributing to the study and provides valuable context for interpreting their responses. The second part of this phase involves a comprehensive analysis of the findings extracted from the interviews. Through careful examination and synthesis of the information shared by the participants, patterns, insights and key themes emerge shedding light on the central issues surrounding crisis communication and offering valuable perspectives for further exploration and research in this critical area.

The researcher carried out a series of comprehensive interviews with a total of nine participants consisting of three high-ranking officials and six key Directorates of the Bureau. Furthermore, a single focus group discussion was facilitated by the researcher involving six public relations experts who are affiliated with Oromia Communication Bureau.

The interviews were meticulously designed to explore a wide array of facets pertaining to their respective roles, duties and viewpoints. This meticulous approach led to the acquisition of invaluable and profound insights that played a pivotal role in enhancing the thoroughness and complexity of the research outcomes. The comprehensive nature of the interviews allowed for a nuanced understanding of the participants' contributions ultimately enriching the depth and breadth of the research findings.

The interview session, which took place between 1:30 and 1:56 minutes, had an average duration of 1:48 minutes. Following this, the researcher dedicated considerable time and effort to transcribe the audio recordings from both the interviews and focus group discussions into written text meticulously. After the transcription process was completed an extensive quality assurance procedure was implemented. The researcher carefully listened to each transcript, cross-referencing it to ensure precision and accuracy. This thorough method was applied to uphold the integrity of the data collected and to guarantee the reliability of the final documented information.

4.1 FINDINGS

In order to address the research inquiries effectively, the study employs a combination of comprehensive interviews and focus group discussions that align closely with both the overarching goals and the specific objectives of the investigation. Through the implementation of these methodological approaches the resulting data obtained offers valuable insights to enhance readers' understanding of the critical role that crisis communication management plays when organisations or governmental bodies are compelled

to react swiftly and adeptly to a disaster situation, all the while upholding principles of openness and bolstering public confidence and credibility. This leverages the significance of adept crisis communication strategies in navigating turbulent scenarios with resilience and maintaining a positive rapport with key stakeholders amidst challenging circumstances.

The interview aims to delve deep into the current trends and practices employed in crisis communication management of Oromia Communication Bureau. By conducting in-depth interviews with notable figures such as high-ranking officials and key directors, the study seeks to gain valuable insights into the practices of crisis communication within the bureau. Phase I of the research concentrates on identifying and analysing key themes derived from interviews with a total of nine participants. These include perspectives from three high officials and inputs from six key directorates of Oromia Communication Bureau. Through this investigation a comprehensive understanding of the crisis communication management of oromia communication bureau be achieved shedding light on effective approaches and potential areas for improvement.

The researcher employed purposive sampling technique to meticulously select adept participants from the realm of Oromia communication bureau for an in-depth interview. During the interviews, the selected individuals shared valuable insights into their extensive experiences in crisis communication management delving into their current practices and reflections on the domain as a whole. They explored the prevailing trends and cutting-edge practices in crisis communication management evaluating the effectiveness of these strategies in effectively engaging target audiences. Furthermore, the conversations touched upon the various tools and challenges inherent in crisis communication shedding light on the intricacies of formulating a comprehensive crisis communication plan and the nuanced approaches required to successfully navigate and mitigate crisis of diverse natures.

4.2. DEMOGRAPHIC DISCUSSION OF INTERVIEWS (I1) AND FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION (FG DI).

4.2.1. BACKGROUNDS OF THE INTERVIEW RESPONDENTS

Regarding participant characteristics, there were a total of nine males who were employed at Oromia Communication Bureau for a period ranging from two to seventeen years. Moreover, the participants showcased diverse levels of experience, with two individuals having between two to six years of work experience, five participants possessing seven to twelve years of experience and one member boasting a remarkable seventeen years of work experience In

terms of age distribution, the participants belonged to various age brackets: while an equal number of participants were aged between 35 to 42 years old.

Table 4.1.1 Demographic Summary of the Interview respondent.

Code Name	I1-A	I1-A	I1-A	I1-A	I1-A	I1-A	I1-A	I1-A	I1-A
Sex	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
Age	35	37	38	40	37	36	36	39	42
Years of experience	2	6	5	7	10	9	11	12	17
Department	OCB	OCB	OCB	OCB	OCB	OCB	OCB	OCB	OCB
Education Background	M A	MA	MA	BA	MA	BA	BA	MA	MA
Field of Study	PRSC	Ling	Jour	Mngt	PSIR	PSIR	Ling	Ling	PRSC

The data presented in the above table reveals that all the respondents who participated in the interviews were male, with ages spanning various categories. Specifically, one respondent was 35 years old, two were 36, two were 37, one was 38, one was 39, and two were aged 40 and 42 respectively. In terms of professional experience and educational background, the respondents' years of experience ranged from 2 to 17 at Oromia Communication Bureau. Moreover, all respondents held Bachelor's and Master's degrees in diverse academic disciplines. This diverse educational background suggests a breadth of knowledge and expertise among the participants, enhancing the depth of insights gained through the interviews.

4.2.2. BACKGROUNDS OF THE FOCUS GROUP RESPONDENTS

Regarding the focus group discussion participants' demographics a total of six males were employed from Oromia Communication Bureau across various key directorates, such as Media Content and Transmission Development, Public Relations and Policy Promotion, Communication Research and Capacity Building, Electronics and Print Media, Social Media, Website Administration, and Regional Data Center Directorates. Each of the focus group discussion participants possesses unique characteristics in terms of age, work experience and educational background. This diversity in profile contributes to a rich tapestry of perspectives and insights that were brought to the table during the discussion. The varying backgrounds and expertise of the participants enriched the discourse allowing for a comprehensive exploration of the topics at hand from multiple angles.

Table 4.1.2 Demographic Summary of the Focus group respondent.

Code Name	F G1-A	FG1-A	FG1-A	FG1-A	FG1-A	FG11-A
Sex	M	M	M	M	M	M
Age	35	34	39	35	37	36
Years of experience		6	5	7	10	9
Department	OCB	OCB	OCB	OCB	OCB	OCB
Education Background	M A	MA	MA.	BA	MA	BA
Field of Study	PRSC	Ling	Jour	Mngt	PSIR	PSIR

The analysis of the table above reveals a diverse demographic profile among the participants of the focus group in this study. In terms of age distribution, the participants fall within the range of 34 to 39 years. Specifically, there is one participant aged 34, two participants aged 35, one participant aged 36, and two participants aged 37 and 39 respectively. Regarding their work experience at Oromia Communication Bureau, it varies between five to ten years, showcasing a spectrum of expertise and tenure within the organization. Furthermore, the educational background of the focus group members is predominantly characterized by a Master of Arts degree, with the majority holding this qualification. However, two participants possess a Bachelor of Arts degree indicating a mix of academic qualifications within the group.

4. 3. ANALYSIS OF DATA OBTAINED FROM THE INTERVEIW AND FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION.

4.3.1 TRENDS OROMIA COMMUNICATION BUREAU USED IN DEALING WITH CRISIS COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT.

The researcher conducted an in-depth analysis of the crisis communication management trends of Oromia Communication Bureaus. The main focus of the research was to investigate the presence of discernible trends in the bureau's approach to managing crisis. Through a series of strategic research questions the researcher sought to determine the level of effectiveness and consistency in crisis communication trends within the bureau.

By formulating specific research inquiries, the researcher aimed to gain a deeper insight into the efficiency and uniformity of the crisis communication trends implemented by the bureau. *Feedback obtained from key members of the bureau's high officials revealed clear recurring*

practices in their tends to crisis management highlighting the importance placed on thorough preparation, rapid reaction protocols and interactive communication with relevant parties. The observations shared by the interviewees illuminated the bureau's commitment to upholding a well-structured and proficient crisis communication trend, emphasizing the significance of diligence and foresight in navigating crisis scenarios (respondent from the bureau 2024).

The bureau is well-versed in various trends related to crisis communication management. Among these trends are digital communication, storytelling, and empathy, which play crucial roles in effectively managing crisis. Additionally, community engagement is a key aspect that the bureau focuses on, recognizing the importance of involving stakeholders in the crisis communication process. A multimedia approach is also employed by the bureau to ensure that messages are conveyed through various channels to reach a wider audience. Furthermore, crisis simulation and preparedness are areas of expertise for the bureau, enabling them to proactively handle potential crisis. Collaboration and partnerships are valued by the bureau, as working with other organizations can enhance crisis communication strategies. Notably, the bureau places significant emphasis on media monitoring and evaluation, understanding the impact and importance of media coverage during crisis. Overall, the bureau's familiarity with these trends ensures a comprehensive and strategic approach to crisis communication management (respondent of the bureau 2024).

The majority of informants strongly support the notion that the bureau has indeed established certain trends in crisis communication management anticipating potential threats and preparing for crisis situations in advance. Despite this, they all acknowledged that the development of crisis communication trends of the bureau has been somewhat lacking. Informants emphasized the need for more comprehensive trends and resources to effectively address and navigate crisis as they arise highlighting room for improvement in the overall trends to crisis communication management of the bureau.

Response obtained through a comprehensive focus group discussion consistently showcases overwhelming support for the aforementioned concept. For example, in delineating the prevalent trends in crisis communication management, a respondent from the focus group articulated a noteworthy perspective. The respondent emphasized the necessity for organizations to swiftly address and mitigate issues as they arise, underlining the critical role of proactive and transparent communication in navigating challenging circumstances. Such proactive approaches not only aid in maintaining the organization's reputation but also in

fostering trust and credibility with stakeholders in times of crisis. This illustrates a paradigm shift towards a more dynamic and agile crisis communication framework that is responsive to the rapidly changing media and digital landscape (Public relation experts of the bureau 2024)

Due to the bureau's established trends in crisis communication management it was equipped to offer a reliable stream of information to the public during times of crisis. Consequently, the bureau was tasked with the vital responsibility of discerning the appropriate course of action to undertake at various stages of crisis communication management, drawing upon the insights gleaned from these established trends in crisis communication management strategies. By leveraging these trends effectively, the bureau could effectively navigate the complexities of crisis communication and ensure that the dissemination of information was both accurate and consistent throughout each phase of the crisis (Public relations experts of the bureau 2024).

The researcher's findings also encompassed the perspectives of the informants and focus group respondents. It is evident that as the use of social media and digital platforms continues to proliferate, there is a notable transition towards leveraging these channels for crisis communication purposes. Through the sharing of personal accounts from individuals impacted by the crisis the bureau aims to humanize the situation and forge a more profound emotional connection with the public. Embracing the trends of actively engaging with the local community and involving them in decision-making processes represents a growing trend that can significantly contribute to the bureau's efforts in garnering trust and support. By vigilantly monitoring these evolving trends and adapting communication strategies to align with current best practices Oromia Communication Bureau stands to enhance its crisis communication management capabilities.

4.3.2 STRATEGIES OROMIA COMMUNICATION BUREAU USED DURING CRISIS COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT.

The primary focus was on investigating whether the bureau had well-defined and effective strategies in place to handle crisis communication scenarios. Through a comprehensive examination of the organization's strategy to crisis communication, key insights were gained regarding the clarity and efficiency of the strategies utilized by the bureau. By delving deep into the specific research questions aimed at evaluating the bureau's crisis communication strategies, a nuanced understanding of their strengths and areas for improvement was

achieved. This research served to illuminate the bureau's current strategies and shed light on potential enhancements that could be made to optimize their crisis communication management efforts.

Accordingly, the majority of participants in the in-depth interviews emphasized the critical importance of establishing a centralized command centre dedicated to monitoring, coordinating and sharing information as a key strategy to enhance the efficiency of crisis communication efforts. By collaborating closely with other government agencies, security forces and local authorities to organize joint news conferences and issue shared statements, the bureau can present a unified front and showcase their coordinated strategy to crisis communication management. Furthermore, actively engaging the community through workshops, focus group discussions and public meetings plays a vital role in gaining valuable insights addressing concerns and collecting feedback essential for refining crisis communication strategies of oromia communication bureau.

Leveraging media monitoring tools and sentiment analysis techniques enables the bureau to assess public perception identify and counter misinformation and recognize patterns that can be used to tailor communication initiatives effectively. Additionally, conducting crisis simulation exercises and drills equips communication teams with the necessary skills to respond swiftly, make informed decisions and tackle communication challenges specific to crisis situations' (Informant and respondent of the bureau, 2024).

One of the responders of in-depth interview mentioned that, 'Despite the importance of having a well-defined crisis communication strategy to effectively manage crisis, the bureau currently lacks such a comprehensive strategy. A carefully crafted crisis communication strategy is crucial for mitigating the impact of crisis by ensuring that the right messages are communicated to the appropriate stakeholders in a timely manner. Without a robust crisis communication strategy in place, the bureau may face challenges in effectively managing communication during crisis, potentially leading to misinformation or a lack of clarity in messaging. Developing a crisis communication strategy will not only enhance the bureau's ability to navigate crisis more effectively but also help in maintaining transparency, building trust with stakeholders and protecting the bureau's reputation in times of crisis communication (Informant from the bureau 2024).

From the view of informants and focus group discussion participant's researchers concludes that having a clear and well-defined strategy for crisis communication management has emerged as a prevalent viewpoint among participants in both the interview sessions and focus group discussions. The consensus among the majority is that the bureau possesses effective strategies capable of navigating crisis communication strategically. This sentiment underscores a shared belief in the bureau's ability to proactively address and manage potentially disruptive events that may impact its reputation and operations. Participants expressed confidence in the bureau's capacity to handle crisis with the necessary foresight and agility to safeguard its interests and maintain stakeholder trust. The emphasis on strategic crisis communication reflects recognition of the importance of preparedness and responsiveness in maintaining the bureau's resilience and credibility in the face of unforeseen crisis communication management.

4.3.2.1 TOOLS OROMIA COMMUNICATION BUREAU USED DURING CRISIS COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT.

This evaluation was carried out in direct correlation with the study's primary inquiry regarding the presence and clarity of crisis communication management tools within the bureau's operational framework. The objective behind this in-depth analysis was to ascertain the adequacy and efficiency of the existing tools in facilitating effective crisis communication tools. By scrutinizing the tools and mechanisms in place for managing crisis communication of oromia communication bureau the researcher aimed to determine the extent to which the bureau is equipped to handle and respond to critical crisis communication management swiftly and effectively.

Regarding of this; eight in-depth interviews and six focus group respondents participated in providing valuable insights into the tools utilized by Oromia Communication Bureau for effective crisis communication management. These key informants expounded on the significance of a diverse range of technological solutions, which encompassed social media monitoring platforms, emergency notification systems, interactive websites, portals and digital storytelling tools. The informants emphasized the pivotal role played by these specific instruments in enhancing the bureau's capacity to monitor situations, disseminate information efficiently, engage with the public actively and develop engaging narratives during crisis scenarios. The overwhelming consensus among both interviewees and focus group participants emphasized the strategic importance of harnessing modern communication technologies to ensure that crisis communication efforts of Oromia

Communication Bureau are not only timely and targeted but also impactful (informants and respondents of the bureau, 2024).

As observed from interview respondent and focus group discussion participant view; the researcher arrived that the strategic development and utilization of social media monitoring tools represent pivotal and highly advantageous tools. It was evident that enhancing public awareness regarding social media platforms can substantially augment the bureau's ability to remain well-informed and promptly address any emerging challenges. By establishing and maintaining dynamic, relevant online platforms such as websites and forums that are consistently updated with pertinent information, alongside leveraging sophisticated social media tools like Adobe for crafting visually captivating imagery and informative content, the bureau can effectively articulate their inclusive vision.

4.3.3 CHALLENGES FACED OROMIA COMMUNICATION BUREAU IN DEALING WITH CRISIS COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT.

Oromia Communications Bureau encounters various obstacles in its efforts to effectively manage communication, particularly in the realm of crisis communication.

A majority of the individuals who participated in the in-depth interviews emphasized the multitude of hurdles that the bureau confronts when navigating crisis communications management. These challenges encompass a range of factors such as limited resources, lack of established protocols, insufficient training of staff members, and the fast-paced nature of crisis situations which demand prompt and strategic responses. As a result, the bureau's capacity to handle crisis in a timely and efficient manner is significantly undermined, potentially affecting the overall effectiveness of their communication strategies and the maintenance of public trust. The complex landscape of crisis communication further compounds these challenges, requiring the bureau to continuously adapt and enhance its capabilities to effectively address the diverse and evolving communication needs during crisis communication management (Respondent of the bureau 2024).

According to the feedback provided by the participants, it was highlighted that within the duration of the crisis communication, Oromia communication bureau systematically developed its communication infrastructure and successfully upheld the public's confidence during crisis times, particularly when confronting issues related to communication breakdowns and institutional challenges. The perception of partiality, a dearth of transparency, or incongruous dissemination of information has the potential to destabilize the

working atmosphere and impede the efficacy of communication channels. When communication channels are compromised by biases, opacity or inconsistent messaging the organization's credibility and the trust of its stakeholders are put at risk potentially resulting in diminished operational efficiency and weakened relationships with both internal and external publics. It is essential for Oromia communication bureau to consistently prioritize open, transparent and coherent communication practices to ensure the maintenance of a harmonious and productive work environment as well as to fortify its reputation among its audience and stakeholders (informants of the bureau 2024).

Further to the point; Oromia Communication bureau faces significant challenges when it comes to providing accurate and culturally relevant information to its diverse population due to linguistic and cultural barriers. The region's varied linguistic landscape can impede effective crisis communication and create knowledge gaps, particularly with specific segments of the population. Furthermore, the presence of infrastructure disruptions such as internet blackouts and restrictions on media access can severely limit the ability of the bureau to disseminate crucial information through both conventional and digital platforms during crisis communication. These obstacles underscore the critical need for tailored communication strategies that can navigate these complexities and ensure that information reaches all members of the community in a timely and accessible manner (informants of the bureau, 2024).

During crisis communications management, Oromia Communication Bureau encounters a multitude of challenges that require adept handling. Among the primary hurdles faced are ensuring the safety and security of communications personnel operating in crisis zones. This includes devising and executing strategies to safeguard their well-being while they are actively engaged in disseminating crucial information. Additionally, the bureau grapples with the arduous task of verifying the accuracy of information to counteract the spread of fake news during crisis times. Disputing false claims and maintaining credibility in the face of misinformation poses a significant obstacle that demands quick and strategic action. Moreover; Managing Conflicting news and retaining control over the narrative present further complexities. Juggling diverging perspectives and ensuring a coherent message is relayed to the public requires a delicate balance and precise coordination. Effective communication activities are contingent on the bureau's ability to orchestrate a harmonious approach amidst the chaos of a crisis, necessitating seamless coordination across all channels and stakeholders involved (respondent of the bureau 2024).

By considering the perspectives of the respondents and diligently recognizing and addressing these challenges in a proactive manner Oromia Communication Bureau stands to enhance its capacity for efficient communication amidst crisis situations. By being attuned to the concerns and obstacles faced by stakeholders, the bureau can refine its crisis communication strategies, thereby fortifying its position as a reliable and responsive entity in times of crisis communication.

This commitment to understanding and mitigating potential difficulties allows for a more robust framework for effective communication practices, serving to bolster relationships and reinforce the bureau's relevance in the eyes of the public.

4.3.4 COMMUNICATION PLANS OF OROMIA COMMUNICATION BUREAU IN DEALING WITH CRISIS COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT.

In the case of the Bureau's crisis communication plan, the researcher's findings were consistent across both the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. Through these research methods, it was revealed that the Bureau's crisis communication plan encompasses various key components essential for its effectiveness and success.

The plan includes thorough risk assessment and strategic planning to proactively address potential challenges, as well as facilitating seamless bureau coordination to ensure cohesive messaging across all platforms. Moreover, the communication goals and messages are clearly defined to align with the Bureau's overarching objectives alongside comprehensive media relations strategies and spokesperson training to enhance the organization's public image and responsiveness. Additionally, the crisis communication plan incorporates diverse information dissemination channels to reach a broad audience effectively, while also emphasizing the importance of community engagement strategies to foster meaningful connections and transparency with stakeholders (respondent and public relation experts of the bureau 2024).

It is evident that the bureau has an effective crisis communication management plan in place that aligns seamlessly with the bureau's core objectives and overarching mission. This includes the strategic development of key messages tailored to different target segments, with a strong emphasis on fostering transparency, accuracy and empathy in all communications. The plan also entails the designation of official spokespersons and media liaisons who are proficient in managing interactions with the press and the public during crisis communication. Moreover, the bureau ensures that these designated spokespersons undergo

comprehensive media training to enhance their ability to effectively convey information and navigate media engagements with confidence and credibility (Informants and respondents of the bureau, 2024).

Most responders suggested 'Conducting a comprehensive risk assessment is a crucial step in proactively identifying and mitigating potential crisis that may arise in the realm of crisis communication management. By thoroughly analysing various risk factors and vulnerabilities, the bureau can anticipate and prepare for potential threats to their reputation and operations. Developing detailed scenarios and response plans for a range of crisis communication is essential for ensuring swift and effective crisis management. By outlining clear protocols and action plans in advance, the bureau can minimize the impact of crisis and maintain control over the narrative during challenging times.

Additionally, establishing robust communication crisis communication plan and channels facilitates seamless collaboration between different departments within the bureau and external stakeholders. By creating an efficient network for sharing information and coordinating response efforts, the bureau can enhance their crisis communication capabilities and strengthen relationships with key partners and stakeholders (Informant of the bureau 2024).

'The bureau has invested substantial resources into clear crisis communication management plan that aligns seamlessly with the bureau's overarching objectives and core mission. Central to this strategy is the creation of pivotal messages tailored to cater to diverse target segments, with a strong emphasis on fostering transparency, precision, and compassion. Additionally, the bureau has designated official spokespersons and media liaisons who are trained to engage with the press and the public effectively during times of crisis. These designated individuals undergo rigorous media training to enhance their capacity to articulate information clearly and navigate various media interactions with confidence and poise (informants of the bureau 2024).

Based on the insights provided by informants and respondents during the research process, it is evident that the effective management of crisis communication plan of Oromia Communication Bureau necessitates the development and implementation of a thorough and detailed crisis communication plan. This plan should encompass a comprehensive framework that delineates the strategies, techniques and steps to be undertaken in response to a crisis situation. It is imperative for the Bureau to establish a structured and systematic approach

towards crisis communication encompassing the proactive identification of potential threats, the formulation of appropriate messaging strategies and the swift and effective dissemination of information to relevant stakeholders.

4.3.5 CRISIS MANAGEMENT APPROACHES OF OROMIA COMMUNICATION BUREAU IN DEALING WITH CRISIS COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT.

The researcher delves into the research questions, contemplating the effectiveness of the bureau's current crisis communication management approach. In discussions with senior officials of the bureau, insights emerged revealing a consensus among them regarding the existence of a standardized method for handling crisis communication of the bureau. These senior officials expressed confidence in the bureau's common procedures and approaches employed when faced with crisis communication, suggesting a structured and coordinated approach aimed at effectively managing and mitigating potential communication crisis. Such shared perspectives highlight the cohesive efforts within the bureau to navigate through turbulent times and maintain a cohesive communication approach in times of crisis communication management.

Identifying potential risks and vulnerabilities is crucial to developing effective crisis communication approaches. By being proactive in anticipating potential crisis, the bureau can establish robust protocols and preparedness measures to ensure a coordinated and timely response when faced with unexpected challenges. Regular training sessions, workshops, and simulated crisis scenarios can significantly enhance the abilities and confidence of communication teams in effectively addressing and resolving issues that may arise. Additionally, tracking developing issues in real-time allows organizations to stay informed, evaluate risks and adapt their communication strategies accordingly to effectively manage and mitigate the impact of crisis. By prioritizing preparedness and continuous improvement in crisis communication approaches oromia communication bureau can effectively navigate challenging situations and maintain stakeholder trust and confidence (respondent of the bureau, 2024).

Collaborating closely with various government agencies, humanitarian organization and local authorities is vital to effectively coordinate response efforts during challenging situations. By pooling together resources and information, these bureau can ensure a more streamlined and efficient response. Additionally, engaging with key stakeholders, community

leaders, and affected communities plays a crucial role in fostering collaboration, gathering valuable insights, and establishing trust.

Clear and transparent communication is key in crisis management, as it upholds principles of accountability and inclusivity, ultimately helping to maintain credibility among stakeholders. By prioritizing transparency and actively involving all relevant parties in the communication process, the bureau can effectively navigate crisis and work towards successful resolutions (Informant of the bureau, 2024).

Based on the perspectives shared by the informants and respondents, the researcher highlights that Oromia Communication Bureau has the potential to enhance its crisis management capabilities and successfully minimize the repercussions of crisis. This can be achieved by adopting a comprehensive approach that incorporates proactive planning, adaptable response tactics, cooperative engagement and strategic communication when navigating crisis communication management. In the realm of crisis communication management approaches, it is anticipated that Oromia Communication Bureau can employ a blend of proactive, collaborative, adaptive and strategic communication methods to effectively address and overcome crisis communication management.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

The primary objective of this research is to investigate the trends and practices employed in crisis communication management of Oromia Communication Bureau during the period spanning from 2022 to 2023. This section provides a comprehensive overview of the principal discoveries, deductions and suggestions derived from the study. The analysis encompassed an in-depth exploration of the Bureau's approaches to addressing and mitigating crisis that arose over the specified timeframe. Through the investigation of trends and practices adopted by the bureau, this study sought to discern key insights into the efficiency of crisis communication mechanisms within the context of Oromia Communication Bureau. The subsequent sections encapsulate a detailed account of the study's significant revelations, deductions drawn from the observed trends and actionable recommendations aimed at enhancing crisis communication management practices of Oromia Communication Bureau for the future.

5.1 SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS

The research findings shed light on a noticeable shift within the crisis communication management strategy of Oromia communication bureau towards a greater reliance on social media platforms and multimedia channels. This strategic transition highlights a proactive embrace of digital engagement tactics to effectively navigate and respond to crisis. The evidence presented underscores a growing recognition of the importance of leveraging online tools and channels to swiftly disseminate critical information, engage with key stakeholders and manage the flow of communication during times of crisis. By embracing this digital-centric approach, Oromia communication bureau is positioning itself to adapt to the evolving communication landscape and enhance its crisis response capabilities in an increasingly interconnected and fast-paced digital world.

The Public Relations and Policy Promotion Directorate of the Bureau has been proactive in implementing preventative measures to address potential issues at an early stage. One key aspect of their proactive approach has been the provision of comprehensive training to personnel responsible for managing crisis communication in the bureau. While these initial steps have been commendable, there are still crucial elements of crisis response strategy that remain incomplete.

This includes the finalization of the selection process for spokespersons, the establishment of a dedicated crisis communications team and the full training of both the designated spokes persons and all team members involved in the crisis management process. It is imperative that these remaining tasks be expedited to ensure the Bureau is fully equipped to effectively handle any crisis communication management.

In an effort to address the second research objective, participants in both the interviews and focus groups highlighted key strategies implemented by Oromia Communications Bureau in managing crisis communications. They emphasized the importance of establishing a central command centre dedicated to monitoring, coordinating and disseminating information swiftly to enhance communication effectiveness. Furthermore, they underscored the significance of developing comprehensive strategies fostering open communication channels and establishing collaborations with relevant stakeholders to bolster crisis response capabilities.

Moreover, the bureau's proactive approach to crisis communication was evident through the strategic deployment of social media monitoring tools issuance of press releases and implementation of community engagement initiatives. These measures have played a pivotal role in enabling the bureau to monitor emerging crisis in real time effectively disseminate critical information to the public and cultivate a sense of transparency and trust among stakeholders. By leveraging a combination of traditional and digital communication channels Oromia Communications Bureau has demonstrated a commitment to ensuring timely and accurate flow of information during times of crisis ultimately enhancing overall emergency response mechanisms.

Despite taking proactive measures, Oromia Communication Bureau continues to face numerous challenges in ensuring the safety and security of their communication personnel in crisis areas. Additionally, they are met with the persistent difficulty of verifying information in a timely and accurate manner combating the spread of fake news and maintaining control over potentially contradictory news and communication efforts across various government organizations, non-governmental organizations and partners. These challenges have significantly impacted the bureau's ability to effectively manage rumours within different communities ultimately hindering their goal of providing consistent and reliable information to the public.

The findings indicate that Oromia Communication Bureau utilizes a comprehensive array of strategies and tools during crisis management. These strategies encompass impact assessment and meticulous planning, seamless cross-departmental coordination, defined communication objectives and tailored messaging, effective media relations along with targeted spokesperson training, strategic information dissemination through various channels, community engagement initiatives and a well-structured emergency response protocol. The bureau's crisis communication plan is meticulously crafted to cater the unique requirements of the Oromia region placing a strong emphasis on engaging with regional stakeholders and implementing swift reaction procedures to mitigate crisis Communication effectively.

The bureau's crisis communication management approach were founded on a multifaceted approach that prioritized proactive engagement with the community, fostering collaboration with stakeholders, maintaining adaptability in response to evolving situations, promoting inclusivity to ensure all voices were heard, demonstrating cultural sensitivity and aiming to cultivate trust and transparency throughout the process of crisis communication management. By incorporating this approach into their practices, the bureau sought to establish strong relationships, promote effective dialogue and enhance the overall resilience and effectiveness of their crisis communication management.

5.2 CONCLUSIONS

The investigation into trends and practices of Oromia Communication Bureau's crisis communication management revealed a significant emphasis on digital engagement tactics. Specifically, it was observed that social media platforms and multimedia channels play an increasingly vital role in ensuring effective crisis communication within the region. This notable shift underscores the necessity for the bureau to adapt to evolving communication patterns to effectively reach and engage with a broader audience during times of crisis. Embracing digital strategies is crucial in not only disseminating timely and accurate information but also in fostering transparency and building trust with the public. As such, leveraging various digital tools and platforms has become imperative for the bureau aiming to navigate and effectively manage crisis situations in today's fast-paced and interconnected world.

While the Public Relations and Policy Promotion Directorate of the Bureau demonstrated a commendable commitment to proactive crisis prevention planning and the provision of crisis management personnel training, shortcomings were identified in the areas of crisis spokesperson and team member selection and training. These observed inadequacies highlight the importance of addressing these specific deficiencies to guarantee a cohesive and effective response in crisis communication management. Ensuring that the right individuals are chosen and adequately trained to serve as spokespersons and team members during times of crisis is paramount in enabling the Bureau to navigate challenges effectively and uphold its reputation in the face of adversity. By rectifying these shortcomings and enhancing the selection and training processes for crisis personnel the Bureau can fortify its preparedness and resilience in managing unforeseen circumstances with clarity, consistency and confidence.

Oromia Communication Bureau faced notable challenges in the realm of crisis communication as it worked to implement crucial strategies aimed at enhancing its effectiveness. By establishing a centralized command Centre, fostering collaboration with government agencies and local authorities, as well as harnessing the power of social media monitoring tools and community engagement initiatives the Bureau encountered various obstacles. These included the prioritization of safeguarding the safety of communication personnel during crisis events, the imperative task of verifying information accuracy, countering misinformation and false narratives and ensuring the maintenance of a coherent

and consistent messaging approach tailored to diverse populations within the region. The Bureau's commitment to navigating these challenges underscores the complexity and critical nature of managing communication during times of crisis.

A robust crisis communication plan should encompass essential components, including meticulous risk evaluation, seamless cross-departmental collaboration, clearly defined communication goals, proactive media engagement, community involvement strategies and well-defined emergency response procedures. By integrating these key elements into the crisis communication plan, the bureau can better prepare it selves to effectively manage and navigate through challenging situations, thereby safeguarding their reputation and ensuring the timely dissemination of accurate information to relevant stakeholders.

The crisis communication management approach employed by Oromia Communication Bureau is centred on proactive community engagement, effective teamwork, flexibility, inclusivity and cultural sensitivity. These key components are focused on enhancing trust and transparency during times of crisis. Through the implementation of these approaches and the targeted resolution of identified challenges, Oromia Communication Bureau can enhance its crisis communication capabilities, thus enabling it to more effectively support and serve the local population during critical crisis communication management.

5.3 RECOMMENDATION

Based on the study findings, the researcher has carefully analysed the data and derived meaningful insights that have led to a series of comprehensive recommendations aimed at addressing the key issues highlighted in the research.

These recommendations encompass a range of strategic approaches designed to optimize effectiveness and efficiency in the targeted areas. The researcher advocates for the implementation of these recommendations to enhance performance, foster growth and drive positive outcomes. Furthermore, the recommendations emphasize the importance of proactive measures and collaborative efforts to achieve sustainable results and facilitate continuous improvement in line with the research findings. It is evident that the proposed recommendations are grounded in a thorough understanding of the research outcomes and are intended to serve as guiding principles for future actions and decision-making processes in crisis communication management of oromia communication bureau.

Enhancing the selection and training processes for crisis communication spokespersons and team members in Oromia Regional State Communication Bureau is crucial to guarantee they are adequately equipped to communicate proficiently in times of crisis. This initiative entails implementing regular training sessions focused on crisis communication strategies, organizing simulated crisis drills to simulate real-life scenarios and conducting on-going assessments to evaluate the crisis communication skills and capabilities of the spokespersons and team members. By prioritizing comprehensive training, practical exercises and continuous evaluation, Oromia Regional State Communication Bureau can strengthen its crisis communication preparedness and ensure that its representatives are well-prepared to handle any crisis communication effectively.

Increase the level of coordination and collaboration among various government agencies, non-governmental organizations and stakeholders is imperative to effectively streamline crisis communication efforts. By fostering stronger partnerships and communication channels between these entities, it is possible to create a more seamless and organized approach to handling emergencies. Establishing clear and explicit communication procedures as well as implementing mechanisms for sharing vital information during times of crisis, becomes crucial in ensuring a well-coordinated response.

These procedures and mechanisms not only facilitate the swift and efficient dissemination of information but also enable all involved parties to work together cohesively towards a common goal of mitigating the impacts of the crisis at hand. Ultimately, a collaborative and structured communication strategy is key to effectively managing and responding to crisis communication.

Investing in state-of-the-art technology and advanced methodologies for monitoring social media platforms, analysing data trends and efficiently distributing information is paramount for the Bureau to proactively anticipate emerging situations, swiftly address evolving crisis, and decisively counter misinformation campaigns. By embracing cutting-edge tools and strategies, the Bureau can maintain a strategic advantage by being well-informed, agile in its responses and proficient in countering inaccuracies that may undermine public trust and the integrity of information during critical events.

Developing a robust crisis communication plan is crucial for effectively managing unforeseen challenges. This plan should encompass a thorough risk assessment to identify potential threats, scenario planning to prepare for various crisis situations, establishing clear communication objectives to guide responses, implementing media relations strategies to ensure timely and accurate information dissemination and engaging with the community to maintain transparency and build trust. It is imperative to continuously review and update the crisis communication plan to remain agile in response to evolving circumstances and emerging communication trends. By integrating these elements into the framework of the crisis communication plan, organizations can better navigate crisis and safeguard their reputation.

Ensuring the safety and security of communication professionals operating in high-risk environments during crisis situations should be a paramount objective. By implementing comprehensive training programs that focus on risk assessment, conflict resolution and emergency protocols the bureau can equip their staff with the necessary skills to navigate potentially hazardous situations effectively. Furthermore, providing essential resources such as up-to-date technology, secure communication channels and personal protective equipment can significantly enhance the ability of communication professionals to fulfil their duties while minimizing crisis communication.

Additionally, offering on-going mental health support and counselling services can help mitigate the emotional toll that often accompanies working in demanding and volatile circumstances. By prioritizing the well-being of communication professionals through these initiatives, the bureau can optimize their response capabilities and ensure the continued effectiveness of their crisis communication efforts.

In order to uphold credibility and foster trust with the public, it is crucial to implement robust approaches for the validation and certification of information prior to dissemination. By establishing clear and rigorous processes for verifying the accuracy of data and content, the bureau can ensure that only reliable and verified information is shared with the audience. These validation protocols serve as a safeguard against the spread of misinformation and help bolster the reputation and integrity of the bureau. Furthermore, it is imperative to devise proactive strategies aimed at mitigating the impact of false narratives and preserving control over the overarching narrative amidst the presence of conflicting information sources. By staying vigilant and responsive to the evolving media landscape, bureau can effectively counter misleading narratives and uphold the authenticity of their communication channels. Through a combination of meticulous validation processes and strategic narrative management, the bureau can maintain public trust and credibility in an environment inundated with diverse sources of information.

Fostering collaboration with a diverse range of regional stakeholders, community leaders and local governments is essential for building strong relationships based on trust, transparency and mutual understanding both in preparation for during and in the aftermath of crisis. By proactively engaging with these key players, the bureau can establish open lines of communication, share vital information, align on strategies and mobilize resources effectively when faced with challenges. This collaborative approach not only enhances overall preparedness and response capabilities but also fosters a sense of unity and resilience within the community, enabling a more coordinated and impactful crisis management process. Through consistent engagement and cooperation, all parties involved can work together towards a common goal of ensuring the safety, well-being and stability of the region during times of crisis Communication.

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APPENDIX I
ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATIONS

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR OROMIA COMMUNICATION BUREAU
HIGH OFFICIALS AND CORE DIRECTORATES

INTRODUCTION:

My name is Temesgen Assefa. I am currently enrolled MA Programme in Public relations and Strategic Communication in School of journalism and communications at Addis Ababa University. To complete the degree I have to conduct a research work and write a thesis.

The aim of my study is to find out Investigation into Trends and Practices of Crisis Communication Management of Oromia Communication Bureau Since 2022-2023.

By taking part in this research project, you will be helping me to understand trends and practices of crisis communication management in your bureau. Your interview will take about 30 to 45 minutes and we will meet at a place agreed upon earlier.

Your permission with audiotape is needed for the interviews and transcribes them later. All features that could identify you will be removed and the tapes used will be erased once the transcription is done. If you agree to participate, the interview questions will be sent to you two weeks in advance to give you enough time for preparation. Your name and information that may identify you will be kept completely confidential and anonymous. All information collected from you will be stored on my personal computer which is a password protected and stored in my computer and can only be accessed by me and my advisor. Please contact me if you have any concerns about the project through my phone (+251 921596618).

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Age -----

Gender -----

Current position -----

Qualification -----

Field of specialization -----

Total years of experience at Oromia Communication Bureau -----

1. How do you describe the nature, causes and trends of the crisis Communication in oromia Communication Bureau?
2. How do you explain the magnitude of crisis? What has been done by the management so far to resolve the crisis? How do you describe the current status of the crisis?
3. Given your position in the bureau, can you tell me your personal experience in combating the crisis?
4. What are the most dominant challenges of Oromia Communication Bureau in managing crisis from communication and public relations perspectives and activities?
5. What are the crisis management approaches of the bureau in dealing with crisis communication management?
6. Is there any strategy and tools your Bureau used during crisis communication Management?
7. Tell me the challenges that the bureau faced in dealing with crisis Communication management?
8. Does your bureau have crisis communication plans in dealing with crisis communication management?
9. What other PR approach, strategies and tools do you suggest to speed up the work of Oromia Communication Bureau in managing the crisis?
10. Do you have additional points?

Appendix II

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATIONS

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR OROMIA COMMUNICATION BUREAU PUBLIC RELATION EXPERTS

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Age -----

Gender -----

Current position -----

Qualification-----

Field of specialization -----

Total years of experience at Oromia Communication bureau -----

1. Can you tell me the Causes, nature and development of current status of the crisis communication in oromia Communication Bureau?
2. What are the Magnitude and impacts of the crisis communication in diverse sectors of the region?
3. What are gains and challenges of the crisis communication management approaches of the bureau? Strategies and tools of communication and public relations department of the Bureau?
4. How Oromia Communication bureau forward for speedy management of the crisis and crafting crisis communication plan for future use?