OIL AND GAS EMPLOYEES' EXPECTATIONS FOR CRISIS RESPONSE MESSAGES: AN EXPLORATORY MIXED METHOD STUDY

A Thesis

by

CASANDRA LYNN LORENTSON

BS, Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi, 2009

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER of ARTS

in

COMMUNICATION

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi
Corpus Christi, Texas

May 2016

May 2016

Oil and Gas Employees' Expectations for Crisis Response Messages:
An Exploratory Mixed Methods Study
Submitted by
Casandra Lynn Lorentson

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of creative and scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a Thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in Communication.

_____
Michelle Maresh-Fuehrer, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Communication
Chair

_____
Michael Sollitto, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Communication
Committee Member

This project was submitted to Graduate Faculty in the Department of Communication and to the College of Liberal Arts Graduate Program. It has been accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Communication.

_____
David Gurney, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Media Studies
Coordinator, MA Communication Program
School of Arts, Media, and Communication

_____
Mark Hartlaub, Ph.D.
Professor of Psychology and Interim Dean
College of Liberal Arts

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to create and validate a measure of employee expectations for crisis communication in the oil and gas industry. Crisis communication researchers largely focus on reputation saving strategies while explaining that organizations also need to first attend to stakeholder basic needs. These needs are considered base crisis response strategies and, according to researchers, should always be implemented before reputation saving strategies. Yet, little research has focused on whether the messages stakeholders expect their organization to communicate during a crisis are consistent with the recommendations being made regarding base crisis response strategies. In the present study, employees from the oil and gas industry participated in two phases of research. During the first phase, 14 individuals participated in a questionnaire. The results suggest employees have the following expectations: to provide information about the crisis, to consider employee needs, to provide business continuity, to provide quick information dissemination, to provide compensation information, to send messages through multiple communication channels, and to explain future crisis prevention. The second phase involved a survey of 100 participants. The results validate one of the eight expectations. The instrument's validity was also tested through the use of three other scales. Organizational climate and identity had a strong relationship to employee expectations while job satisfaction and employee expectations had a weaker relationship. Results from the current study provide usable data which benefit crisis communication researchers and organizational crisis managers.

Keywords: crisis communication, crisis response, stakeholder expectations, safety communication, oil and gas, organizational communication

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would first like to thank my husband, Brian Lorentson, whose constant support and encouragement kept me from throwing up my hands in defeat. Without you to make sure everything else in our lives were taken care of, I would have never been able to pour all my attention and focus into completing this study. Thank you for being there for me when the going got tough!

I would also like to thank my thesis advisors, Dr. Michelle Maresh-Fuehrer and Dr. Michael Sollitto. Together we made a great team! I would like to thank Dr. Maresh-Fuehrer for her fantastic attention to detail and for the multiple edits she made to this paper. Thank you for helping me to create something that I can truly be proud of and for always providing me with tons of encouragement. To Dr. Sollitto, I would like to thank you for always taking time out of your day to discuss organizational communication literature as well as statistics. Your guidance allowed me to process and synthesize the material I read.

I would also like to acknowledge all of my amazing coworkers who helped share my questionnaire and surveys via social media, without your support I would never have been able to collect data.

Finally, I would like to thank my parents, friends, and family. Over the past two and a half years I have placed all of my attention on school and work at the expense of everything else. Thank you for waiting patiently as I strove to complete this momentous achievement and for sticking it out with me! Your love, support, and encouragement kept me going.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Coombs (2007a) defined a crisis as "the perception of an unpredictable event that threatens important expectancies of stakeholders and can seriously impact an organizations performance and generate negative outcomes" (pp. 2-3). Crises occur on a daily basis and, whether they are small or disastrous, have the ability to affect the relationships between organizations and their stakeholders. Not only can a crisis affect the relationship an organization cultivates with its various stakeholders but it can also cause serious damage to the organization's reputation. This definition also highlights the importance of stakeholders, their perceptions, and expectations of crisis response strategies from an organization experiencing a crisis. Rawlings (2006) defines a stakeholder as anyone who can affect or be affected by an organization.

Initially crisis communication research was application based and provided organizations with the tools needed to communicate effectively with stakeholders during crises. However, research based in theory became increasingly more important and Coombs (2010a) asked the question "is the crisis communication research supplying advice that management can trust – based on evidence (p. 720)?" He builds the argument that much of the research in crisis communication is speculative and based on researcher opinion gathered from case studies versus empirical testing. This need for theoretical testing is the basis for this thesis and supporting rationale. As Coombs (2010a) mentioned, it is important to base research on theory versus speculations and recommendations gathered from organization specific case studies.

In an earlier study, Coombs and Holladay (2001) stated "it is *assumed* [emphasis added] that crisis managers provide instructing information prior to or in conjunction with crisis responses" (p. 321). This statement is in direct contradiction with the need for developing more evidence-based research in crisis communication and sends mixed messages on areas in need of

further inquiry. As noted by the definition of crisis, an important area of study includes stakeholders and their expectations of crisis response strategies. Yet, a recent study conducted by Kim and Sung (2014) pointed out the lack of research focused on base crises response strategies in current crisis communication studies. These base crisis response strategies consist of important instructing and adjusting information that aid stakeholders in protecting themselves as well as coping with a crisis (Kim, Avery & Lariscy, 2011). Coombs (2007a) clearly stated that before using Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT), or other reputation saving strategies, crisis managers must provide instructing and adjusting information to their stakeholders. These strategies also aid in reducing uncertainty for stakeholders during a crisis and many researchers tout its importance (Coombs, 2007a; Coombs & Holladay, 2002; Kim, Avery & Lariscy, 2011; Kim & Sung, 2014). Organizations that deviate from this formula during a crisis run the risk of causing harm to their reputations.

However, less than 2% of organizations say that the public's safety or health is the goal of their crisis responses (Kim, Avery & Lariscy, 2011). This huge disconnect in what the literature states organizations should be communicating with their stakeholders and the strategies organizations actually use, represent an area that needs more attention. Crises are times of great stress for an organization and information must be gathered quickly. Attempting to understand specific stakeholder expectations in the heat of a crisis could pose a huge challenge for crisis management teams. Therefore, this thesis will attempt to assess and address stakeholder expectations of crisis response messages communicated by their organization by building upon base crisis response strategy research as explained by Coombs (2007). This thesis will focus on creating and validating a measure of employee expectations. Stakeholders in the oil and gas

industry, specifically employees, will be surveyed to discover their expectations for crisis responses during industry related crises.

Examples of Industrial Crises

At the expense of providing important base crisis response strategies, reputation saving strategies have become the communicative norm for organizations experiencing a crisis (Kim et al., 2011). This use of response strategies can often cause harm to the stakeholders, people who interact with the organization, and the environment around them. When organizations act in a self-serving manner that is not beneficial to the larger community, they are not fulfilling their duty as a good member of that community (Heath & Ni, 2010). Organizations who are actively trying to save their tarnished reputations at the expense of stakeholder safety can also create a dangerous organizational culture that is unwilling to provide instructing information during a crisis.

Seeger, Sellnow, and Ulmer (2003), stated that crises are an inherent danger associated with organizing and organizations need to be prepared for them to occur. Sadly, many organizations see a crisis as something that could not happen within or at their company and do not prepare for them (Maresh-Fuehrer, 2013; Orts & Spigonardo, 2013). Yet, many organizations maintain a "myth of safety" attitude that can be seen in several examples of industrial crises. Often this idea of absolute safety creates an organizational culture that is unwilling to provide instructing information during a crisis because they are trying to save tarnished reputations or prevent further image damage. These types of organizations not only run the risk of harming their relationship with stakeholders but ruining their image with the reputation saving strategies they employed.

Two examples of crises where the organization put their reputations before their stakeholders include Japan's Fukushima Nuclear Disaster and BP's Deepwater Horizon oil spill. Both crises involved organizations who acted in a way that led stakeholders into interpreting their responses as self-saving and, in BP's case, exposed a longstanding organizational culture that puts monetary value above stakeholder relations. These two examples of industrial crises show how improper communication can harm the stakeholder/organization relationship and why creating a measure of employee expectations is necessary.

The Fukushima Nuclear Disaster. Japan's Office of the Prime Minister issued the following crisis response almost five hours after government officials were notified that the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant was undergoing a nuclear emergency: "This order is a precautionary measure, and is an order to evacuate. Currently, there are no leakages of radioactivity outside the reactor. At this time, there is no danger to the environment" (Hachisuka, et al. 2012; ch. 4, p. 15). This response illustrates the lack of base crisis response strategies that should have provided the Japanese people with important information on how to protect themselves. As a result, residents of nine villages were left in in areas of radioactive contamination for several weeks without access to food or supplies (Hachisuka et. al, 2012). After a thorough investigation, it was found that the two major organizations involved in the crisis abandoned their duty to their many stakeholders in favor of reputation saving strategies.

Brief timeline of crisis events. On March 11, 2011at 2:46 p.m., an earthquake with a magnitude of a 9.0 hit the northeast coast of Japan and triggered a series of characteristic-based crises. Two natural disasters, rumors, technical breakdowns, human breakdowns, and organizational misdeeds led to what is known as the Fukushima Nuclear Disaster. The Great Tohoku earthquake initially caused a power outage at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power

Plant, which is owned and operated by the Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO). Due to the loss of power, reactor units switched to back-up diesel generators in order to continue cooling nuclear fuel rods. At 3:37 p.m. on the same day, a tsunami reaching over 50 feet in height also struck the northeast coast as a direct result of the Great Tohoku Earthquake (Orts & Spigonardo, 2013). The tsunami directly impacted the power plant and caused massive damage to the grounds, destroying backup generators, the power grid, and three cooling system fail-safes, which ultimately led to critical system failure (Hachisuka et al., 2012; Kushida, 2014).

According to the Fukushima Nuclear Accident Independent Investigation Commission, (NAIIC), 146,520 people were evacuated and told that no harmful gases were emitted during the explosion of reactor unit 1 (Hachisuka et al., 2012). In the following days, reactor units 3 and 4 exploded. During this time, the government asked residents within 30 km to shelter in place and they were inadvertently left in their homes until March 25 due to a lack of communication. The Japanese government then suggested a voluntary evacuation of residents within 30 kilometers of the power plant. It was not until December 16, that former Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda announced that all reactors were in a stable state of shutdown (Fecht, 2012).

In 2012, the NAIIC surveyed 21,000 randomly selected households to discover how the crisis was communicated to evacuees. The NAIIC investigated the actions of both TEPCO and the Japanese government, specifically the actions of the former Japanese Prime Minister, Naoto Kan. They also focused on how both organizations communicated with specific sets of stakeholders, especially the evacuees. With a 50% response rate, it was discovered that evacuee expectations were not met by official crisis response strategies from both organizations (Hachisuka et al., 2012). Since the incident, the public has lost trust in TEPCO, and TEPCO's relationship with stakeholders has suffered.

TEPCO response strategies. Despite operating in an area that was prone to earthquakes and tsunamis, TEPCO was not prepared for the disaster that occurred at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant (Hachisuka et al., 2012). TEPCO is one of the largest electric companies in Japan and has head offices in Tokyo, Washington D.C., and London. According to their official website, they own 197 power stations, generate 5375.4 billion yen from electricity sales, and will begin selling natural gas while expanding business overseas (Tokyo Electric Power Company, n.d.a). They have 35,723 employees, 826,982 shareholders, and 29.04 million customer agreements (Tokyo Electric Power Company, 2014). TEPCO is just one of ten electric power companies in Japan and they provide thermal, nuclear, and hydroelectric power to ten regions.

However, TEPCO and its regulating bodies have a history of continuing to act reactively rather than proactively towards safety issues within the organization. After sending out initial notifications, TEPCO's response to the Fukushima Nuclear Disaster was to shift communication responsibility to the Office of the Prime Minister. It seems that a complicated mix of corporate apologia and image restoration techniques were at play when TEPCO made the decision to give up communication responsibility. Both apologia and image restoration are reputation saving techniques used by organizations experiencing a crisis.

For example, there were many times during the escalation of the accident that TEPCO officials refused to make decisions that would prevent meltdown. Most notable was the miscommunication that occurred between Plant Manager Masao Yoshida and TEPCO Fellow Ichiro Takekuro. According to the NAIIC, Yoshida, who was in charge of the disaster response efforts at Fukushima Daiichi, should have had full decisional authority, but was often at odds with the TEPCO head office (Hachisuka et al., 2012). Yoshida was told to halt action many times by TEPCO Fellow Takekuro and wait for all decisions to be made by former Prime

Minister Kan (Kushida, 2014; Hachisuka et al., 2012; Funabashi & Kitazawa, 2012). It appears that TEPCO's crisis response strategies focused on Hearit's (2006) strategy of differentiation and Benoit's (1997) evasion of responsibility.

Hearit (2006) explains that in differentiation an organization will try to distance themselves from their guilt. An organization may admit that a crisis has occurred but try to attribute the crisis to an accident. This also coincides with Benoit's (1997) theory of Image Restoration. In this theory, Benoit (1997) places the accident strategy within a larger response category called evasion of responsibility. There was no possible way that TEPCO could deny that an accident occurred at the power plant. Yet, the chosen crisis response strategies show that TEPCO tried to attribute the escalation of the meltdown to the unprecedented combination of an earthquake and the resulting tsunami.

Organizations who try to employ this response strategy are ultimately hoping to convince stakeholders that the crisis evolved due to an accident therefore reducing perceived responsibility. Contrary to TEPCO's attempt at convincing the public that the crisis was an accident, the NAIIC decided the crisis could have been prevented given the organization's history of irresponsibility (Hachisuka et al., 2012). Because of the evasion of responsibility, much of the public communication and information dissemination of the crisis came from the Japanese government, specifically the Office of the Prime Minister.

Government response strategies. It is important to note that at the time of the disaster, Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency Deputy Director Koichiro Nakamura was dismissed after publically acknowledging the possibility of nuclear meltdown and replaced by former Chief Cabinet Secretary Edano (Funabashi & Kitazawa, 2012). This led the public to believe that the government was being deceptive and hiding the truth about the severity of the accident.

> On the night of March 12, a press conference was held in response to a 20 km evacuation order and Former Chief Cabinet Secretary Edano stated:
>
> […] there is no actual danger to the residents in the areas lying between 10 km and 20 km from the plant due to the release of radioactivity, we have expanded the evacuation zone to 20 km from the plant considering the fact that new response measures may be taken, for the sake of taking full precautionary measures (Hachisuka et al., 2012, ch. 4, p. 15).

This response coincides with Benoit's (1997) description of the response strategies, denial, and reducing offensiveness. With this statement, the Japanese government employed the denial strategy and simply denied the fact that a nuclear meltdown was in progress. At the time of this statement reactor unit 1 at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant had already exploded due to hydrogen buildup. Therefore, to publically announce that there was no danger to the public was unethical and a blatant disregard to important stakeholder safety.

The Japanese government also used aspects of reducing offensiveness by downplaying the seriousness of the accident to stakeholders. During the first three days of the crisis, the Japanese government and the public witnessed the explosion of three of the six nuclear reactors at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant. In an interview with the Nuclear Safety Commission's Haruki Madarame, who was a member of an ad-hoc emergency response group appointed by former Prime Minister Kan, it was found that government officials were purposely downplaying the severity of the accident. Their use of Benoit's (1997) reducing offensiveness strategy stemmed from a fear of causing widespread public panic (Funabashi & Kitazawa, 2012). Research also showed that former Prime Minister Kan had a good understanding of nuclear energy and secretly prepared for a worst-case scenario – the evacuation of Tokyo (Funabashi & Kitazawa, 2012; Kushida, 2014).

All parties involved in the Fukushima Nuclear Disaster used crisis response strategies that were focused on denial, differentiation, evasion of responsibility, and reducing offensiveness. They strategically tried to save their reputations at the cost of stakeholder safety when they had information stating stakeholders were actually in danger. The mixed messages and lack of information communicated during the accident further increased the amount of anxiety and mistrust stakeholders had with both organizations, which will be explained further.

Stakeholder reactions and expectations. In 2012, the NAIIC surveyed 21,000 randomly selected households to discover how the crisis was communicated to evacuees. With a 50% response rate, it was discovered that evacuee expectations were not met by official crisis response strategies (Hachisuka et al., 2012). The 10,633 stakeholders who responded to the NAIIC voluntary survey voiced two major concerns: 1. Information during the event was provided too slowly and 2. Information provided was not informative or helpful in preparing to evacuate and taking precautionary safety measures. Both of these expectations match the assumption that stakeholders expect to hear instructing and adjusting information before organizations attempt to use reputations saving strategies.

According to the Fukushima evacuee survey, a resident of Minamisoma's Odaka ward stated, "[…] The director (of TEPCO) at the time of the accident recalled on TV that he thought he might die at the time, but that sort of information should have been announced to the nearby residents instantly […]" (Hachisuka et al., 2012, Survey of Evacuees, p. 54). This comment explains the first major communication expectation expressed by stakeholders who evacuated during the time of the disaster, which was that information should have been relayed faster. Evacuees expressed dissatisfaction with the way information was communicated during several evacuation announcements. Many of the residents were unaware that the accident had even

occurred because the government delayed the release of important information (Hachisuka et al., 2012). In fact, at the time of the first evacuation only 20% of residents were aware that an accident had occurred at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant (Hachisuka et al., 2012). This led to increased confusion during evacuation orders and even forced stakeholders to evacuate multiple times during the crisis.

Evacuees also expressed a dissatisfaction with the clarity of crisis information communicated during the Fukushima Nuclear Disaster and expressed an expectation for better instructing information. A resident of Iitate Village expressed the following concern, "I believe many people were exposed to radiation because of the inadequate accident response by the government and municipality. Data was deleted and deceptive instructions were given even though they were aware of the real situation" (Hachisuka et al., 2012, Survey of Evacuees, p. 57).

Another evacuee, who was a resident of Naraha Town, expressed the following:

> The evacuation orders did not include any clear information about the nuclear accident, and were ambiguous. I think evacuating without knowing the reasons behind the evacuation only contributed to greater anxiety among the people. Thereafter, distrust of the government and TEPCO grew, and the situation has remained unchanged, even now (Hachisuka et al., 2012, ch. 4, p. 14).

According to the NAIIC (Hachisuka et al., 2012) evacuees did not receive specific information about the nuclear accident or information that would be beneficial during the evacuation process. Evacuee comments reveal that because there was no specific instructing information from the government, they suffered physically and emotionally. During much of the crisis, many residents believed they were evacuating in response to the earthquake or tsunami

and left with the barest necessities (Hachisuka et al., 2012). Many did not realize that radiation contamination would make their homes unfit to live in and they would be left in temporary housing for an extended period. The lack of information during the crisis also caused people to evacuate several times. Stakeholders would evacuate to an area thinking it was safe from radiation, only to be evacuated again. Sadly, the government made no moves to issue clearer messages in regards to radiation contamination and the effect it could have on residents (Funabashi & Kitazawa, 2012).

The first SCCT recommendation for a crisis response strategy is providing instructing information to all victims, or potential victims, in the form of warnings and directions for protecting themselves from harm (Coombs, 2007a, p. 143). An evaluation of response strategies used by the two major organizations involved in the Fukushima crisis clearly show that they did not have their stakeholder's immediate safety in mind. In all communications, the organizations continually put their reputations before attending to the needs of the public. This led to mass confusion, anxiety, and a mistrust, which ultimately harms the organization/stakeholder relationship. The NAIIC found that both organizations abandoned their duty to communicate important crisis information to their stakeholders (Hachisuka et al., 2012).

As the only country to experience the effects of a nuclear weapon, Japan has had a long and complicated relationship with nuclear energy. In the wake of World War II, it was the general consent of the Japanese people to oppose nuclear power. According to Orts and Spigonardo (2013), Japan does not have many options when it comes to natural resources and the Japanese government was eager to convince the public of the safety of nuclear energy, which led to a widespread organizational culture that blindly ignored safety issues. Keyton (2011) defined organizational culture as "the set(s) of artifacts, values, and assumptions that emerges from the

interactions of organizational members" (p. 28). This culture can be passed down from the company's top leadership through the hierarchical structure as well as through other company values and norms. Prior to the Fukushima Nuclear Disaster, Japan created a general culture that focused on a "myth of safety" which ultimately led to what experts called, "Japan's Nuclear Village" (Funabashi & Kitazawa, 2012; Funabashi, 2012).

TEPCO and the Japanese Government's lack of safety culture. Japan's "Nuclear Village" consisted of local leaders within the government and academia. Its only purpose was to ensure that the people of Japan believed a nuclear catastrophe could never happen. Members within the nuclear village refused to acknowledge any issues with nuclear energy, going as far as ignoring obvious safety issues and precautions.

> A comment from an Okuma resident, obtained from the NAIIC's evacuee survey brings to light the common thought within the nuclear village:
>
> […] When I was working as a contract worker for TEPCO on the first floor, I asked a team leader 'what if a tsunami similar to the one in Sumatra hits Japan?' The reply was 'Impossible! There is no need to think of an impossible situation.' After all, TEPCO, the government, and the municipality did not think seriously enough. Nor did I […] (Hachisuka et al., 2012, p. 57).

It would seem that safety issues and scandal plagued Japanese nuclear power from the start. General Electric (GE) constructed the first Fukushima plant in 1975 but they did not consider Japan's unique environment during construction. Several GE engineers pointed out the plant's earthquake and tsunami design flaws, but due to the conformist thinking within the nuclear village corrective action was not implemented (Funabashi, 2012). To make matters worse, the

government, regulating officials and scientists, who were the main proponents of the safety myth, regularly received large monetary payouts from TEPCO.

A look at the corporate ethics and compliance section of TEPCO's website shows that in 2002 they implemented measures to improve their corporate culture. Four commitments were enacted and focused on promoting transparency of nuclear operations through information disclosure, strengthening employee and organization performance, encouraging communication within TEPCO, as well as ensuring corporate ethics are followed by offering trainings, and conducting audits (Tokyo Electric Power Company, n.d.b).

TEPCO and its regulating bodies have a history of continuing to act reactively rather than proactively towards safety issues within their company. They also have a history of ignoring lessons from other nuclear disasters such as Chernobyl (Funabashi, 2012). Although TEPCO's main website and their public relations staff would have you believe that they are a company that runs on good ethical standards, they are plagued by scandals. A company such as TEPCO has huge sums of money that they used to buy scientists, politicians, and nuclear regulators. This effectively buys them a group of people willing to promote nuclear power to all of Japanese society. Nevertheless, much of the media surrounding TEPCO, before and after the Fukushima Nuclear Disaster, revolves around a legacy of irresponsibility, a lack of transparency, and a history of information manipulation (Hachisuka et al., 2012, ch. 5, p. 54).

The lack of safety culture that was seen in the Fukushima Nuclear Disaster represents a learning opportunity for other industries. The Deepwater oil and gas exploration industry serves as a prime candidate for the lessons learned from disasters experienced in the nuclear industry. In support of this notion, The National Commission on the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling (2011) gave the following recommendation, "the nuclear power industry's

method of transforming business-as-usual practices offers a useful analogue as the oil and gas industry now seeks to do the same [...]" (p. 235).

Nuclear power plants are just one example of organizations that have the capability of causing damage to the environment and stakeholders involved during a crisis. Such irresponsible behavior does not represent the community relation strategies that are needed in crisis communication and TEPCO did not attempt to assist the community during the disaster. Unfortunately, these types of crises are not isolated events and they can occur in many different industries such as agriculture, mining, construction, manufacturing, and utilities. Another organization that is familiar with crises and putting reputation before stakeholders is oil and gas giant, BP.

Deepwater Horizon oil spill. In 2010, President Barack Obama stated that the explosion of BP's Deepwater Horizon oilrig was "the worst environmental disaster America has ever faced" (Graham et al., 2011, p. 189). The fire and explosion that occurred aboard the Deepwater Horizon oilrig has also been called the largest marine oil spill in the nation's history (Schwartz, 2015, January). Even though it was clear that the oil spill would harm the environment and the people who worked along the coast, BP's response was not up to stakeholder expectations. According to the National Commission on the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling (2011), "If BP's response capacity was underwhelming, some aspects of its response plan were embarrassing" (p.133). After the National Commission investigated BP's oil response plan, it was found they had included information that was not applicable to the current crisis and copied some of their information from government websites such as the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (Graham et al., 2011).

According to Maresh-Fuehrer (2013), the pre-crisis planning stage is of the utmost importance and improper preparation can become apparent during the crisis event especially when communicating to stakeholders. BP's ill-created oil response plan serves as a symbol of a widespread organizational culture that placed revenue over safety and crisis preparedness. However, corporate social responsibility and community relations, which have strong ties to crisis communication strategies, state that organizations should always act in a way that is beneficial to both the organization and the community. Therefore, it is reasonable to believe that organizations must first build trust and have good community relations with stakeholders to build a good reputation. Sadly, the way BP reacted to the 2010 Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill shows they built an organizational culture based on increasing revenues at all costs.

Brief timeline of crisis events. At 9:45 p.m. on April 20, 2010, BP issued the following distress call, "Mayday, Mayday, Mayday, this is the *Deepwater Horizon*. We are on fire" (Graham et al., 2011, p. 10). An explosion aboard the Deepwater Horizon oilrig caused by a buildup of high-pressure oil and gas in the drill pipe injured 17 workers and killed 11. On the day of the crisis BP was drilling the Macondo well, a deep-sea hydrocarbon reserve, off the coast of Louisiana. Starting at 5 p.m. pressure tests of the drill pipe were conducted and increased pressures were seen several times (The Deepwater Horizon Study Group, 2011). During several tests, pressure in the drill pipe increased from 273 psi to 1,250 psi in six minutes. It was believed the building pressure was caused by a leak from the well and when pressures stabilized, it was believed the leak had stopped. At 9 p.m., pressure in the pipe rose to 1,350 psi indicating there was indeed a leak in the pipe. The crew of the Deepwater Horizon worked on decreasing the pressure in the drill pipe but spikes in pressure were seen numerous times until the pressure

pushed seawater, followed by drilling mud, to the top of the drill derrick (Deepwater Horizon Study Group, 2011).

At 9:47 p.m., the first gas alarm on the oilrig sounded and caused generator failure to the rest of the oilrig. According to the Deepwater Horizon Study Group (2011), the first explosion occurred within minutes of the alarm, followed by a second explosion. The explosion and resulting fire was caused by the presence of highly explosive hydrocarbons escaping from the well. By 11:22 p.m., 115 members of the Deepwater Horizon crew had successfully evacuated the rig. Within the next 36 hours, the oilrig sank 5000 feet to the bottom of the ocean and began spewing oil from the hydrocarbon reserve (Deepwater Horizon Study Group, 2011; Graham et al., 2011). From April 21 to September 19, BP orchestrated ten different attempts to stop the oil that was gushing into the Gulf of Mexico. At the time, it was estimated that 1,000 barrels per day (b/d) were escaping from the well and this number was projected to increase to a maximum of 60,000 b/d over the next three months (Smithson & Venette, 2013).

On May 11, top executives of organizations involved in the oil spill including BP, Transocean, and Halliburton Global Business, placed full blame on each other in front of a senate committee (Time, n.d.). On June 16, BP started a $20 billion fund for damages and a $100 million fund to pay for oilrig workers lost wages (Time, n.d.). During this time, BP executive and CEO, Tony Hayward appeared in court and in the media as the spokesperson of the company. BP also launched a $93 million public relations campaign that focused on clean-up efforts (Veil, Sellnow, & Wickline, 2013). In all, BP issued 145 press releases during the crisis. Nevertheless, BP continued to use crisis response strategies that placed preventing further reputation damage and saving money as their top priority (Smithson & Venette, 2013).

BP response strategies. BP operates on an international level in 80 different countries including Europe, the United States, Canada, Asia, and Russia, to name a few. According to their website, they have 80,000 employees worldwide and generate $403.3 billion in economic revenue (BP, n.d.a). As a company, BP provides transportation fuel, lubricants, and petrochemicals to support the worlds energy needs (BP, n.d.a). According to their website, they have drilled 17 exploration wells and produced 3.2 million b/d of oil (BP, n.d.a). Their official website states they value safety, respect, excellence, courage, and one team (BP, n.d.b). In 2000, the company underwent a major re-branding phase to help remove their previous association with an aggressive BP/Amoco merger (Landor, n.d.). According to Landor (n.d.), the company hired to create the new image, the new green and yellow logo was made to mark BP as an environmental leader. However, BP maintains their tarnished reputation and has been accused of cutting corners on safety to save money leading up to several other major crises (U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board, 2007; Smithson & Venette, 2013).

According to Smithson and Venette (2013), one of the major crisis response strategies used by Hayward during the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill was stonewalling. Smithson and Venette (2013) define stonewalling as, "uncooperative communication that strategically obstructs and delays the flow of information" (p. 399). In their analysis, they give multiple examples of Hayward using responses such as, the investigation is ongoing, he was not involved in decision-making, or that he was not qualified to provide an answer. In fact, Hayward is most known for his poor communication during the crisis. He was even quoted as saying, "I would like my life back," when speaking to a reporter about the impact of the spill (Walsh, 2010 July). Smithson and Venette (2013) explained this type of crisis response strategy is used to minimize the amount of reputational damage the organization experiences from a crisis. However, many

people believed BP was being uncooperative or hiding information (Smithson & Venette, 2013). Thus, their image was damaged as well as their relationship with stakeholders.

Contrary to stakeholder perceptions, it was found that BP accepted responsibility for clean-up efforts from the beginning of the crisis (Graham et al., 2011). During an oil spill, the federal government maintains the option to take command of response efforts by funding all clean-up efforts. However, this option is not usually utilized especially when the organization involved in the oil spill has enough money to fund the response themselves (Graham et al., 2011). It is important to note that although BP accepted responsibility for response efforts they gave off the perception that they were not sincere. Hayward was even quoted saying the following statement, "what the hell did we do to deserve this" (Graham et al., p. 135). Through the investigation it was found that prior to the crisis BP did not proactively create a detailed crisis response plan. A crisis response plan is a crucial piece of pre-crisis planning that outlines all the possible risks associated with an organization. According to Maresh-Fuehrer (2013), a crisis communication plan can help organizations communicate effectively with their various stakeholders.

It was also found that BP did not attempt to tailor an oil response plan for the Gulf of Mexico crisis and even copied much of their plan from other organizations. One section of their response plan mentioned walruses, seals, and sea otters as animal populations that would be affected by the gulf spill (Graham et al., 2011; Veil, Sellnow, & Wickline, 2013). None of these animals can be found in the Gulf of Mexico and BP's response plan showed a lack of effort to apply response measures to the Deepwater Horizon Spill (Graham et al., 2011). BP's 582-page response plan was criticized as an unchanging document that was used from region to region (Jervis, 2010 May). Other issues found in BP's response plan included a link, which led to a

Japanese entertainment website, the naming of a deceased wildlife expert to assist in relief efforts, and the fact that their plan was almost identical to several other oil company plans (Graham et al., 2011). This was the result of many years of organizational safety oversight and a culture where production reigned supreme.

BP's lack of safety culture. According to the U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation report (2007) of BP's actions leading up to the 2003 Texas City explosion, a major key finding showed a lack of communication within the organization about safety problems. This led to a "myth of safety" culture that caused managers not to report safety concerns. In their letter to the president, Graham et al. (2011) mentioned that BP managers had access to a 2009 safety audit, which showed over 390 items on the Deepwater Horizon oilrig that needed attention prior to the oil spill. At the time of the blowout, completion of the Macondo well was six weeks behind schedule and had been aptly nicknamed "the well from hell" as well as "the nightmare well" by the crew (Letter to Tony Hayward, 2010; Graham et al., 2011).

At the time, costs for drilling the Macondo well were already $58 million over budget and the Deepwater Horizon was at risk of losing its top performing record. According to The National Commission on the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling (2011), The Deepwater Horizon maintained an outstanding performance record in it seven years of drilling and had never experienced a lost-time incident. Therefore, The Deepwater Horizon Study Group (2011) concluded that one of the major underlying causes of the oil spill was a dangerous companywide culture of saving time and money at the risk of safety. Investigation findings linked BP's actions, response strategies, and organizational culture at the time of the crisis with the same culture the company displayed during several other major crises.

After several progress reports and investigations, The Deepwater Horizon Study Group (2011) found the following:

> At the time of the Macondo blowout, BP's corporate culture remained one that was embedded in risk-taking and cost-cutting – it was like that in 2005 (Texas City), in 2006 (Alaska North Slope Spill), and in 2010 ("The Spill")….Cultural influences that permeate an organization and an industry and manifest in actions that can either promote and nurture a high reliability organization with high reliability systems, or actions reflective of complacency, excessive risk-taking, and a loss of situational awareness. (pp. 5-6)

BP's high-risk culture can be traced back to the 1980s and their former Executive Vice President, Sir John Brown. He effectively brought the company back from possible bankruptcy by establishing a new work ethic focused on high-reward opportunities that were also high-risk (Graham et al., 2011). In their letter to Hayward (2010), members of the investigation committee Rep. Henry Waxman and Rep. Bart Stupak, explained their concern over the evidence backing up BP's lack of safety culture. Although BP announced that safety was indeed an important part of their organization it seems that they focused more on occupational safety versus process safety (Graham et. al, 2011). Occupational safety focuses on keeping workers or people in the organization safe while process safety can be applied to general work procedures. The National Commission on the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling (2011) stated that while injury and spill rates have reduced by 75% since 1999, BP still experiences major safety lapses.

Not only was the company widely criticized for its lack of safety leading up to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, its communication during and after the incident was also criticized. BP's lack of pre-crisis planning as well as Hayward's lack of tact when speaking to the public

provided another example of an organization that only cared about saving their reputation. Their use of reputation saving strategies showed an organization that would rather frustrate public opinion than admit they were wrong (Smithson & Venette, 2013).

Stakeholder reactions and expectations. The public were indeed frustrated with BP's response to the oil spill. Although the official investigation report (The National Commission on the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling, 2011) gives numerous examples of BP paying for response costs and serving as an active member of the response, stakeholders maintained a different perception. Stakeholders maintained the perception that BP was not sincere about their efforts in stopping the leak and that they must pay for the crisis at all costs. Several aspects affected stakeholder's perception of BP throughout the response efforts including Hayward's downplaying of the damage and the economic impact to local industries, which seemed to have planted a deep fear in local governments. This caused many stakeholders to take response efforts into their own hands.

Hayward was quoted saying the following, "the Gulf of Mexico is a very big ocean. The amount of volume of oil and dispersant we are putting into it is tiny in relation to the total water volume" (The National Commission on the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling, 2011, p. 144). This statement is a reflection of Benoit's (1997) image repair strategy, specifically reducing offensiveness. By stating that the amount of oil gushing out of the Macondo well was insignificant compared to the size of the ocean, Hayward was trying to minimize the negative feelings associated with the crisis. This response strategy was also used during the Exxon Valdez oil spill when then Chairman Rawl also tried to downplay the oil spills effect on the environment (Benoit, 1997). Another example of BP's use of image repair strategy occurred at the beginning of the crisis when they first estimated the amount of oil spilling into

the Gulf of Mexico as only 1,000 b/d. It was quickly seen by government officials and stakeholders that this was a gross underestimation of the actual amount of oil being leaked. By the end of the crisis, the government's estimate was closer to 60,000 b/d (The National Commission on the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling, 2011). This coupled with the lack of pre-crisis response planning, gave stakeholders the perception that BP was not competent in resolving the crisis. Benoit (1997) stated that when using image repair strategies, it is important to identify all audiences involved. However, when BP continuingly downplayed the severity of the accident, they were not taking into consideration the impact the crisis was having on local stakeholders.

According to The National Commission on the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling (2011), more than 650 miles of Gulf Coast was adversely impacted by the spill. Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, and Texas were all impacted by the spill to varying degrees. However, the Louisiana coastline received the greatest impact and was designated as moderately to heavily oiled. This caused a severe economic impact to the Gulf of Mexico fishing industry, causing many companies to go out of business.

One Florida business owner expressed the following:

> […] NOAA predicted a shift in the weather and that oil was imminent. I was devastated. I couldn't sleep, I couldn't eat. It was the worst time of my life. Everything was at risk – my home, my income, my children's education, my three employees who are like a family to me. (p. 189)

Contrary to BP's initial predictions, the oil spill was in fact having major repercussions on stakeholders. Many local fishermen, who were without jobs because of the ban on fishing,

resented having to compete for response personnel jobs with out-of-state companies (The National Commission on the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling, 2011).

In response to this, BP initiated their Vessels of Opportunities program, which sought to hire private vessels to aid in response efforts. However, the program had many issues and wealthy boat owners ended up benefiting more from the program than the out-of-work fishermen. This seems to have increased stakeholders dislike of BP causing them to question their response efforts. Local governments then initiated their own response programs such as creating sand berms to protect delicate coastline environments and charging BP an estimated $424 million for the cost of the project (The National Commission on the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling, 2011). The official investigation report (2011) provides many other examples of stakeholders not believing that BP was competent in their response efforts.

It has become apparent that even though BP was spending a significant amount of money to combat the crisis, they could not gain the trust of local stakeholders and the community. Heath and Ni (2010) stated that it is an organization's duty, as a member of the community, to act in a way that is both beneficial to the organization and its surrounding environment. This statement is especially true when focusing on community relations, which has strong ties to crisis communication strategies (Heath & Ni, 2010). In community relations, the organization has to actively build trust with local stakeholders and show them the company cares about their safety. Ultimately, during the crisis, stakeholders did not feel like BP sincerely cared about their wellbeing. Therefore, they could not trust BP.

In today's society, it is now more common for stakeholders to personify organizations and expect them to display ethical behavior (Maresh-Fuehrer, 2013). With their manpower and money, organizations have the potential to influence and create a positive change in the

communities around them. This is why it is so important for organizations to act with their stakeholder's safety in mind rather than their reputation. Heath and Ni (2010) stated that these types of community relation strategies are the centerpiece to solving the crisis management puzzle because, as an example, people who live near refineries want to know how safe they are. Therefore, providing base crisis response strategies would be the best course of action for an organization to take during a crisis. This would ensure that the company is acting in a way that is mutually beneficial to the organization as well as the community.

According to Coombs (2007a), an organization's reputation is crucial to the success of businesses and many organizations have adopted this concept when dealing with mishaps and the public. However, Kim and Sung (2014) discovered that employing reputation repairing response strategies during a crisis did no better at lowering attribution versus just providing base crisis response strategies, including instructional and adjusting information. In their concluding remarks, they suggested that researchers should reconsider the emphasis on reputational management by adding to base crisis response literature. Coombs and Holladay (2001; 2002) explained that during a crisis, stakeholder relations should be more important than organizational reputation, yet TEPCO and BP serve as examples of organizations that put their reputation first. Selfish organizations that employ reputation saving strategies as their first and only crisis response strategy, ultimately damage their own reputation at the cost of stakeholder relations.

Purpose of Study

This study will add to the literature by providing practitioners and researchers a base to conduct further theory testing by providing a new measure of employee crisis message expectations obtained through quantitative analysis. Much of the literature states that organizations should use base crisis response strategies before using any reputation repairing

strategies. However, when faced with a crisis, most organizations first action is to repair reputation and not provide stakeholders important information that will ensure their safety. In doing so, organizations run the risk of further damaging their reputation as seen in the Fukushima Nuclear Disaster and the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill.

According to Coombs (2007a), reputations are formed through organizational/stakeholder interactions and a crisis is based on stakeholder perceptions. SCCT provides organizations with crisis response strategies that, according to Coombs (2007a), puts people first. However, a content analysis of 51 articles published between 1991-2009 discovered that the most prevalent crisis response strategies were used for reputation management (Kim et al., 2011). Many crisis managers chose response strategies that are aimed at preserving organizational reputation as a primary step during crisis, which often places stakeholder safety lower on the priority list. This strategy was prevalent during the Fukushima Nuclear Disaster and the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill. During both crises, stakeholders' expectations were not met. This can be dangerous for the organization because if stakeholders are unhappy with organizational efforts and maintain a negative attitude, the crisis will continue (Maresh-Fuehrer, 2013).

This study is important to the field of crisis and organizational communication because results may also expose stakeholder expectations for response strategies and message content for crises. In the midst of a crisis, it may be difficult for crisis teams to gather and identify expectation information. Therefore, results of this study may provide crisis managers with a set easily administered items representing stakeholder expectations which could be used during crises. This will aid in removing the assumption and ambiguity encountered when trying to identify stakeholder expectations in the midst of a crisis. Research questions should focus on how to identify stakeholder needs, and how to address them. Much of the crisis communication

research has focused on stakeholders' perceptions of reputational crisis response strategies, but there is little to no clear research that addresses the information stakeholders expect crisis messages to contain.

This study has the possibility of identifying those expectations for crises in the victim and accidental crisis cluster. In the victim and accidental crises, stakeholders attribute the least amount of responsibility to the organization. Because of the low perception of responsibility, organizations can and should respond by informing stakeholders as their first communication goal during a crisis. Yet, it is still common for organizations to put their reputation first. This can result in dire consequences for the organization and its stakeholders. According to Coombs (2007a), a crisis can be represented by a three-stage cycle. In the post-crisis stage if stakeholder's expectations go unmet then the crisis can never truly end. Countless crises throughout history, including what is currently occurring in Japan and the Gulf of Mexico, serve as examples of what happens when stakeholder expectations are ignored.

This leads to the main topic of this study: assessing and addressing employee expectations during industrial crises as a pre-requisite for implementing reputational crisis response strategies, specifically Situational Crisis Communication Theory. There needs to be a clearly defined measure that first addresses stakeholder expectation, especially during highly dangerous crises. Therefore, statistical data that quantifies the message content stakeholders expect to hear could lend itself to creating a reliable list of base crisis response strategies. Professionals could then use this list quickly and easily in the event of a crisis before reputation saving strategies are utilized.

This study addresses the disconnect found in the literature between what organizations communicate to their stakeholders during a crisis and what the literature states stakeholders

expect to hear. The purpose of this two-phase, exploratory sequential design was to develop and test a survey instrument. The first phase of the study consisted of a qualitative exploration of stakeholder expectations for crisis message content, for which responses to open-ended questions were collected from employees of South Texas oil and gas companies. The second, quantitative phase followed the qualitative phase for the purpose of testing words, sentences, and phrases that were developed into an instrument. In the quantitative phase, instrument data were then collected from South Texas oil and gas employees' close-ended survey answers. Quantitative research questions were formulated after the completion of the initial qualitative phase. The reason for collecting qualitative data, initially, is that instruments pertaining to instructing and adjusting information are not available and there is a lack of specific information on stakeholder expectations of base crisis message content (Kim & Sung, 2014; Kim et al., 2011).

The following chapter constitutes a review of organizational and crisis communication literature, particularly focusing on the role of the stakeholder. The review begins with a description of the defining characteristics of organizations and organizational communication. The researcher will also review extent literature on the influence organizations have on their environment through community relations and corporate social responsibility. Finally, a thorough explanation of the history of crisis communication, its connection to organizations, and the importance of stakeholders will be discussed, leading to an argument regarding the need for more research focused on base crisis response strategies (Kim, et al., 2011).

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Included in this chapter are answers to the following questions: What are organizations? What is organizational communication? How do organizations interact with the environment around them, especially during a crisis? First, these questions are answered through an overview of literature concerning the foundation and development of the organizational communication discipline. Second, an in-depth discussion of how stakeholders influence their organization will serve as a bridge between organizational communication and crisis communication research. Third, an overview of the development of the crisis communication field and its most commonly used theories will be explained. Finally, base crisis response strategies will be discussed.

Defining Organizations

Many organizational communication scholars have provided definitions for organizational communication, but to completely understand the term it is important to first break it down by its individual characteristics. In doing so, it becomes possible to understand how organizations are formed and how the people within the organization communicate. Keyton (2011) defined an organization as "a dynamic system of organizational members, influenced by external stakeholders, who communicate within and across organizational structures in a purposeful an ordered way to achieve a subordinate goal" (p. 9). This definition will be heavily used in the present study. In her book, Keyton (2011) stated that an organization is made up of four important characteristics and can be defined by its people, how it communicates within and across structures, its superordinate goal, and the fact that it is a dynamic system.

Throughout the development of the discipline scholars have used several comparable definitions for an organization. In his overview of the discipline, Wrench (2013) considered 12

definitions of an organization from several prominent researchers in the field of organizational communication. He focused on drawing out themes that can be observed while looking at many different interpretations of the words "organization" and "communication." He built strong evidence for what is needed for an organization to exist and validated the definition of an organization as provided by Keyton (2011). By breaking down the four themes described by Keyton (2011), it is easy to understand what makes an organization, what occurs within an organization, and who can be affected by an organization.

The people. The first and the most important element of an organization are the people. This is an integral component of an organization because without people, whether they are full-time, part-time, or volunteers, the organization could not exist (Keyton, 2011; Wrench, 2013). In addition, Wrench (2013) stated that an organization could not exist without more than one person. Taylor and Van Every (2000), describe the people in an organization in two ways, they make the organization, and they are made by the organization. As the "makers" of an organization, the people must engage in communication and, as a result, the work or tasks of an organization can be completed. When Taylor and Van Every (2000) referred to a person as "made" by the organization, they were referring to a person's identity within the organization. A person who identifies with an organization sees themselves as an extension of themselves (Albert, 1998). Organizational identity will be discussed in greater detail in the organizational culture section.

Taylor and Van Every (2000) identified March and Simon (1985) as the first researchers to recognize the people in an organization as more than just the instruments used to carry out the organization's goals. They argue that the people in the organization accomplish their tasks in a purposeful manner called performance programs. These performance programs can be executed

by all people in the organization simultaneously and alongside each other to accomplish the organization's goals. March and Simon (1985) identified three levels of performance programs. The first level is used for performing tasks, the second level identifies which set of performance programs to use, and the final level is used to revise other programs (Taylor & Van Every, 2000).

Wrench (2013) also explained three common functions people within the organization may fulfill. First, the people within the organization are dependent on each other. They must work together because it is not possible to accomplish the organizational goals alone. Second, the people in the organization must communicate. Wrench (2013) stated, "communication in organizations is as important as breathing is to human life" (p. 9). To organize, these people must interact in a coordinated and purposeful manner, which leads to the second element of an organization, the goal.

The goal. The second element of an organization is the goal and represents something that all members of the organization are trying to achieve. In other words, a goal is what "an organization really, really wants" (Wrench, 2013, p. 4). According to Keyton (2011), the goal of an organization cannot be easily accomplished by one person. This also explains why more than one person is necessary to have an organization. Members with unique and different skill-sets are needed to help achieve the organization's goals. Taylor and Van Every (2000) also introduced the idea of a superordinate goal when they stated "...by structuring implications of talk and, by so doing, to generate the kind of common accord (not necessarily unanimous) as to the objects and agents of communication." (p. 73). However, it is important to note that the goals of the people within the organization may differ or even be incompatible with the goals of the organization as a whole (Taylor & Van Every, 2000). People within the organization must be able to

communicate clearly with each other to be able to accomplish the superordinate goal. This leads to the third element needed in an organization, communicating within and across structures.

Communicating within and across structures. The third theme, structure, is in each definition of the word organization. Structure represents the physical and materialistic form of the organization as well as its presence in the environment. According to Wrench (2013) all organizations exist in some type of external environment. The physical structure of an organization may be located in a downtown urban environment or at the edge of a residential area. How the structure interacts with the surrounding environment depends on whether the organization maintains open or closed boundaries. Open boundaries in the organizational structure allows for a two-way flow of goods, services, and even workers (Wrench, 2013). The structure of an organization may also be influenced by many other aspects including geographic location, time zones, shifts, and even departments (Keyton, 2011).

The internal hierarchy is also important when considering the structure of an organization. Whether the organization has a tall or flat hierarchy can influence how the members of the organization communicate with each other to accomplish the main organizational goal. The hierarchical structure of an organization can affect how messages are transferred from superiors to subordinates and vice versa. According to Wrench (2013), a flat hierarchy, or one with few levels between top management and workers, encourages direct communication. This could mean that average workers have the ability to communicate with upper-level management.

Not only do members communicate within the organization but they can also communicate with other organizations and people outside of the organization. People outside of the organization can consist of suppliers, shareholders, media, family members of employees,

other businesses. Taylor and Van Every (2000) identify communication as a way to generate a common accord (or subordinate goal) between the people found in an organization. In their book, "The Emergent Organization: Communication at Its Site and Surface," Taylor and Van Every (2000) concluded that an organization emerges from communication. What is most important is that, according to Keyton (2011), an organization must also communicate across structures. By communicating across open boundaries, an organization is fulfilling the final aspect needed when creating an organization.

A dynamic system. The final defining theme is that an organization must be dynamic. An organization influences and can be influenced by its environment. Wrench (2013) stated, all organizations exist in an external environment and, as a result, they influence the area around them regardless of whether they have open or closed boundaries. For example, the mere presence of a structure, such as a major shopping mall on the outskirts of a town, can drive large amounts of traffic to that area. This may cause other businesses to follow suit, which could ultimately change the area completely. What makes an organization dynamic is that it must be responsive and interact with customers, clients, and stakeholders (Keyton, 2011).

Thus, the four elements needed to create and understand an organization are: people, a shared goal, structure, and a dynamic system. The use of Keyton's (2011) definition of an organization as "a dynamic system of organizational members, influenced by external stakeholders, who communicate within and across organizational structures in an ordered and purposeful way to achieve a subordinate goal" (p. 9) is further strengthened by Wrench's overview. Through this definition it becomes apparent that the people within the organization must communicate to achieve the subordinate goal as well as to communication within and across their boarders, and so that they can create a dynamic system. Based on the above

information it becomes clear that organizations cannot exist in a vacuum. Whether it is intentional or not, organizations influence the people within them and their surrounding environment. This was the case during the Fukushima Nuclear Disaster and the BP Oil Spill which greatly affected people's lives and the environment. The research shows that at the heart of these interactions is communication with the people surrounding the organization. The discipline of organizational communication is an important piece of this study and will be explained in more detail in the next paragraph.

Organizational Communication

Deetz (2001) asks the question, "what do we see or what are we able to do if we think of organizational communication in one way versus another" (p. 4). By looking at both Deetz's (2001) and Keyton's (2011) definition of organizational communication, it is possible to understand organizational communication on both a macro and micro level. Deetz (2001) provided three macro ways of conceptualizing organizational communication, while Keyton (2011) focuses on organizational communication as something that happens between the organization and its stakeholders. Keyton (2011), who cited Taylor and Van Every's (2000) work, stated, "thus an organization emerges from communication and continues to emerge from communication of its members" (p.11). Both researchers' viewpoints help to build a greater understanding of the discipline of organizational communication from a macro to a micro perspective and help to summarize the discipline. To understand how communication fits into an organization it is important to first understand Deetz's (2001) three overarching themes.

Deetz (2001, 2013) defined organizational communication as a way to describe a discipline within communication, a way to describe or explain organizations, and a phenomenon that occurs within organizations. The three conceptualizations of organizational communication

start out broad with the development of the discipline then narrow in focus with it as a phenomenon that occurs within an organization, as well as a way to describe the discipline. For the purpose of this literature review, more emphasis will be placed on understanding organizational communication as a discipline.

Development of the discipline. The discipline of organizational communication can be described as a hybrid field because it is greatly dependent on research from other disciplines (Wrench 2013). Miller (2008) stated that modern organizational communication was influenced by traditional rhetorical theory, human relations, psychology, management, sociology, anthropology, and the physical sciences. This is a positive aspect of the field, which allows researchers to view organizational communication from many different angles and increases the heuristic value of the discipline (Jablin, 2006).

Today, the discipline of organizational communication is referred to as an eclectic discipline with an interdisciplinary identity (Miller, 2008; Putnam & Mumby, 2014). The discipline underwent three major theoretical paradigm shifts including post-positivism (also called functionalism), interpretivism, and the critical paradigm. It is important to note that during the history of the discipline there were differing opinions on which paradigm was best but today's scholars recognize that different methods are needed to understand different questions about the nature of organizing (Putnam & Mumby, 2014). What scholars do agree on is that a communication perspective is needed to understand organizations and how the people within them organize. It becomes clear to see that the communication that occurs within an organization would cease to exist without all the necessary pieces needed to create an organization.

Therefore, in summary, for an organization to be considered a *dynamic system,* members need to have shared *goals* to create, maintain, and change the organization. This occurs in the

communication that transpires between organizational members. Finally, as Keyton (2011) explained, without *people* there can be no organization and, without these important members, there can be no organizational communication. This explanation of organizational communication fits well with Keyton's (2011) definition of an organization. It is important to remember that the four elements needed to create and understand an organization are the people, shared goals, structure, and a dynamic system. This shows how intricately communication is entwined with what is needed in an organization and why understanding how crisis response messages are communicated to stakeholders is an important research pursuit.

This review of organizations and organizational communication shows that researchers now look at organizations from multiple viewpoints, that the discipline uses multiple theoretical perspectives, and the discipline has a clearer image of what it means to communicate within organizations. The field of organizational communication has shifted away from focusing on organizations as containers that house communication, and researchers have stopped conducting studies with only managers in mind. Today, organizational communication scholars are no longer focused on the organization as a place where communication happens. They are now focusing on organizations as entities without borders that have the ability to affect social, cultural, and individual ways of life. This shift highlights a movement from studying communication as information transmission to studying the production of meaning within the organization and how that meaning creates a shared culture. An understanding of how an organization's culture is created through communication is presented in the following paragraphs.

Organizational Culture

Research on organizational communication has revealed that, to have an organization, there must be more than one member, those members must strive to achieve the same subordinate goal, and they must do this through communication, and in a way that is dynamic. Members share certain beliefs and assumptions based on important artifacts. This socially transmitted behavior must also be distinct from other groups and help to create a common understanding (Luis, 1985). All of which, works together to create the organization's culture. An organization's culture is often described as "what it feels like to be there" (Keyton, 2014, p. 550). Most people can identify with this statement and understand what it feels like to work for an organization that has a poor culture. However, Schein (2010) argued whether or not a culture is good, bad, or effective depends on how it interacts with the environment surrounding the organization. It is important to understand the shared beliefs and culture of the people within an organization. Schein (2010) stated, "we recognize cultural differences at the ethnic or national level but find them puzzling at the group, organizational, or occupational level" (p. 7). Therefore, it is important to study culture within an organization because it can explain the unique experiences and phenomena that happen within these structures (Schein, 2010).

According to Storey (2012), one of the easiest ways to understand culture is to think of it as a particular way of life or lived culture and as a signifying practice or text. By thinking of culture in this context, it can easily be applied to many different situations to serve as an explanation of organizational culture. As it pertains to an organization, culture is not something that can be discussed or forced upon a group of people, it is created through their interactions and sense-making (Keyton, 2011; 2014). The concept of culture helps explain and normalize phenomena found in the organization (Schein, 2010). In the oil and gas industry, understanding

an organization's culture may help to identify the reasons why certain organizations choose to disregard safety concerns until a major crisis occurs. For example, investigations into the cause of the Fukushima Nuclear Disaster revealed that leadership and scientists in Japan helped to create a culture that believed nuclear energy was absolutely safe. This "myth of safety" culture led to an absence of safety drills and safety precautions at the power plant. Understanding organizational culture may also explain the certain expectations stakeholders may have in regards to crisis communications. First, it is important to understand the three levels of organizational culture to understand its effects on organizational members.

The three levels of organizational culture. Keyton (2011) stated, "organizational culture is the set(s) of artifacts, values, and assumptions that emerge from interactions of organizational members" (p. 28). Her definition of organizational culture contains several important pieces that serve as the cornerstone of organizational culture. In her definition, she includes the members themselves as an important piece of organizational culture. According to Keyton (2014) the discipline lacks a comprehensive theory from which organizational culture can be studied, but it is widely accepted that an organization's culture is built upon three pieces which include artifacts, values, and assumptions. They also serve as the key features of organizational culture, so it is important to understand how they influence each other to help define the way organizational members work together. Schein (2010) separates organizational culture into three distinct levels, which includes artifacts, espoused beliefs and values, and basic underlying assumptions. These characteristics are based on the visibility of culture to an observer and will be discussed further in the following sections.

Artifacts. Artifacts are visible and tangible. Schein (2010) identified artifacts as the first level of organizational culture. Artifacts are the visible representations of an organization's

culture and can include logos, celebrations, and cultural norms. Cultural norms represent the standard way members behave in the organization. New employees can learn about their organization's culture through mission statements, socialization, and when they violate an existing cultural norm (Liberman, 2013). Other examples of artifacts may include a published list of values, narratives told about the organization, observable behavior, and even the climate of the group.

Patterson et. al (2005) explained, in the past organizational culture and climate were often used interchangeably. Although climate does derive from the culture, they are indeed different. Climate can be considered the patterns of behavior that arise because of the organizational artifacts. According to Patterson et. al (2005), "these climates represent employees' perceptions of organizational policies, practices, and procedures, and subsequent patterns of interactions and behaviors that support creativity, innovation, safety, or service in the organization" (p. 381). As a tangible representation of the organizational culture, climate also has the ability to affect the outcomes of the organization. For example, changing the patterns with which an organization behaves in regards to following safety rules may change the number of accidents that occur.

Prior schools of thought considered climate as a psychological representation of what employees thought of their organization. The more dominate approach now considers climate as a shared perception of the organization (Patterson et. al, 2005). Research conducted by Patterson et. al (2005) created the organizational climate measure which revealed climate to consist of four dimensions. Those dimensions consisted of the subscales representing the human relations model, the internal process model, and the open systems model. All four of these dimensions represent different approaches to organizing.

Again, artifacts are not only visible representations of the organization but they are also tangible objects like an employee handbook or crisis plan. The most important thing to remember when trying to understand the first level of culture is that artifacts are easy to see yet they are extremely hard to interpret, unless the observer is part of the organization. If the observer is not a member of the organization the best way to understand the meanings of organizational artifacts is to ask (Schein, 2010).

Values. Values represent the strategies, goals, principles, or qualities that create guidelines for member's behavior (Keyton, 2011). Schein (2010) identified the second level of organizational culture as that which includes espoused beliefs and values. Values represent the ideals of how the organization should act or how its members should behave. They are also built upon shared group experiences and assumptions. The process of sense-making in an organization is inherently a social process (Weick, 1985). Therefore, a value may start out as just one person's idea, such as a leader's idea for increasing assembly-line production, but may not become a value until it is accepted by the group (Schein, 2010). A value or belief can become ingrained in the organization's culture through social validation as well as how beneficial it is to the organization (Schein, 2010). It is important to note, values are difficult to identify but can be seen in the behaviors of organizational members (Keyton, 2014).

Assumptions. Finally, assumptions are beliefs that are not openly discussed but are widely accepted (Keyton, 2014). This is because assumptions are often deeply entrenched and, like values, are revealed in organizational members' conversations. Assumptions form from tested and socially accepted values which result in valuable outcomes for the organization's members. Once the tested and accepted value is successfully used multiple times, it then becomes taken for granted by the organization and tends to work at the least visible level of

culture (Schein, 2010). An example of an assumption could include organizations who assume their engineers will always design safe products and consumers who assume the company will keep their safety interests in mind when selling products. Because assumptions work at the least visible level of culture and are taken for granted, they are not openly discussed and are difficult to change (Schein, 2010). Even though assumptions come from the social process of creating values, they also have the ability to provide individual members with a strong sense of organizational identity.

Organizational identity. Pratt (1998) defined organizational identity as "when an individual's belief about his or her organization become self-referential or self-defining" (p. 172). Organizational culture can be considered the overarching system in which organizational identity is created. Because organizational culture is made from the social understandings of a social collective, organizational identity is built from those understandings (Kreiner, 2011).

When a newcomer is introduced to a new organization they go through a process called assimilation (Jablin, 1982). The new employee must learn the rules, culture, and expectations of the organization they are now a member of. The new employee must also shape a new identity as it relates to the organization and the specific tasks that go along with their new organizational role. By creating an identity that fits with their organizational culture and what is socially acceptable for a certain position, the employee will increase their success and likelihood of doing a good job. Philosophy, social sciences, sociology, and linguistics are disciplines which have helped to contribute literature to the study of identity. As a phenomenon, identity can be an extremely broad topic which may pose a challenge to researchers who are interested in discovering all there is to know about the subject.

According to Gonzales-Miranda, Gentilin, and Ocampo-Salazar (2014), researchers have created many different definitions of organizational identity over the years. However, for the purpose of this literature review, organizational identity will be considered a similarity or oneness with the organization. Organizational identity can also be understood as the question, "who are we?" This question seems so short and simple, yet represents an organizational member's attempts at identifying who they are individually and collectively within the organization. Basically, organizational identity is a form of conversation that occurs between the individual (self) and the other (organization) of how they want to be seen as or how they want others to see them. In an analysis of organizational identity research conducted between 2000 and 2011, it was found that there are three common paradigms associated with understanding this phenomenon (Gonzales-Miranda, Gentilin & Ocampo-Salazar, 2014).

The first paradigm associated with organizational identity is called the essentialist paradigm of social actors. This paradigm views identity as fixed by the reified objects of the organization. The organization is seen as an entity which has fixed features that attribute to its identity. The second and third paradigms fit better with the fluid nature of identity and are more open-ended. The second paradigm, the social construction paradigm relies on a collective interpretation of how members fit within the organizational identity (Gonzales-Miranda, Gentilin & Ocampo-Salazar, 2014). In this paradigm identity is socially and collectively negotiated. It relies heavily on individual as well as collective perspectives of what the identity of the organization should be. The third paradigm is the linguistic paradigm and relies on how language helps to construct reality. Narratives play an important part of constructing the identity of the organization in this paradigm. Those who tell the stories and those who listen to them are able to accept or reject the narratives (Gonzales-Miranda, Gentilin & Ocampo-Salazar, 2014). All three

of the aforementioned paradigms can influence and guide how organizational identity should be thought of, as something that is socially constructed.

To understand an organization's culture, researchers must first understand the socially constructed underlying assumptions. Only after the socially constructed underlying assumptions are learned can the values and artifacts of the organization be clearly understood (Schein, 2010). According to Keyton (2014), there are several different lenses through which organizational culture can be studied including the lens of narrative reproduction and the lens of power and politics. The first lens focuses on storytelling as a device for employees to make sense of their organization. These stories become artifacts that identify the organization's dominant values, norms, and beliefs. In regards to the lens of power and politics Keyton (2014) stated, "organizations are sites of hierarchy, dominance, and power; and organizational members having (sic) varying degrees of power and status as well as varying degrees of control over message creation and meaning" (p. 558). This power can be used to force organizational culture on members who have less power even if they do not share the same values and assumptions. Weick (1985) explained, "individuals neither share precisely the same theory nor do they understand equally well different sectors of the culture. Thus, any cultural description is an abstract composition that will never be contained entirely in one person's account" (p. 385). This statement shows how important it is to remember that organizational culture is not always representative of every individual even though it is socially constructed through group interactions and communications.

There are three positions that discuss the role of communication, or discourse, in organizational culture including the object orientation, the becoming orientation, and the grounded in action orientation (Keyton, 2014). In the object orientation approach, it is assumed

that organizational culture comes before discourse or communication. From this orientation it can be believed that any change to a culture will change the way the members communicate with each other. In the becoming orientation it is assumed that communication or discourse comes before organizational culture. In this orientation, the way members of the organization communicate with each other actively shapes or creates the organization's culture (Keyton, 2014). The final orientation is called the grounded in action orientation. This perspective does not place either communication or culture before each other but instead takes the stand that they simultaneously influence each other.

It is possible for an organization's culture to be clear and consistent while also being inconsistent and unclear (Keyton, 2014). A common thread in the literature shows that, although culture is socially constructed, culture may not make sense to everyone involved in the organization. For example, in the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and the Fukushima Nuclear Disaster, both organizations portrayed cultures that placed organizational benefit over stakeholder safety. Many researchers may wonder how an organization could value anything more than human life and safety. As Schein (2010) proposed it is important not to impose our own cultural beliefs upon an organization and those who are within them. Therefore, it is important to understand the culture of those within the oil and gas industry. This may allow for a clearer understanding of why some organizations prioritize other things before safety. In summary, it is better to understand organizational culture by looking at how members negotiate and create meanings (Keyton, 2014). To begin to understand oil and gas industry culture it is important to identify how meanings are created within the organization and they affect the organization. Therefore, the first research question is proposed:

RQ1: How are workplace safety messages communicated to employees of the oil and gas industry?

The Importance of Stakeholders

In the previous sections, the definition for organizations and organizational communication was broken down into individual components. However, there was one term used in Keyton's (2011) definition of an organization that has not been thoroughly investigated. Keyton used the word "stakeholder" to define the groups of people who can influence the organization internally and externally. Stakeholders are an important piece of the organizational puzzle because of their ability to affect an organization through their communication. To understand the complex relationship between an organization and their stakeholders, it is first important to understand what the term stakeholder represents. Rawlins (2006) explained that the terms "stakeholder" and "public" are often used interchangeably, but this is an incorrect use of terms. The word public is associated more with public relations and mass media. This association connects publics with messages rather than with an organization (Post, Preston, & Sachs, 2002). The purpose of this study is to understand links between organizations and their stakeholders. Therefore, the following sections focus on stakeholders, as opposed to publics.

Stakeholders, theory, management, and prioritization. Because stakeholders are the cornerstone of a successful organization, it is important to first define the word stakeholder. According to Rawlings (2006), the most used definition for a stakeholder comes from business literature and defines a stakeholder as anyone who can affect or be affected by an organization. The term stakeholder first appeared in 1963 and was used to differentiate between stockholders and other groups of people who had a stake in the organization (Freeman, 1984). Freeman (1984) later popularized the word in his book "Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach," in

which he argued, "…each of these stakeholder groups has a right not to be treated as a means to some end, and therefore must participate in determining the future direction of the firm in which they have a stake" (Freeman, 2001, p. 39).

Stakeholder theory was created from this sentiment, which challenged organizations to create mutually beneficial relationships with groups of stakeholders. Freeman (2001) asked organizations to re-conceptualize the way they organized. He asked organizational managers to think about whom they were benefiting and at whose expense the organization was being managed. In his theory, he identified a narrow and wide definition of stakeholder. In the narrow definition, a stakeholder is described as someone or a group of people who are vital to the success and survival of the organization. In the wide definition, a stakeholder is defined as someone who can affect or be affected by the organization. Stakeholder Theory focuses on the narrow sense of the definition.

This topic is prevalent within business and management literature. Business researchers place an emphasis on studying how the stakeholder affects the organization's, goals, or plans (Post et al., 2002). There is also an emphasis on stakeholder management as a way to maintain relationships. According to Post et al. (2002), stakeholder management occurs when the organization creates policies or practices that consider stakeholder concerns. In agreement with stakeholder theory, stakeholder management also places emphasis on creating mutually beneficial relationships between the organization and its stakeholder groups. Therefore, the organization must be alert to the formation of new stakeholder groups, manage their existing groups, and be responsive to stakeholder concerns to be successful (Post et al., 2002). To do this the organization must identify relevant stakeholders, identify how they affect the organization,

identify each stakeholder group's goals, monitor inter-stakeholder relationships, and attempt to harmonize with them (Post et al., 2002).

Rawlins (2006) conducted a thorough literature review of Stakeholder Theory, stakeholder management, and public relations. In his review he discovered a gap in research that explains how to identify stakeholders. To address the lack of research he modified Grunig and Hunt's (1984) Linkage Model to identify four ways stakeholders can be connected to the organization. First, stakeholders can be connected to the organization through enabling linkages, which means they have some control and authority within the organization. These could include shareholders, board of directors, and even government legislatures (Rawlins, 2006). The second way stakeholders are connected to the organization is through functional linkages. According to Rawlins (2006), this includes employees, suppliers, and consumers. As the name suggests, these stakeholders are necessary for the day-to-day functioning of the organization. Organizations can also be connected to groups of stakeholders through the normative link. This group of stakeholders shares the same values and goals with the organization and may even include competitors. Finally, organizations can be connected to stakeholders through the diffused linkage. This type of stakeholder does not maintain daily contacts with an organization but may become more involved in times of crisis. Stakeholders in this group could include media, the community, activists, and other interest groups (Rawlins, 2006). According to Rawlins (2006), stakeholders in the enabling, functional, and normative groups tend to remain consistent once they are identified by the organization. Freeman (2001) also identifies owners, suppliers, employees, customers, management, and the local community as stakeholders of a typical organization.

Rawlins (2006) used a modified version of Grunig and Hunt's (1984) linkage model as a springboard to create a four-step process that assists organizations in prioritizing specific stakeholder groups. He focused on helping managers prioritize their many different groups of stakeholders, which is important during a crisis event. During a crisis, managers need to determine whom they should communicate with first. After identifying stakeholders based on organizational relationships, Rawlins then prioritizes them based on their level of power, legitimacy, and urgency. According to Bryson (2004), much of the business literature views a stakeholder as someone who has the power to alter the organization's future. However, he argues organizations must also consider the concerns of the powerless to remain socially acceptable. This is why it is important for an organization to pay attention to stakeholders. Not only are they able to damage an organization's reputation in a time of crisis, but some stakeholders also have the power to affect organizational operations. Rawlins (2006) prioritizes stakeholders based on how active they are in voicing their opinions in his third step. For example, when a crisis occurs, a vacuum of information is created that causes stakeholders to turn to mass media or to the internet for news about the event (Coombs, 2006a). If they do not hear information from the organization, they may turn to activism. Finally, he prioritizes stakeholders based on their communication strategy. In the final step, organizations must take into consideration how active each group is and whether they are supportive of the overall company goals.

In summary, some of the most common stakeholders include employees, employee family members, board of directors, investors, customers or clients, suppliers, community leaders, and the media (Maresh-Fuehrer, 2013). Researchers of Stakeholder Theory and stakeholder management (Freeman, 1984, 2001; Post et al., 2002; and Rawlins, 2006) have not only identified stakeholder relationships as an important piece of organizing, but have also

identified them as a priority. Post et al. (2002) stated that an organization's survival and success is dependent upon how well it establishes and maintains relationships with *all* stakeholder groups. This relates back to Keyton's (2011) definition of an organization where she stated that the organization could not exist without the people, being dynamic, and interacting with its environment.

Successful stakeholder management involves learning about stakeholder's constantly changing interests (Post et al., 2002). It becomes apparent that there has been a focus on providing organizations with tools to identify and prioritize key stakeholders. However, there is a lack of research focused on identifying stakeholder's specific interests. Researchers are still unclear about stakeholders' expectations for organizational communication during times of crisis. Despite a large body of literature concerning stakeholders in other fields, stakeholder message expectations are still unclear. Therefore, adding a communication lens to stakeholder research becomes an important step to aid in understanding the messages that occur between the organization and stakeholders during crises. Due to the large amount of stakeholder groups, communication between the organization and their employees will be the focus of this research study. As a result, the second research question is:

RQ2: What are employee expectations for crisis response messages from their organization?

Crisis Communication

Stakeholders' perceptions are becoming increasingly important in the crisis communication field because of the high visibility of their opinions and their ability to affect the organization. According to Coombs and Holladay (2007), stakeholders have the ability to share and spread information about organizations and can use the Internet to flex their power over

organizations through stakeholder activism. Whether stakeholder activism remains a mere voicing of opinions or becomes a full-blown crisis is up to crisis managers and the response strategies employed. Coombs (2007a) argues that the most effective crisis managers and teams are those who react to issues quickly by gathering and dispensing important information. Seeger et al. (2003) stated, "uncertainty is the sine qua non of crisis" (p. 71). This means, uncertainty is an essential factor of a crisis. To manage uncertainty effectively during crises, organizations must communicate with their employee stakeholder group. A quick reaction time may help to save important stakeholder relationships and the reputation of the organization. Before explaining what an effective crisis response entails, it is important to first define the term crisis and then gain an understanding of the current research within the discipline.

Crisis defined. According to Seeger et al. (2003), "the term crisis evokes a sense of threat, urgency, and destruction, often on a monumental scale" (p. 4). Coombs (2007a) also stated that a crisis is based on the perception of stakeholders and, if the stakeholder believes that an incident is a crisis, the organization must treat it like one. Crises can occur on a daily basis and, whether they are small or disastrous, have the ability to affect the relationships between organizations and their stakeholders. A crisis may also cause serious damage to the organization's reputation. Therefore, it is reasonable to define a crisis as being an unexpected event that has the ability to affect an organization's relationship with key stakeholders as well as tarnish reputation and image. To gain a better understanding of crisis communication and why it is important to organizations, the following sections will focus on explaining the development of crisis communication as a discipline.

From application to theory building. Coombs (2010a) stated that research within the field of crisis communication was historically based on application. During the early

development stages of crisis communication, case studies were created by practitioners for practitioners and tended to provide a list of what managers should do to avoid a crisis. Much of the research was focused on building a base of knowledge of effective crisis response strategies from the analysis of case studies. This knowledge was used to provide information to crisis managers to apply to similar situations within their own organizations. In a meta-analysis of research published between 1975 to 2006 in the Journal of Public Relations Research and Public Relations Review, An and Cheng (2010) discovered that there were no articles on crisis communication prior to 1987. Since then, according to their analysis, there has been a steady increase in crisis communication research using case studies as a platform. However, it was discovered that more than half of published research articles did not propose a hypothesis or research question based on common crisis communication theories (An & Cheng, 2010).

As the field progressed, researchers began to apply theory to case studies to create more evidence-based information. According to Coombs (2010a), theories should be built upon a foundation that is grounded in empirical testing and evidence-based research. An and Cheng's (2010) meta-analysis indicated a 93% growth in case studies that used theoretical applications from 2001 to 2006. Coombs, as well as several other scholars, have contributed much to crisis communication research by creating "evidence-based research" which uses testing to support a proposed theory.

According to An and Cheng (2010), the more widely used and developed crisis communication theories come from the rhetorical approach, which is used to understand organizational communication strategies before or during a crisis based on case study analysis. The more commonly used theories, which will be the focus of this literature review, include

Apologia (Hearit, 2006), Image Restoration (Benoit, 1997), and Situational Crisis Communication Theory (Coombs, 2007b).

Apologia. Corporate Apologia deals directly with company response strategies. Apologia refers to a company's desire to respond to criticism with compelling defense (Hearit, 2006, p.4). Hearit (2006) breaks corporate apologia into five distinct strategies used by companies to defend their actions during a crisis. These strategies include denial, counterattack, differentiation, apology, and legal. A company chooses their response based on the amount of guilt or responsibility they accept for a particular crisis. Denial and differentiation will be discussed further because of its use in TEPCO's crisis response during the Fukushima Nuclear Disaster.

Denial is arguably the most widely used defense strategy employed by organizations and is used to deny a company's guilt during a crisis (Kim et al., 2011). The question of guilt can be brought on by all types of crises, large or small, and can be influenced by company stakeholders (Hearit, 2006). The second strategy is differentiation. When organizations use this strategy they admit some guilt and accept a small amount of responsibility. However, this strategy also shifts the blame to factors that were out of the organizations control including single employees or specific company branches (Hearit, 2006).

Image Restoration Theory. Image Restoration Theory (IRT) (Benoit, 1997) is another commonly used theory that provides organizations with strategies aimed at repairing an organization's reputation following a crisis event. However, unlike Apologia, an organization must be considered responsible for an offensive crisis to use this theory. Stakeholder's perception defines how offensive the crisis may be believed to be. Benoit (1997) stressed that stakeholders' perception of the company's responsibility, guilt, and offensiveness determines whether an organization's image is at risk during and after a crisis.

There are five categories of crisis response strategies discussed in this theory: denial, evasion of responsibility, reducing offensiveness, corrective action, and mortification (Benoit, 1997). For the purposes of understanding how the actions of organizations can negatively affect stakeholders, special attention is paid to denial, evasion of responsibility, and reducing offensiveness. Within the denial strategy, organizations can either simply deny responsibility for the crisis or shift blame away from the company. Within the evasion of responsibility strategy and organization also has several response options including provocation, defeasibility, accident, and good intentions. Organizations which say they were reasonably reacting to some other offensive act are using the provocation response strategy. Defeasibility is when the organization attributes a crisis to a lack of information. When an organization uses the accident response strategy they are trying to convince stakeholders that the crisis was out of their hands and should be less responsible for the outcome (Benoit, 1997). Good intention is used when the organization tries to convince stakeholders that their actions were for the greater good. For example, during the Fukushima Nuclear Disaster stakeholders were lead to believe nuclear power was absolutely safe for the economic good of Japan. Finally, reducing the offensiveness includes strategies to bolster or strengthen an organization's image, downplay the extent of damage or negative feelings towards the crisis, and/or compensate the victims of the crisis.

Situational Crisis Communication Theory. Similar to IRT, SCCT centers on repairing organizational reputation, or avoiding reputation damage, and uses stakeholder attribution as the basis for choosing correct response strategies (Coombs, 2007b). SCCT focuses on the intersections between the crisis, response strategies, and the response to specific situations (Coombs, 2006b). SCCT was built through empirical testing and takes the viewpoint of the organization into consideration as well as stakeholder perspective during a crisis. SCCT

considers how stakeholders will interpret the response strategies organizations choose to enact. According to Coombs (2006b), the amount of responsibility stakeholders assign to organizations will match specific response strategies. SCCT groups crises into three different typologies based on amount of responsibility stakeholders attribute to the organizations involved (Coombs, 2006b). It is important to note that the severity of the crisis, the organization's history of crisis events, and their relationships with stakeholders can affect attributions of responsibility as well as the crisis cluster. Organizations that have a history of ignoring safety concerns as well as poor relationships with stakeholders should respond with greater responsibility and concern (Coombs, 2007a).

Crisis clusters can be broken down into ten major types including natural disasters, workplace violence, rumors, malevolence, challenges, technical-error product harm, human-error product harm, human-error accidents, and organizational misdeeds (Coombs, 2007a; Coombs, 2012). An example of a natural disaster would include extreme weather such as a tornado or earthquake. Workplace violence occurs when members of the organization harm one another. Rumors occur when harmful information is purposefully shared about an organization. A malevolent crisis occurs when someone outside of the organization takes steps to harm the organization. An organization experiences a challenge crisis when stakeholders confront them on operation procedures. A crisis that occurs because of technology failure can be considered a technical-error accident and if that technology failure leads to product harm it is then considered a technical-error product harm crisis. As the name implies a crisis caused by human error or mistakes is considered a human-error accident. Likewise, if the human-error damages a product it is then considered a human-error product harm crisis. Finally, when an organization chooses to ignore stakeholder safety or the law the crisis is considered an organizational misdeed. Once the

type of crisis has been identified, crises are then categorized into specific crisis clusters including, the victim cluster, accidental cluster, and the preventable cluster (Coombs, 2007b).

The first category is called the victim cluster and includes crises such as natural disasters, rumors, workplace violence, and malevolence. The victim cluster assumes that these crises were unintentional and that the organization is as much of a victim as stakeholders. Stakeholders attribute the least amount or responsibility to organizations experiencing these types of crises (Coombs, 2007a). The second category is called the accidental cluster and includes crises like stakeholder challenges, mega-damage, technical breakdown accidents, technical breakdown recalls. Crises in this category are also assumed to be unintentional and it is assumed that stakeholders attribute a low amount of responsibility to the organization. Finally, the preventable cluster, includes crises such as human breakdown accidents, human breakdown recalls, organizational misdeeds with no injuries, organizational misdeeds/management misconduct, and organizational misdeeds with injuries. Crises in this category are considered intentional and have the highest amount of responsibility attributed to them by stakeholders. Once the cluster is known, the organization can then choose the appropriate response strategies. Coombs (2007a), lists 13 different recommendations for response strategies based on level of responsibility.

SCCT views stakeholders' perceptions and expectations as the most important aspect of crisis response signifying its roots in Attribution Theory (Coombs, 2007b). Coombs (2010b) stated, "Attribution Theory is a social-psychological theory that attempts to explain how people make sense of certain events" (p. 37). In the face of a negative and unexpected event, Attribution Theory postulates how stakeholders would react if the organization were found to be responsible for a crisis. Most stakeholders react with anger and, if that anger is ignored, reputational damage may occur (Coombs, 2007b). Coombs created SCCT to provide response strategies that would

acknowledge stakeholders' sense of attribution, therefore protecting the organization's reputation and relationship with stakeholders (Coombs, 2007b).

All three of the previously explained theories work in conjunction with each other and have a common theme of stakeholder perception. In an ideal situation, stakeholder perception is the driving force behind how an organization responds to a crisis and which strategies they choose to enact. All of these theories provide crisis response strategies that are focused on protecting the organization's reputation; however, before an organization addresses their reputational concerns, they must first be concerned with the emotional, psychological, and physical wellbeing of stakeholders involved (Coombs, 2007a; Coombs & Holladay, 2001; Coombs & Holladay, 2002; Kim et al., 2011). To achieve this, an organization and their crisis team must have a clear understanding of base crisis response strategies.

Base crisis response strategies. Research focusing specifically on response strategies has only been conducted in the last 20 years (Coombs, 1999). Sturges (1994) argued there was a lack of research on crisis response strategy content. In a content analysis of research published from 1991 to 2009, Kim et al. (2011) found that base crisis response strategies, which consist of both instructing and adjusting information, were largely neglected. Kim and Sung (2014) echoed this statement when they explained that base crisis response strategies were neglected by both organizations and academic research. After conducting an overview of the most commonly used crisis response techniques, it is apparent that this remains true today. Researchers continue to make efforts to understand SCCT and other reputation repairing strategies, but information on adjusting and instructing techniques is still lacking (Kim & Sung, 2014; Kim et. al., 2011).

Coombs (2007a) provided a thorough list of 13 recommendations for crisis response selections based on SCCT. The first recommendation is to provide instructing information and

the second is to provide adjusting information and will be explained in the following two sections. Coombs argued that adjusting and instructing information must be provided to stakeholders before reputation saving strategies such as SCCT can be used (Sturges, 1994; Coombs, 1999; Coombs & Holladay, 2001; Coombs & Holladay, 2002; Coombs, 2007a).

Sturges (1994) was the first researcher to place an emphasis on instructing information as a necessary component to response messages. He argued organizations should consider creating messages based on stakeholder expectations to create positive relationships and foster a positive image (Sturges, 1994). To do this, organizations were encouraged to provide stakeholders with instructing information during each stage of a crisis. In his early work, he suggested there should be emphasis on three different types of information content. These types of messages should contain information that tells people how to physically react, how to psychologically cope, and information that will help them formulate an image about the organization. This seminal article laid the groundwork for the current method used by organizations when responding to a crisis. Over the years, Sturges' (1994) three types of message content evolved into instructing information, adjusting information, and reputation management. According to Coombs (2007a), crisis responses must be used in this order.

Instructing information. Instructing information provides stakeholders with the knowledge needed to protect themselves physically during a crisis. For example, families living near a refinery that has just experienced an explosion need to know what to do to avoid injury. Crisis managers who provide this information satisfy the expectation that people, not reputation, are top priority in a crisis (Coombs, 2007a). Coombs (2007a) identifies another aspect of instructing information, business continuity, which addresses organizational needs during a crisis. As explained, an organization is made up of several stakeholder groups and is a dynamic

system that influences its environment (Keyton, 2011). When an organization experiences a crisis, the ramifications extend beyond those who were directly involved. The crisis can affect suppliers, distributors, other employees, other businesses, and residents in the vicinity. For example, during the 2011 BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill, President Barack Obama halted all oil and gas drilling in the Gulf of Mexico and the Pacific from May 30 – July 12, 2011 (Graham et al., 2011). Thousands of workers in the oil and gas industry found themselves out of work because of BP's crisis, and the local economy suffered (Graham et al., 2011). Coombs (2007a) suggested creating a business continuity plan, which provides instructing information on how the organization will maintain operations and how they plan to restore day-to-day business operations.

Adjusting information. During a crisis, stakeholders will experience high levels of uncertainty, stress, and anxiety (Seeger et al., 2003). Sturges (1994) explained that information should be provided immediately after the onset of the crisis, to help stakeholders psychologically cope. Coombs identifies this type of information as adjusting information, which is provided to reduce the amount of uncertainty and stress stakeholders experience. By providing this type of information, the organization helps stakeholders adjust to the aftermath effects of the crisis. Adjusting information consists of the "what," "why," "when," "where," and "how" information pertaining to the crisis (Coombs, 1999; Coombs, 2007a). Given the definition of a crisis, it is logical to believe that stakeholders will want to gather as much information as possible to reduce their uncertainty. By explaining what has occurred, why the crisis occurred, when it occurred, where the crisis took place, and how it affects specific groups of stakeholders, crisis managers can reduce uncertainty.

The emotional and psychological needs of the stakeholder takes precedence in adjusting information. According to Coombs (2007a), crises have to potential to create a new group of victim stakeholders. A victim is anyone who has suffered physically, mentally, or financially from the crisis. During their respective crises, BP became responsible for a large group of out of work stakeholders, while the Japanese government and TEPCO became responsible for thousands of homeless evacuees. Adjusting information also includes corrective action from the organization. This means the organization should communicate how they are correcting the situation and how they plan to prevent another occurrence (Coombs, 1999; Coombs, 2007a).

Instructing and adjusting information represent the first steps organizations should take when responding to a crisis. Yet, researchers continue to test the validity of crisis response strategies such as SCCT, while information on base crisis response strategies remains scarce (Kim & Sung, 2014). Although Sturges (1994) outlined ideas for more research on base crisis response strategies, there are few new studies.

Kim et al. (2011) stated:

> Quantitative content analysis of 51 articles published in crisis communication literature in public relations indicates both a prevalent focus on image restoration or reputation management in the crisis responses analyzed in more than 18 years of research and a relative neglect of instructing and adjusting information in subsequent recommendations. (p. 183)

Based on the recommendations of Kim and Sung (2014), Kim et al. (2011), and Sturges (1994), it becomes apparent that there is a need for conducting a thorough analysis of stakeholder expectations for crisis messages. Sturges (1994) suggested, "customizing" messages for different

stakeholders in different crises to identify changing stakeholder expectations. Therefore, the following research question is posed:

RQ3: Are provided employee expectations representative of base crisis response strategies?

The literature emphasized the need for base crisis responses, yet many organizations do not provide this information. Coombs (1999) stated that much of the research on crisis response strategies focused on providing lists for crisis managers to use. However, these lists should not be the conclusion of research on response strategies, and practitioners should not rely on untested assumptions. Therefore, more research is needed to focus on base crisis response strategies to help support the literature and inform organizational practice.

Putnam and Mumby (2014) also suggested creating a larger "tool box of theories" to help when researching and trying to understand organizations. By expanding on the theoretical tools available, it is no longer necessary to rely on well-used theories. Organizations are often encouraged to provide valuable information, which tells stakeholders how they should react to a crisis, if the crisis will affect them, and what they should do to protect themselves (Coombs 2007a; Seeger et al., 2003). Nevertheless, there remains little empirical evidence to support these claims.

The present study will be split into two phases of research. In the first phase, qualitative data will be collected to explore stakeholder expectations for crisis message content. The second phase will consist of quantitative analysis to empirically support the results of the first phase of the study. The following research questions will be used to connect the qualitative portion of the study to the quantitative portion of the study:

RQ4: What items will best measure the themes presented in phase one of the exploratory sequential design?

RQ5: How does the created employee expectations items compare with Coombs' base crisis response strategies?

Organizations continue to place an emphasis on reputation repair due to the reputational threat associated with crises (Kim et al., 2011). Organizations that operate in this fashion run the risk of creating an organizational culture and climate that prioritizes reputation over employee safety. This type of organizational culture was prominent in both the Fukushima Nuclear Disaster (Hachisuka et al., 2012) and the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill (The Deepwater Horizon Study Group, 2011). This organizational culture led stakeholders to believe the organizations were at fault during both of the crises and caused reputational damage. Yet, it is important to remember that although an organization's culture is built through social constructions it is not always accepted by all members (Weick, 1985). Therefore, it would be beneficial to organizations to understand how their culture and climate intersects with individual employee identity as well as how this affects how employees wish to be communicated to. Because culture is considered one of four important dimensions which create the communication climate within the organization (Zhang & Liu, 2010) the following research question is proposed:

RQ6: What is the relationship between employee expectation (s) and organizational climate?

Employees must also shape an identity as it relates to the organization and the specific tasks that go along with their organizational role. In this study organizational identity is considered a similarity or oneness with the organization. By creating an identity that fits with an organization's culture and climate, the employee will be able to increase his/her success within

the organization. However, an identity that is too strongly associated with an organization may lead to a culture which values money over safety as was seen in the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill. Because it is important to understand how employee expectations and identification influence each other, the final research question was asked:

RQ7: What is the relationship between employee expectation (s) and organizational identification?

Organizations continue to place an emphasis on reputation due to the reputational threat associated with crises (Kim et al., 2011). In 1999, Coombs conducted a study comparing compassion and instructing information during an accidental crisis. He surveyed 114 crisis managers to identify how base crisis response strategies affected organizational reputation. He found a positive effect for compassion on reputation, but not for instructing information. In response to his findings, Coombs (1999) argued that more research was needed to add support for the use of base crisis response strategies. He stated that his results ultimately created more questions than they solved. The research questions presented in this study represent an important step in responding to Coombs (1999) call for further research on base crisis response strategies.

This chapter focused on understanding what is an organization, what is organizational communication, and how organizations interact with the environment around them, especially during a crisis. To understand these concepts, a thorough overview of what is needed to create an organization, the development of the organizational communication discipline, and how communication can create organizational culture was conducted. A discussion of how stakeholders influence their organization served as the bridge between organizational communication and crisis communication research, with special attention placed on understanding base crisis response strategies. This literature review led to the creation of several

research questions which dictated the use of a mixed methods approach. An argument for the use of mixed methods and the present research design will be explained in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

This chapter focuses on guiding readers through the methods used to complete the present study. The research questions that emerged from Chapter Two of this study led the researcher to choose mixed methods as the avenue for completing this study. What follows is a thorough explanation of the researcher's worldview and design, which help to create a strong argument for the use of mixed methods. Explanations of Phase One and Phase Two of this study will also be provided and include information regarding instrumentation as well as data analysis.

Design Rationale and Worldview

The worldview adopted for this project is pragmatism, which recognizes both objective and subjective knowledge as valuable (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). Abductive reasoning is used in the pragmatic worldview, which allows the researcher to move between data and theory (Myers, 2014). This allows the use of both deductive reasoning (used during quantitative research) and inductive reasoning (used during qualitative research). This worldview promotes using "what works" (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007, p. 26) to best address the proposed research questions. At the same time, it is acknowledged that a purely qualitative or purely quantitative design would not sufficiently address the disconnect between base crisis response literature and organizational practice. Alone, a qualitative study would indeed aid in understanding employee expectations for crisis messages but would not provide statistical support for the would not provide statistical support for the themes. Due to a lack of clarity regarding what base crisis response messages should contain and what employees' expectations are concerning crisis messages, a quantitative study alone would not suffice. Therefore, a mixed methods research design best fits the pragmatic worldview and addresses the commonly known weaknesses of a purely qualitative or quantitative research design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) stated:

> Mixed methods research is a research design with philosophical assumptions as well as methods of inquiry [….] Its central premise is that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches in combination provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone. (p. 5)

The use of mixed methods also has the ability to show convergence of both qualitative and quantitative data, building stronger support for the findings (Myers, 2014). The benefits of mixed methods also extends its practicality beyond creating a rigorous research design and method. A mixed methods study adds to the literature by providing evidence-based research to a lesser-studied phenomenon and honors crisis communication's roots as an applied discipline. According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2007), by providing organizations with both qualitative and quantitative data research can be more persuasive to organizational leaders. Using mixed methods allows key organizational leadership to understand a problem with both post-positivist and interpretive data. Providing support for long-standing assumptions about base crisis response strategies will also address Coombs' (2010a) question as to whether researchers are providing crisis managers with advice that is based on evidence.

Research Design

The purpose of this study is to investigate the expectations and perceptions of stakeholders in the oil and gas industry regarding crisis message content. A mixed methods design was used to reveal themes about oil and gas employee expectations and to empirically test identified variables to create generalizability. This was achieved with the exploratory sequential design (qual → QUAN). This design consisted of two distinct phases: a qualitative phase followed by a quantitative phase (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007) (see Figure 1). In the first

phase, qualitative data was collected with an open-ended questionnaire. The data was then mixed, using the instrument development model (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007), to develop and implement a quantitative survey instrument. The second phase of the study consisted of quantitative data collection with the survey instrument. More emphasis was placed on the quantitative portion of the study, which answers the need for more empirical testing in crisis communication studies (Coombs, 2010a) and, more specifically, places a greater focus on the area of base crisis response strategies (Kim & Sung, 2014; Kim et. al, 2011; Sturges, 1994).

Figure 1. Exploratory Sequential Design: Instrument Development Model (QUAN emphasized)

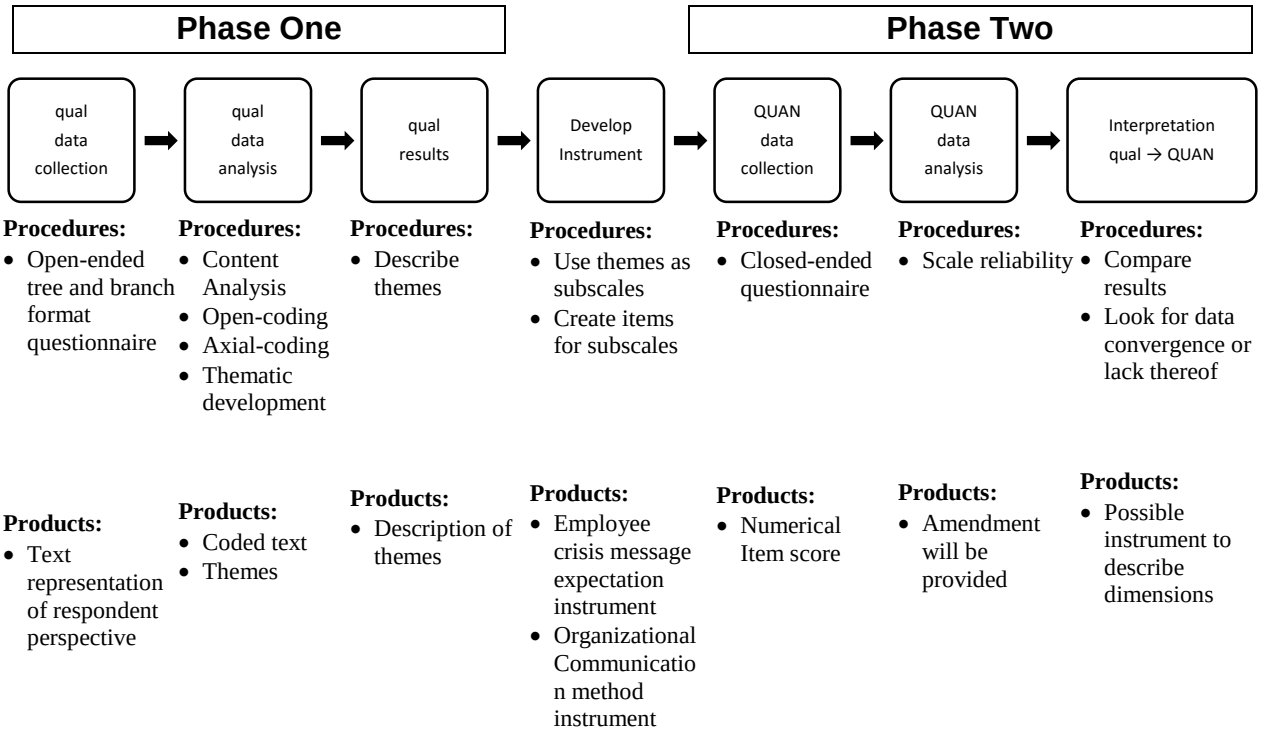

*Figure 1***.** Visual Diagram of the Procedures Used to Measure Exploratory Qualitative Results with Quantitative Data.

Phase One

Participants and procedures. Qualitative data for the first phase of this study were collected using an online open-ended questionnaire. Participants included individuals over the age of 18 who currently, or have recently (within the past year), worked in the oil and gas industry. Participants were recruited through several methods including paper fliers providing a link to the online questionnaire (see Appendix A and Appendix B) and using social media (Twitter, Instagram, Facebook Groups, LinkedIn) graphics (see Appendix C), which also included the questionnaire link. The survey link was also distributed to personal contacts and professors through email (see Appendix D).

Respondents included 14 individuals who worked or had recently worked in the oil and gas industry. Participants included nine (64%) males and five (36%) females. In the population, 29% of participants were in the age range of 18 to 24, 14% were 25 to 34, 21% were 35 to 44, 14% were 45 to 54, 14% were 55 to 64, and 7% were 65 to 74. Ethnicity of participants included Caucasian/White (n = 9, 64%), Hispanic/Latino (n = 5, 36%), and Indian (n = 1, 7%). All participants worked in the oil and gas industry for a minimum of two years with one participant working in the industry for 55 years. Of the 14 participants, seven (54%) experienced a major or minor crisis, four (31%) had not experienced a crisis, and two (15%) were unsure if they had previously experienced a crisis.

Construction of open-ended questionnaire. An open-ended questionnaire was chosen rather than in-depth interviews because organizations in the area of study would not grant access to their employees. Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) stated,

> […] because qualitative data involves spending time at sites and the sites may be places not typically visited by the public (e.g., soup kitchens for the poor), researchers need to

> find a gatekeeper, an individual in the organization supportive of the proposed research who will, essentially 'open up' the organization. (p. 175)

At the time of Phase One, a gatekeeper could not be found to grant access to employees in the oil and gas industry. The use of an open-ended questionnaire allows permission to be gained from participants and provides them with complete anonymity.

According to Frey, Botan, and Kreps (2000), there are two general types of questions a researcher can use when creating questionnaires including closed and open questions. In this study, open-ended questions were chosen to create the questionnaire. Four research questions regarding stakeholder expectations for message content during a crisis, organizational culture, and member identity were proposed to create the questionnaire. Open-ended questions asked respondents to use their own words when answering questions. Open-ended questions are typically more time-consuming for respondents to answer and they typically provide data that is more difficult to categorize because answers can vary widely (Frey et al., 2000). However, open-ended questions can provide more information about an individual's perspective of a phenomenon and allow the individual's voice to be heard. Open-ended questionnaires are also helpful to use when information, such as instructing and adjusting information, cannot be easily categorized (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

Open-ended questionnaire. Participants were asked to respond to several open-ended questions pertaining to crisis response messages through the online questionnaire hosted on Qualtrics. Before starting the questionnaire, respondents were prompted to review a webpage that contained an information sheet explaining the study and their rights (see Appendix E). Questions were designed to elicit specific data about the employee's personal feelings during a specific crisis experience, expected crisis message content, their perceptions of crisis messages,

and how espoused organizational safety values/culture is communicated. The open-ended questionnaire follows a tree and branch format. In this format, research questions maintain equal emphasis and provide the basis for the main questions (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). Appendix F contains the open-ended questionnaire for Phase One.

Data analysis. The grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) approach was used to collect data about employee expectations for crisis response messages. Strauss and Corbin (1998) stated, "grounded theories because they are drawn from data, are likely to offer insight, enhance understanding, and provide a meaningful guide to action" (p. 12). This approach supports the purpose of developing an instrument model that is based on data rather than assumptions. The constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) was used to identify important themes collected from the open-ended questionnaire. First, the data were analyzed to create inductively derived typologies regarding the message expectations oil and gas employees have during organizational crises, organizational safety culture, and their perceptions of the organization during a crisis, and if expectations are indicative of base crisis response strategies. Words, phrases, and sentences were then analyzed to understand both assumed and intended meanings (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

A content analysis was also conducted. This involved counting the instances of information provided by the respondents (Frey et al., 2000). Glaser and Strauss (1967) suggested using open coding when applying grounded theory approaches such as the constant comparative method. They defined open coding as "the process of breaking down, examining, comparing, conceptualizing, and categorizing data" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 61). A codebook was created to catalogue themes associated with employee expectations for crisis messages and organizational safety culture. Axial coding was then used to find connections between the

observed themes (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). A second coder who was not familiar with the purpose of the project was used to establish interobserver reliability using the previously created codebook. Frey et al. (2000) suggested coding 20 percent of the data with a second coder and independently coding the rest. However, because the data set collected from Phase One was rather small, 50 percent was coded together with the researcher independently coding the rest. Doing so helped to understand employee expectations and draw inferences about their meaning. Any discrepancies in coding were discussed between the researcher and the second coder. Intercoder reliability using Scott's π was computed. According to Krippendorff (2004), Scott's π should be used when there are two coders and when the data set is relatively small. Scott's π was .59.

Choosing the acceptable reliability standards should be based on the results of drawing a wrong conclusion. Krippendorff (2013) stated, "if the outcome of a content analysis will affect someone's life – such as in court proceedings – the analyst should not rely on data whose probability of leading to a wrong decision is less than what is commonly accepted" (p. 325). He suggested accepting data with a Cronbach's alpha (α) score between .80 and .667 but warned that these guidelines were created for this specific reliability variable. In their survey of 200 content analyses, Lombard, Snyder-Duch, and Bracken (2003) found it was common to accept lower levels of reliability for more conservative measures such as Scott's π. Krippendorff (2004) argued this is a common misconception when reporting reliability. As a remedy for low reliability scores (less than .667), Frey et al. (2000) suggested refining code definitions, allowing the second coder to become more familiar with the data, and resolving disagreements between coders.

However, Krippendorff (2004) reiterated:

> An acceptable level of agreement below which data are to be rejected as too unreliable must be chosen depending on the costs of drawing invalid conclusions from these data. When human lives hang on the results of a content analysis, whether they inform a legal decision or tip the scale from peace to war, decision criteria have to be set far higher than when a content analysis is intended to merely support scholarly arguments. (p. 429)

He further stated, "resolving disagreements by majority among three or more coders may make researchers feel better about their data, but does not affect the measured reliability" (Krippendorff, 2004, p. 430). Therefore, due to the exploratory nature of this research project and lack of threat to human life, thresholds lower than .667 is acceptable.

The first four research questions were answered in Phase One of the study. To answer research question one, which asks how workplace safety messages are communicated to employees of the oil and gas industry, data were analyzed from five items on the questionnaire. The first item on the questionnaire asked, "describe, in as much detail as you feel comfortable providing, the safety conditions at your organization. Explain, specifically, any actions that have been taken to enhance employee safety." The second question asked, "what messages, if any, has your organization communicated to employees regarding their values for employee safety and how do they communicate this information?" The third question asked, "describe a specific time when employees demonstrated their agreement or disagreement with the organization's expressed safety values." The fourth question asked, "does your organization's safety values match with your own personal values? Please explain how your values and your organization's align. If they do not match, please explain why." The final question asked, "what did your organization do/say to employees in response to this particular crisis? How did you receive these messages (face-to-face, text message, phone call, social media, alert system, etc.)?" These five

questions were used to gather more information on how safety is currently communicated and practiced within the oil and gas industry.

The second and third research questions, "what are stakeholder's expectations for crisis response messages from their organization," and "are provided employee expectations representative of base crisis response strategies," were answered with three items on the questionnaire. The first item asked, "if your organization has experienced a crisis, think of an example that impacted you most. Describe what happened during this crisis in as much detail as you feel comfortable providing. If your organization has not experienced a crisis, proceed to the last question." The second item asked, "describe your personal reaction to how the organization handled this particular crisis and the information you were provided." The third item asked, "in the event of a future crisis, what are your expectations for message content from your organization (i.e. messages pertaining to employee safety, emotional support, organizational reputation, and continuation of work operations, etc.)? Please explain, in detail, why you think crisis messages should contain this type of information." These questions were used to gain a clearer understanding of employee crisis and safety message expectations from their organizations. The results from Phase One directed the research questions and data collection of Phase Two.

Phase Two

In Phase Two, 38 items were developed to represent oil and gas employee expectations for crisis communication. The items were created using qualitative data gathered from Phase One and were based on emergent themes. A sample of oil and gas employees were then asked to use the items to assess their expectations for crisis communications.

Respondents and procedures. Quantitative data for Phase Two of this study was collected using an online closed-ended questionnaire. Respondents included anyone over the age

of 18 whom currently, or have recently (within the past year), worked in the oil and gas industry. Respondents were recruited through several methods including paper fliers providing a link to the online questionnaire (see Appendix A and Appendix B) and using social media (Twitter, Instagram, Facebook Groups, LinkedIn) graphics (see Appendix C), which also included the questionnaire link. The survey link was also distributed to personal contacts and professors through email (see Appendix D) asking them to solicit participants. The researcher of the present study also attended a local area monthly safety meeting to actively recruit participants. The newly developed scale, along with other related items was administered via Qualtrics.

Respondents included 100 individuals (82% male and 18% females) who worked or had recently worked in the oil and gas industry. In the population, 2% of respondents were in the age range of 18 to 24, 25% were 25 to 34, 56% were 35 to 44, 21% were 45 to 54, 22% were 55 to 64, and 2% were 65 to 74. Ethnicity of respondents included Caucasian/White (50%), Hispanic/Latino (39%), African/Black (1%), Other (7%), and No Response (3%). Respondents worked in the oil and gas industry for an average of 14.20 years with a range of 1 to 44 years.

Respondents were prompted to review a webpage that contained an information sheet explaining the study and their rights before starting the questionnaire (see Appendix E). Questions were designed to elicit specific data about the employee's expected crisis message content and their perceptions of how crisis messages affect organizational climate, identification, and job satisfaction. Appendix G contains the closed-ended survey for Phase Two.

Development of survey instrument. An addendum was submitted to IRB outlining the methods of Phase Two in greater detail after the collection of data from Phase One. The data collected from Phase One guided the development of a Likert-type scale. Following procedures recommended by DeVellis (1991, 2012) eight steps including determining what will be

measured, generate an item pool, determine the format for measurement, have the item pool reviewed, consider inclusion of validation items, administer items to a sample, evaluate the items, and optimize scale length were used to create a new measure for employee expectations. The welfare and formalization subscales of the Organizational Climate Measure (Patterson et al., 2005; Appendix H), four items adapted from Cheney's (1982) Organizational Identification Questionnaire (Scott & Stephens, 2009; see Appendix I), and the general job satisfaction subscale of Hackman and Oldham's Job Diagnostic Survey (1975, Appendix J) were included in the survey as validation items.

Instrumentation. *Employee expectations* were measured using 38 items created from qualitative responses gathered in Phase One of this study. Common themes included crisis information, consideration, business continuity, quick communications, compensation, multiple communication options, and prevention. Responses were solicited using a 5-point Likert-type scale of (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree. Questions were asked to gather data regarding employee expectations for crisis response message content.

An exploratory factor analysis was performed on this measure with principle axis factoring and promax rotation to assess its dimensionality. Four criteria were used to determine the numbers of factors to retain. It was required (1) for each factor to have a minimum eigenvalue of 1.0, (2) account for at least 5% of the variance, (3) yield a primary factor loading of .60 or greater with no secondary factor loadings above .40, and (4) no factor loadings that cross-loaded. A one factor solution accounting for 52.20% of the variance (eigenvalue = 3.65) was produced. The factor, labeled employee expectations, represented oil and gas industry employees' expectations for Crisis response messages to contain information dealing with employee's physical and mental well-being, emotional reaction, and familial needs. The factor

consisted of seven items (α = .87, *M* = 4.37, *SD* = .69). Table 1 contains the measure items and factor loadings.

Table 1

Exploratory Factor Analysis Factor Loadings for Employee Expectations Measure

Items	Factor
1. When a crisis occurs I expect my company to tell me where and when the accident occurred.	**.85**
2. When a crisis occurs I expect my company to communicate messages that show they care about me.	**.61**
3. When a crisis occurs I expect my company to communicate that they care about my overall well-being.	**.81**
4. When a crisis occurs I do not expect my company to tell me that they care about their workers.	**.64**
5. When a crisis occurs I do not expect employee welfare to be a communication priority.	**.81**
6. When a crisis occurs I expect messages that communicate employees come first.	**.67**
7. When a crisis occurs I do not expect employee safety to be my company's communication priority.	**.64**

Note: Principle axis factoring with promax rotation.

Organizational climate was measured with the welfare and formalization subscales of the Organizational Climate Measure (Patterson et al., 2005; Appendix H). Welfare is a four-item subscale, which assess employee perception of how much their organization cares for their wellbeing. Formalization is a five-item subscale, which assesses how employees perceive the use of rules within their organization. Responses were solicited using a 5-point Likert-type scale of (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree. Previous Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients ranged from .67 to .91 (Patterson et al., 2005). The measure proved reliable for this study as well (α = .91, *M* = 3.85, *SD* = .95). Formalization also proved reliable in this study (α = .86, *M* = 3.80, *SD* = .92). Higher scores reflect greater levels of welfare and formalization.

Organizational Identification was measured with four items adapted from Cheney's (1982) Organizational Identification Questionnaire (Scott & Stephens, 2009; see Appendix I). The items measured how strongly employees felt shared commonalities or oneness with their organization (Scott & Stephens, 2009). Responses were solicited using a 5-point Likert-type scale of (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree. Previous Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients ranged from .73 to .96 (Scott & Stephens, 2009). Organizational identification proved to be reliable in this study as well ($\alpha = .85$, $M = 3.74$, $SD = .81$). Higher scores reflect greater identification with the organization.

Job satisfaction was measured with the general job satisfaction subscale of Hackman and Oldham's Job Diagnostic Survey (1975, Appendix J). The general job satisfaction subscale consists of three items that assesses employee's level of happiness with their work. Responses were solicited using a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly disagree. Previous Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients ranged from .76 to .77 (Hackman & Oldham, 1975; Lawrence, 2001). Job satisfaction also proved to be reliable in this study ($\alpha = .75$ ($M = 4.00$, $SD = .86$). Higher scores on the sum of the items reflected greater satisfaction.

This chapter focused on the exploratory sequential design used in this mixed methods study. The chapter began with a thorough explanation of the researcher's worldview and design, which helped to create a strong argument for the use of the exploratory sequential mixed methods design. Explanations of the qualitative methods including construction of the open-ended questionnaire, use of grounded theory, and completion of a content analysis was provided for Phase One. Explanations of the quantitative methods used for Phase Two of this study were also provided and included information regarding instrumentation as well as data analysis. Results of Phase One and Phase Two will be provided in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Results of both Phase One and Phase Two will be described in this chapter. The main purpose of this chapter is to present results from both Phase One and Phase Two of this study without providing any interpretation. Results of research questions one, two, and three will be first described and summarized in data tables. Following the mixed methods design shared in chapter three, results from research questions four, five, six, and seven will also be provided.

Phase One Results

The total number of units collected in response to the open-ended questionnaire was 167 which generated 101 total number of units coded. Of the 101 units of analysis, 73 were representative of research question one and 28 were representative of research question two. Research questions one, two, and three were answered in Phase One of this study.

Research question 1: communicating workplace safety. The first research question asked, how are workplace safety messages communicated to employees of the oil and gas industry? This research question was asked to discover how employees learned safety protocols from their organization. A total of 73 units identified how oil and gas organizations communicated safety messages to their employees. Results of the constant comparative analysis showed that oil and gas organizations communicate workplace safety messages through eight methods. Those methods included *required safety trainings and presentations* (n = 21), *safety equipment availability* (n = 5), *company-wide culture integration* (n = 9), *based on work environment* (n = 11), *through a variety of communication channels* (n = 6), *by an authority figure* (n = 9), *by appealing to employee intuition* (n = 4), and *through rules and regulations* (n = 4). See Table 2 for a summary of all data from research question one.

Table 2

Organizational method for communicating safety to employees

Safety Communication Method	Example	Item 5	Item 6	Item 7	Item 8	Item 11	Freq.
Required Safety Trainings and Presentations – Safety is communicated through various learning opportunities such as online courses, training sessions, safety stand down meetings, and presentations.	"If there are injuries/deaths associated with the company, the company conducts safety stand downs - all work is halted and training is conducted when needed to retrain or remind people as necessary of the need for safety and vigilance."	8 (14.81%)	5 (9.26%)	0	0	3 (5.56%)	16 (29.63%)
Safety Equipment Availability – Safety is communicated by providing employees with equipment that protects them from bodily harm or injury.	"we are provided with all the gear that we need to operate safely."	2 (3.70%)	0	1 (1.85%)	0	1 (1.85%)	4 (7.41%)
Company-wide Culture Integration – The organization ensures that safety is accepted as a part of employee culture by creating company-wide PR safety campaigns and safety slogans.	"hard hat 'slogans' are handed out regularly [….] The latest safety message was...'everyone has everyones back when it comes to safe working conditions.'"	2 (3.70%)	3 (5.56%)	1 (1.85%)	0	0	6 (11.11%)
Based on Work Environment – Safety is communicated based on employee's specific job duties or their work location.	"I work in an office environment, safety problems faced by rig personnel are not part of my daily routine."	4 (7.41%)	1 (1.85%)	2 (3.70%)	0	0	7 (12.96%)
Through a Variety of Communication Channels – Work safety messages are communicated using more than one type of communication channel. The organization communicates using face-to-face communication, computer-mediated communication, social media, and traditional media.	"We got text messages. We had an employee hotline to call. Information was also submitted to the media to help inform us and the public in general."	2 (3.70%)	1 (1.85%)	0	0	3 (5.56%)	6 (11.11%)
By An Authority Figure – Safety is communicated by a designated person, such as a manager, who is responsible for ensuring all employees follow safety rules and regulations.	"there is a safety manager to make sure employees and the company as a whole is complying with all regulations."	4 (7.41%)	2 (3.70%)	0	2 (3.70%)	0	8 (14.81%)
By Appealing to Employee Intuition – Safety is approached in a way that appeals to employee common sense and by using rules that appear in everyday life.	"Safety is approached from a common-sense point of view. The same safety values that the company puts forth are those used on a daily basis by 'most' people."	0	0	3 (5.56%)	1 (1.85%)	0	4 (7.41%)
Rules and Regulations – Safety is communicated through rules and regulations which can be created by the organization or outside regulators such as the government. Rules can also be represented by organizational artifacts such as a safety handbook or standard operating procedures.	"My only issue was not due to my employeers (sic) policies but more so due to knee jerk policies imposed by OSHA."	1 (1.85%)	1 (1.85%)	0	1 (1.85%)	0	3 (5.56%)
		23	13	7	4	7	54
		42.59%	24.07%	12.96%	7.41%	12.96%	99.99%

Required safety trainings and presentations. Safety is communicated through various learning opportunities such as online courses, training sessions, safety stand down meetings, and presentations. Most notably safety was communicated through safety stand down meetings. One participant described these meetings in the following quote, "If there are injuries/deaths associated with the company, the company conducts safety stand downs - all work is halted and training is conducted when needed to retrain or remind people as necessary of the need for safety and vigilance." Safety meetings, trainings and presentations happened in both a reactive and proactive manner. As the above quote exemplifies safety training could happen as a response to a crisis type event. It is important to note that safety trainings and meetings were also used in a preventative manner to educate employees on what they should or should not do. Most training was required or mandatory and would be conducted individually online or in a groups setting.

Safety equipment availability. Safety is communicated by providing employees with equipment that protects them from bodily harm or injury. Many employees explained that access to personal protection equipment showed that their organization cared about safety. One participant stated, "We are provided with all the gear that we need to operate safely." This respondent mentions "gear" as physical representations for how the company enhances employee safety.

Company-wide culture integration. The organization ensures safety is accepted as a part of employee culture by creating company-wide safety campaigns and safety slogans. These campaigns have a public relations quality to them where the organization focuses on making safety a part of employee culture. Slogans and posters make it easier for employees to remember safety precautions and protocols in a way where it can be seamlessly integrated into daily tasks. One participant was even able to remember their organization's last slogan "hard hat 'slogans'

are handed out regularly [….] The latest safety message was... 'everyone has everyones back when it comes to safe working conditions.'" These campaigns also make safety messages clear and cohesive throughout the entire organization.

Based on work environment. Safety is communicated based on employees' specific job duties or their work location. Employees who work in locations that have higher hazards or higher risks of bodily harm receive more safety communications from their organization. Locations such as the "rig," "well," or "in the field" were listed as places that require more safety precautions. Special safety messages or trainings often took place before employees left the organization to perform work duties. When in the field, employees were notified of the nearest hospitals and emergency precautions were planned out. As a result, employees who worked in areas deemed relatively safe or with a low chance of bodily harm received less safety communications from their organization. For example, one participant stated, "I work in an office environment, safety problems faced by rig personnel are not part of my daily routine."

Through a variety of communication channels. Work safety messages are communicated using more than one type of communication channel. The organization communicates using face-to-face communication, computer-mediated communication, new media, and traditional media. Safety messages are communicated through multiple communication channels that cover a wide variety of methods. As an example, one participant stated, "We got text messages. We had an employee hotline to call. Information was also submitted to the media to help inform us and the public in general." This response shows the many ways organizations communicated safety to their employees.

By an authority figure. Safety is communicated by a designated person, such as a manager, who is responsible for ensuring all employees follow safety rules and regulations. One

participant provided the following quote, “There is a safety manager to make sure employees and the company as a whole is complying with all regulations.” The authority figure is responsible for ensuring safety protocols and standard operating procedures are followed, safety training is completed and handles safety during a crisis. The authority is also responsible for disciplining employees who do not follow safety protocols.

By appealing to employee intuition. Safety is approached in a way that appeals to an employee’s common sense and by using rules that appear in everyday life. The following example from a participant illustrates this theme, “Safety is approached from a common-sense point of view. The same safety values that the company puts forth are those used on a daily basis by ‘most’ people.” The organization uses safety rules that are “common-sense” and are used by everyone in their daily lives. Rules that appeal to employee intuition are easily accepted in the organization with little to no challenge to their necessity.

Through rules and regulations. Safety is communicated through rules or regulations, which can be created by the organization or outside regulators such as the government. One employee stated, “My only issue was not due to my employeers [sic] policies but more so due to knee jerk policies imposed by OSHA.” These rules and regulations tend to either appeal to employee intuition or feel imposed by outside regulators. Employees do not as readily accept rules and regulations imposed from outside sources. Organizational artifacts such as a safety handbook or standard operating procedures can also represent rules.

Research question 2: employee expectations for crisis response messages. The second research question asked, what are employee expectations for crisis response messages from their organization? This research question was designed to discover what employees expect, want or need to hear from their organization in a time of crisis. A total of 28 units identified employee

expectations of crisis response messages from their organization. Results of the constant comparative analysis showed that employees expressed seven expectations for the content of organizational crisis response messages. Employees expected crisis response messages *to provide information about the crisis* (n = 7), *to consider employee needs* (n = 8), *to provide business continuity* (n = 3), *quick information dissemination* (n = 4), *to provide compensation information* (n = 3), *to be sent through multiple communication channels* (n = 5), and *to explain future crisis prevention* (n = 2). See table 3 for a summary of all data from research question two.

Table 3

Employee expectations for crisis response messages from their organization

Employee Expectations	Example	Item 10	Item 12	Item 13	Freq.
To Provide Information About the Crisis – Crisis response messages should contain detailed information about the crisis including what happened, who the crisis affected, where the crisis occurred, what caused the crisis and when the crisis occurred.	"Stand down was a good reminder, especially when it is coupled with detailed information about the accidents/deaths […]."	0	2 (8.00%)	5 (20.00%)	7 (28.00%)
To Consider Employee Needs – Crisis response messages should contain information that deals with employee's physical and mental well-being, emotional reaction, and familial needs.	"I'm fortunate in that they put their employees well being in the forefront of their actions."	2 (8.00%)	0	3 (12.00%)	5 (20.00%)
Provide Business Continuity – Crisis response messages should tell employees how the crisis will affect immediate and future organizational operations.	"I would expect any communication to let me know how this crisis effects us and how we should proceed forward."	0	0	3 (12.00%)	3 (12.00%)
Quick Information Dissemination – Crisis response messages should be relayed to employees in a quick and organized manner.	"I would expect information, but the company I work for lacks the understanding that immediate information is warranted. Most of the information I receive about ongoing situations comes after the fact or not at all."	0	1 (4.00%)	2 (8.00%)	3 (12.00%)
Compensation Information – Crisis response messages should notify affected employees of compensation opportunities or provide information of how the organization is spending money to fix the crisis.	"Any compensation or what the company is doing about the crisis."	0	1 (4.00%)	2 (8.00%)	3 (12.00%)
Sent Through Multiple Communication Channels – Crisis response messages should be sent through multiple communication channels such as social media, text messages, emails, internet, new outlets, telephone, and face to face communication.	"From here forward, I would think that email, text, alert system, and social media would be the way we would go about this."	0	0	3 (12.00%)	3 (12.00%)
Crisis Prevention – Crisis response messages should explain how the organization will prevent the same crisis from repeatedly occurring.	"They have discussions and investigations into the crisis and cause and come up with ways to prevent."	0	0	1 (4.00%)	1 (4.00%)
		2 (8.00%)	4 (16.00%)	19 (76.00%)	25 (100.00%)

To provide information about the crisis. Employees expected crisis response messages to contain detailed information about the crisis including what happened, whom the crisis affected, where the crisis occurred, what caused the crisis and when the crisis occurred. For

example, one participant stated, “Stand down was a good reminder, especially when it is coupled with detailed information about the accidents/deaths […].” Employees expected detailed information about any work related crises. Safety meetings with managers were considered more effective when the organization provided more information about what had occurred. Participants discussed how organizational response efforts were more effective when the organization actively tried to keep the employees and the public well informed. One participant stated, “Crisis management messages would put an instant stop to the rumor mill/water cooler talk that everyone starts when they lack information.” While yet another participant stated, “I expect them to say the crisis and what happened.”

To consider employee needs. Employees expected crisis response messages to contain information that deals with employee’s physical and mental well-being, emotional reaction, and familial needs. The following quote is illustrative of this theme, “I'm fortunate in that they put their employees well being in the forefront of their actions.” An employee’s well-being could be affected by a crisis several different ways including bodily harm, emotional distress for the employee and emotional distress for their family. Employees expected crisis response messages to provide information about those who were injured, and help them cope with the emotional distress of the accident. It was also important for the organization to communicate crisis information to the families of those who were affected by the crisis. The following quote illustrates this interpretation, “The company allowed people to take care of themselves and their families first.” Another quote echoes this expectation, “I feel my employer would work hard to keep us informed and to provide information of emotional support […].”

To provide business continuity. Employees expected crisis response messages to explain how the crisis will affect immediate and future organizational operations. One participant stated,

"I would expect any communication to let me know how this crisis effects [sic] us and how we should proceed forward." This participant used the word "us" in reference to the organization and its employees. If a crisis were to occur, employees expected to know how the organization will continue to operate immediately after and in the future. Employees expected the organization to communicate their recovery plan and their economic status.

Quick information dissemination. Employees expected crisis response messages to be relayed to them in a quick and organized manner. One participant expressed the following, "I would expect information, but the company I work for lacks the understanding that immediate information is warranted. Most of the information I receive about ongoing situations comes after the fact or not at all." This participant was not satisfied with information that was slow or provided well after the crisis occurred. Therefore, quick information dissemination is necessary immediately after the crisis occurs. To provide information in a quick manner employees expect that the organization is ready to provide information at a moment's notice and is organized well enough.

Compensation information. Employees expected crisis response messages to notify those affected of compensation opportunities or provide information on how the organization is spending money to repair the crisis. For example, one participant stated, "I thought they were very helpful. Even spending money to help out affected people." Employees expected the organization to financially assist the employees and families of those who were injured or lost wages due to a crisis. For example, a respondent stated, "Also their (sic) is a Catastrophic Relief Fund that employees can make donations to in case a crisis occurs for employees." If damage is caused by the crisis, the organization is expected to provide finances to help rectify the situation. Another respondent stated, "Any compensation or what the company is doing about the crisis."

Sent through multiple communication channels. Employees expected crisis response messages to be sent through multiple communication channels such as social media, text messages, emails, internet, new outlets, telephone, and face-to-face communication. For example, "From here forward, I would think that email, text, alert system, and social media would be the way we would go about this." This participant expected the organization to communicate through many different channels. This is important during a crisis because employees may only have access to a few of the aforementioned options and by using multiple communication channels the organization increases the likelihood the employee will receive the crisis response message.

Crisis Prevention. Employees expected crisis response messages to explain how the organization will prevent the same type of crisis from repeatedly occurring. The following is a representative quote, "They have discussions and investigations into the crisis and cause and come up with ways to prevent." Employees expected the organization to spend time and effort discovering the causes of the crisis and planning ways to prevent the same crisis from reoccurring.

Research question 3: expectations and base crisis response strategies. The third research question asked, are provided employee expectations representative of base crisis response strategies? As explained in greater detail in chapter two base crisis response strategies consist of instructing and adjusting information. Instructing information provides stakeholders with the knowledge needed to protect themselves physically during a crisis, provides information on business continuity, and places people's needs before organizational reputation (Coombs, 2007a). Adjusting information is provided to reduce the amount of uncertainty and stress

stakeholders experience and consists of the "what," "why," "when," "where," and "how" of the crisis (Coombs, 1999; Coombs, 2007a).

The following two responses are the best representation of employee expectations, which mirror base crisis response strategies. The first participant stated, "I feel my employer would work hard to keep us informed (adjusting information) and to provide information of emotional support (adjusting information), as well as communicate as to the continuation of operations (instructing information)." A second participant stated, "The company allowed people to take care of themselves and their families first. The message was communicated by text, phone, and web site (instructing information)." Both responses contain examples of base crisis response strategies and the organization prioritizing employee needs over organizational reputation.

The themes that emerged from research question two did appear to serve as examples of base crisis response strategies. For example, to provide information about the crisis and to provide business continuity were representations of instructing information. Again, instructing information should be provided to tell stakeholders how to protect themselves from the crisis and what the organization plans to do to continue operations after the crisis (Coombs, 2007a). Although employees did touch on instructing information, adjusting information was represented by more themes including: consider employee needs, quick information dissemination, compensation information, sent through multiple communication channels, and crisis prevention. Adjusting information pertains to the organization providing information which will reduce stakeholder uncertainty and allow them to emotionally as well as psychologically cope with the crisis (Seeger et al., 2003; Sturges, 1993). Therefore, it is acceptable to say that the responses provided in Phase One are representative of base crisis response strategies.

Research question 4: items to best measure themes in phase one. The final research question of Phase One asked, what items will best measure the themes presented in phase one of the exploratory sequential design? This research question was asked to connect Phase One to Phase Two and transform the qualitative data into items which could then be placed into a quantitative survey. Once all data were analyzed from research question one and two, 93 items were created from participant responses and broken up into two main categories, safety communication items and employee expectation items. Items were created to measure how employees of the oil and gas industry reported their organization's workplace safety communications and their expectations for crisis response message content from their organizations. The 55 safety communication items consisted of the following sub-categories: continuing education and trainings, safety equipment availability, culture integration, based on work environment, multiple communication channels, by an authority, employee intuition, and rules and regulation. The 38 employee expectation items consisted of the following sub-categories: crisis information, consideration, business continuity, quick communications, compensation, multiple communication options, and prevention.

Table 4 contains the items that were created to represent reported safety communication methods and employee expectations. As employee expectations is the latent variable which this research project focused on, only items from the employee expectations category were used in a quantitative closed-ended survey.

Table 4

Safety Communication and Employee Expectation Items

Safety Communication Items
Continuing Education and Trainings
Safety is communicated through required online safety courses

I must stay up-to-date on safety trainings to keep my job
Safety training is not mandatory**
We discuss safety in our meetings
We are not required to take training courses**
Training courses are always available online
Safety education is left up to the individual**
We immediately halt all work if an accident has occurred to conduct safety training

Safety Equipment Availability
Safety equipment helps protect me from injuries.
Personal protection equipment is provided by my organization
I do not wear personal protection equipment**
I wear personal protection equipment to prevent injury

Culture Integration
Safety is part of our work motto
Slogans are created to help me remember safety messages
Everyone does not have to agree to safety**
We do not have slogans to help us remember safety messages**
There is a campaign for safety
There is a wide-spread culture of safety
I feel like a member of the team when I follow the safety rules

Based on Work Environment
Because I work in the field I have more safety trainings and meetings
It is much safer working in the office
It is more dangerous working in the field
Before working on a well or rig I get more safety trainings
Before we work in dangerous locations we have a safety meeting
When I am working in the office I do not have to worry about my safety
People who work in the field do not need to worry about their safety**
I am not provided with extra safety information before I do a dangerous task**

Multiple Communication Channels
Safety information is sent to me many different ways
I get safety emails
I can call an employee hotline number to hear safety information
Safety information is on our company website
I get safety information in a text message
Our safety information is readily available

Safety information is not easily accessible**

By an Authority
There is a safety manager who makes sure we comply with safety protocols
If I do not follow safety protocols I will be punished
My supervisor will write me up if I do not follow the safety protocols
I could lose my job if I do not practice proper safety
There is not a designated safety manager**
Managers and supervisors teach us about proper safety
If I need to know safety protocols I ask my supervisor
I cannot discuss safety issues with my supervisor

Employee Intuition
Following safety rules just makes sense
The safety rules are not practical**
It would be stupid to ignore safety protocols
Safety protocols are industry standard
Most people would agree with my organization's safety standards
Safety rules that make sense are easily accepted

Rules and Regulations
We have safety rules that we follow
All of our safety rules are in our employee handbook
We do not have to follow safety rules**
We have to meet specific government regulations
Standardized operating procedures do not exist
There were less safety rules in the past**
Now there is more emphasis on following safety rules

Employee Expectation Items
Crisis Information
Expect to know the details of what happened
Expect To know who was hurt
Do not expect my company to tell employees specific accident information**
Do not expect to know who will be affected**
My company to tell me where and when the accident occurred
To know what caused the crisis

Consideration
Expect my company to communicate messages that show they care about me

Expect my company to communicate that they care about my overall well-being
Do not expect my company to show that they care about their workers**
Do not expect employee welfare to be a communication priority**
Expect messages that communicate employees come first
Do not expect employees safety to be my company's communication priority**
Expect emotional support from my company

Business Continuity
Expect to know how my company's future will be affected
Expect my company to have a recovery plan
Do not need to know the economic situation of my company**
Do not need to be told about my company's future plans**
Expect to be told when I can come back to work
Expect my company to tell us how we will proceed forward

Quick Communications
Expect information to be shared with employees quickly
Expect my company to respond quickly
Do not expect to be told what is happening as soon as possible**
Do not expect my company to communicate with me right after an accident**

Compensation
Expect to be compensated
Expect anyone affected to be compensated
Do not expect my company to spend money to fix the accident**
Do not expect to be compensated if I lost wages**
Do not expect to be compensated if I get hurt on the job**
Expect my company to spend money when their employees get hurt
I expect my organization to have a disaster relief fund

Multiple Communication Options
Expect crisis information to be easily accessible
Expect my company to communicate with me in person, over the phone, and online
I do not expect my organization to communicate with me in a variety of ways**
Expect my company to have established communication options during an emergency
Expect my company to utilize social media, email, and/or text messages to share information about the accident

Prevention
Expect to my company to tell me how they will prevent an accident from repeating

Do not need to know how my company will keep the accident from repeating**
Think the organization should investigate into what happened

Note. **are reverse coded

Phase One Summary

The results of the first study provided information regarding the way organizations commonly communicate safety in the oil and gas industry. The way organizations commonly communicate safety emerged through eight themes, which included continuing education and trainings, culture integration, based on the work environment, and more. Results also included emergent themes, which represented what employees commonly expected to hear from their organizations during time of crises such as an accident or natural disaster. Seven themes emerged that represented employee expectations, which included crisis information, consideration, and business continuity, to name a few.

Phase Two Results

The fifth research question asked how the created employee expectations measure compares with Coombs' base crisis response strategies. The purpose of this research question was to identify any similarities between how employees in the oil and gas industry expected crises to be communicated and how Coombs suggested crises should be communicated to employees. Results of the exploratory factor analysis showed that items in the sub-category *consideration* were the best representation of employee crisis communication expectations (see Table 1). Consideration items can best be compared to adjusting information, which explains the "what," "why," "when," "where," and "how" information pertaining to the crisis (Coombs, 1999; Coombs, 2007a). This type of information meets the emotional and psychological needs of the stakeholder. Table 5 contains a correlation matrix of the five variables in this study and provides the results for research questions six and seven. The five variables represent the employee

expectations measure and the four validation measures of welfare, formalization, organizational identification, and job satisfaction.

Research question six asked, what is the relationship between employee expectation (s) and organizational climate? The purpose of this research question was to discover if organizational climate had any effect on how employees expect their organization to communicate a crisis. Results of a Pearson (*r)* correlation revealed that employee expectations were positively related to organizational climate subscales of welfare ($r = .40$, $p < .01$) and formalization ($r = .41$, $p < .01$).

Research question seven asked, what is the relationship between employee expectation (s) and organizational identification? This research question was asked to discover if organizational identification had any effect on how employees expected their organization to communicate a crisis. Results of the Pearson *(r*) correlation revealed that employee expectations were also positively related to organizational identification ($r = .42$, $p < .01$). Job satisfaction was included as a validation measure and was also found to be positively related to employee expectations ($r = .24$, $p < .05$).

Table 5

Bivariate Correlations Among Employee Expectations, Job Satisfaction, Organizational Climate & Identification

Variables	1	2	3	4	5
1. Expectations	-				
2. Welfare	.40**	-			
3. Formalization	.41**	.58**	-		
4. Organizational ID	.42**	.61**	.47**	-	
5. Job Satisfaction	.24*	.70**	.46**	.53**	-

Note. n = 100 **p < 0.01 *p < 0.05.

Phase Two Summary

Phase Two results suggested that items in the *consideration* sub-category, which resembled adjusting information, were the best representation of employee expectations of crisis communications in the oil and gas industry. Therefore, employees mostly expected crisis messages to contain information dealing with employee's physical, mental, emotional, and familial needs. These results were collected after an exploratory factor analysis was used to discard any items that failed to meet the standards described in the Phase Two instrumentation section of chapter three. After three extractions, it was found that a one factor solution best measured employee expectations and included seven items. Results of reliability testing indicated that the newly created measure would produce stable and consistent results. A bivariate correlation also revealed that there was a significant relationship between all of the variables used in this study. These relationships will be explained in detail in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to create and validate a measure of employee expectations for crisis communication in the oil and gas industry. Current crisis communication strategies focus on reputation in great detail while explaining that organizations also need to first attend to stakeholder basic needs. Researchers contend that needs are a part of base crisis response strategies, which should always come before reputation saving strategies, yet little research has focused on identifying the types of messages stakeholders – specifically employees of the oil and gas industry – expect their organization to communicate to them or what their needs are during a crisis. Therefore, an exploratory sequential analysis was conducted using grounded theory and themes from an open ended questionnaire to create a new measure of oil and gas employees' expectations for crisis communication. Employee expectations for how an organization should communicate a crisis were best represented by items in the results of Phase One which resembled adjusting information as described by Coombs (2007a, 2012). Results of the quantitative portion of the present study revealed a newly created measure of employee expectations to be reliable and positively correlated with the validation measures of welfare, formalization, organizational identification, and job satisfaction.

Phase One Implications

Clarification of expectations. Phase One of this study provided results that suggest the importance of instructing and adjusting information in crisis communication. Employees in the oil and gas industry expressed expectations for crisis messages including information about the crisis, consideration of employee needs, quick information dissemination, compensation, use of multiple communication channels, and future crisis prevention planning. These expectations echoed what Coombs (2007a) described as base crisis response strategies. These strategies,

which consist of information used to help stakeholders protect themselves and emotionally cope with a crisis, should be used by organizations as the first step in crisis response. However, prior to this study, the information a crisis manager could find on base crisis response strategies was vague (Sturges, 1994; Coombs 2007a; Coombs 2012). The only thing that was clear was that it was important to use base crisis response strategies prior to using reputation saving strategies. Yet, there was an overall lack of research on this topic (Kim & Sung, 2014). It was unclear how an organization could communicate in a way which would meet the needs of the stakeholder because it was unclear exactly what those needs were.

The Phase One results for the present study provide organizations in the oil and gas industry the tools to identify the specific information that their employees expect during a crisis situation. Prior to the present study, it would be difficult for an organization to provide stakeholders with the specific information to meet their needs during a crisis. This became apparent during both the Fukushima Nuclear Disaster and the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill. As discussed in Chapter 1, during Fukushima, stakeholders felt like they were not provided with the information necessary to protect themselves from radiation. During the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill, stakeholders did not feel like BP was sincere in their efforts to stop the spill and in their restoration efforts. Even though BP ultimately accepted responsibility, their crisis response strategies were ineffective. It is clear that during both the Fukushima Nuclear Disaster and the BP Oil Spill the organizations involved failed to meet the needs of their stakeholders. Therefore, more research was needed to clarify exactly what stakeholder needs were, how they could be met, and how organizations are currently communicating safety to employees.

Towards a culture of safety. In a previous case study of the Fukushima Nuclear Disaster and the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill, it became apparent there was a lack of corporate safety

culture which led to both crises (Hachisuka et al., 2012, U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Report, 2007). However, an outsider of an organization cannot hope to understand a culture until they can first understand the underlying assumptions (Schein, 2010). These assumptions are only made clear through an organizational member's speech and behavior. This led to a focus on understanding how safety is communicated to employees in the oil and gas industry. The results of the present study reveal that organizations in the oil and gas industry communicate safety through eight different methods including safety trainings and presentations, safety equipment availability, company-wide culture integration, tailoring messages based on work environment, by an authority figure, appealing to employee intuition, and through rules and regulations. More emphasis will be placed on discussing trainings, the authority figure, and company-wide culture integration.

Oil and gas industry employees readily shared their experiences with how safety is communicated inside of their organization. In fact, results of the open-ended questionnaire revealed employees were more comfortable talking about safety communication verses crisis communication. After coding responses from the open-ended questionnaire, 73 coded units were identified as it related to safety communication versus 28 coded units regarding crisis communication. Safety trainings and presentations were mentioned 29.63% of the time in the questionnaire responses. Employee responses revealed their organization communicated safety during special in-person meetings and through online trainings. At 14.81%, an authority figure was the second most mentioned mode of safety communication. Employees mentioned a safety manager as being responsible for ensuring employees followed safety rules. If safety rules were not followed, it was up to that authority figure to discipline employees. The results also illustrated that safety messages were tailored to the environment employees worked in. An

employee who worked in an office environment received different safety messages as compared to employees who worked in dangerous locations such as on a rig. Finally, it was found that safety was communicated through company-wide culture integration (11.11%).

These results can be grouped into two ways of understanding the culture of safety in the oil and gas industry. As Keyton (2014) explained, culture can be understood through the lens of narrative reproduction and the lens of power and politics. Responses from employees revealed that their organization communicated safety to them through public relations campaigns and even slogans. One participant was even able to share the most recent safety slogan her company shared, "Hard hat "slogans" are handed out regularly [….] The latest safety message was... "everyone has everyones (sic) back when it comes to safe working conditions." It is possible that these slogans have become the narrative of the organization. These narratives then become artifacts which represent an organization's dominant values of safety.

The second way of understanding the culture of safety in the oil and gas industry is through the lens of power and politics. Employees explained that their organization communicated safety through required safety trainings and through an authority figure. Keyton (2014) stated that organizational members have some degree of status and power over meaning creation in their organization. It is understood that not all members of an organization will share the same values as their organization (Weick, 1985). Therefore, it is possible to surmise that the oil and gas industry used power to force employees to adhere to a stronger safety culture. For example, employees are required to consistently take online safety trainings and attend safety meetings. If a crisis occurred, all work was stopped and a safety meeting was held. One participant stated, "If there are injuries/deaths associated with the company, the company conducts safety stand downs - all work is halted and training is conducted when needed to retrain

or remind people as necessary of the need for safety and vigilance." Employees are consistently "retrained" in the ways of the dominant culture. Another more obvious representation of this is the use of an authority figure to communicate safety. One participant stated, "There is a safety manager to make sure employees and the company as a whole is complying with all regulations." Participants also made it clear that any noncompliance was severely dealt with and could even result in the loss of their jobs. This leads us to believe that the oil and gas industry is using power and politics to force their industry down the path of having a stronger culture of safety.

These finding revealed that organizations in the oil and gas industry are striving to create a culture of safety for their employees to identify with. This result indicates a culture that is far different from what was found at BP and Fukushima. These findings could indicate that as a result of past crises, the oil and gas industry is actively working to change their safety and organizational culture. According to Muscalu (2013), creating a new organizational culture is a long and complex process. By changing an organization's culture, employees must reassess the basic assumptions that make up the current culture. However, culture change is possible and can be a direct result of how an organization changes their treatment of and responses to a crisis (Muscalu, 2013). Therefore, the significance of learning how organizations communicate safety to their employees is that it reveals a movement towards a stronger safety culture. Organizations that incorporate safety into their corporate culture reveal a top-down decision to create a stronger safety culture. The perceptions of oil and gas industry employees led to Phase Two of this study which built upon the findings of Phase One.

In this study, adjusting and instructing information served as the latent variable which could not be directly measured due to a lack of research. As themes emerged from the qualitative portion of this study, employee expectations served as the observable variable which could be

seen and measured. Responses from oil and gas industry employees served as a basis for what employees expected to hear from their organization during a crisis. Employees provided expectations which were consistent with adjusting and instructing information. This finding further strengthened the claim that base crisis response strategies were an important first step in crisis response messages. To further refine and clarify which expectations were most important to employees in the oil and gas industry, a second quantitative phase was conducted.

Phase Two Implications

Taking into consideration the expressed expectations for crisis communication in Phase One and lack of a pre-existing instrument to measure employee expectations was created. This instrument was made available to oil and gas industry employees in a closed-ended survey. An exploratory factor analysis revealed a one factor solution and consisted of seven items which most resembled what literature describes as adjusting information. The factor represented oil and gas industry employees' expectations for crisis response messages to contain information dealing with an employee's physical and mental well-being, emotional reaction, and familial needs. According to Vogt (2007), results obtained by a factor analysis leave much room for interpretation. The use of an exploratory factor analysis served two purposes in this research project. The first use of the factor analysis was to assess the reliability of the newly created employee expectations measure and the second was to discover patterns of relationships with other variables.

Reliability is used to determine whether items in a scale consistently measure the same things (Vogt, 2007). Results of reliability testing for the newly created seven-item measure of employee expectations revealed that those seven items could be treated as one variable (See Table 1). These results indicate that out of 38 items created from Phase One responses only those

that clustered together in factor one were answered by participants in a consistent fashion. Results revealed that employees in the oil and gas industry expect their organization to tell them the following: where and when the accident occurred, communicate messages that they care about them, communicate messages that they care about employees overall well-being, communicate messages that say they care about their workers, employee welfare to be a communication priority, communicate that employees come first, employee safety as a communication priority. It could be interpreted that the items are representative of what Coombs (2012) described as adjusting information.

Crisis communication priority: Adjusting information. During two of history's most recent disasters it was found that organizations involved failed to meet stakeholder expectations for crisis communication. In both the Fukushima Nuclear Disaster and the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill, stakeholders felt like they were not provided with the information necessary to protect themselves and that the organizations were not sincere in their restoration efforts. Since the Fukushima Disaster occurred in 2011, stakeholders' mistrust of the government is still apparent (Featherstone, 2016).

A nuclear scientist, Ikuro Anzai recently stated,

> The accident destroyed people's trust in the industry, in the government, and experts. As a scientist, I want to make a sincere effort to stand beside victims and help minimize their exposure to radiation, and to restore trust in scientists (Featherstone, 2016, p. 77).

This recent statement reveals that five years after the disaster occurred, the crisis is still ongoing. It is important to remember, if stakeholders are unhappy with crisis response efforts the crisis will continue (Maresh-Fuehrer, 2013). Thus, the results of the exploratory factor analysis in the

present study are important. These items represent exactly what a group of stakeholders – employees – wish to hear during a crisis in the oil and gas industry.

Results indicate that crisis communication resembling adjusting information become the priority during a crisis. Employees in the oil and gas industry want their organization to communicate messages which show that the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of employees is priority. Although these results seem like common sense, the literature revealed that less than 2% of organizations place public safety or health as the priority during crisis response (Kim, Avery & Lariscy, 2011). As instructing and adjusting information is explained by Coombs (2012) there appears to be some overlap between the two categories. Results of the exploratory factor analysis revealed that instructing information was not as important as adjusting information. By communicating in a way that shares the what, why, when, where, and how of a crisis as well as expressing the importance employee well-being, employees are being provided with information that helps protect them from the crisis. Therefore, adjusting information should become the number one priority of organizations in the oil and gas industry.

Along with the new measure of employee expectations, three validation measures were also included in the close-ended survey. Validation measures included the welfare and formalization subscales of the Organizational Climate Measure (Patterson et al., 2005; Appendix H), the Organizational Identification measure (Scott & Stephens, 2009; see Appendix I), and the general job satisfaction subscale of Hackman and Oldham's Job Diagnostic Survey (1975, Appendix J). These validation measures were chosen as an addition to the survey because of the similarities they shared with Phase One safety communication themes. A bivariate correlation was calculated to understand the relationships between employee expectations and the validation measures. It was found that relationships existed between all three of the validation measures and

employee expectations. Further discussion of the relationships between employee expectations, organizational climate, and organizational identity will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

Employee expectations as a product of organizational climate. The climate of an organization is represented by the behaviors of the employees. Employee behaviors are then influenced by their perceptions of organizational practices (Patterson et. al, 2005). The first and most important aspect of an organization are the people who make it up because without them the organization could not exist (Keyton, 2011). It would stand to reason that organizations should put employee welfare in the forefront of all their actions because employees are such an important piece of the organizational structure. However, past case analyses of the Fukushima Nuclear Disaster and BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill showed organizations which placed their reputation before their employees' well-being. Also as results revealed in Phase One organizations also show that they care about their employees' safety by using rules and regulations.

After calculating the correlation coefficient (*r*), it was found that employee expectations had a positive relationship with the welfare and formalization subscales of the organizational climate measure. This relationship means that when an organization treats its employees well, 16% (r^2= .40 x .40) of the time employees will expect their organization to communicate with them according to the newly created expectations measure. It was also found that when organizations communicate safety through clearly defined rules and regulations, 17% (r^2= .41 x .41) of the time employees' expectations will mirror the newly created measure. Therefore, results indicate that employee expectations arose as a product of the organizational climate.

Employee expectations as a product of organizational identification. In this study, organizational identification is understood as a similarity or oneness with the organization. An

employee who identifies strongly with an organization is also more likely to help the organization achieve their goals. This is why it is important to communicate in ways that help employees build a strong identity with their organization. After calculating the correlation coefficient (*r*), it was found that employee expectations had a positive relationship with organizational identification. When an employee can identify strongly with their organization, 18% (r^2= .42 x .42) of the time employees will expect their organization to communicate with them according to the newly created expectations measure. Therefore, it is reasonable to believe that employees who identify with their organization will also expect their organization to communicate in a way that shows they care about their well-being and infers that expressed employee expectations arose as a product of organizational identification.

It was also found that employee expectations had statistically significant relationships with both the organizational climate and identification measures. This reveals to researchers that if time is taken to understand the climate of the organization as well as how employees identify with the organization they will be able to predict how crises should be communicated. In a previous study, it was found that using reputation repairing strategies did no better at lowering stakeholder attribution than just using base crisis response strategies (Kim & Sung, 2014). In their study, Kim and Sung (2014) tested the effectiveness of base crisis response strategies compared to reputation management strategies and the effectiveness of sharing both the positive and negative sides of a crisis. Their study found that crisis communication which included information about what happened, how a company will provide corrective action, and addressing emotional needs were just as effective at satisfying stakeholder expectations. In their concluding remarks they suggested more research was needed to discover the full potential of base crisis response strategies.

Study Limitations, Future Research, and Conclusion

Even though there are numerous benefits in using a mixed methods design, there are also some challenges associated with this choice. Challenges that are specific to the exploratory sequential design include possibility of participant overlap in both studies and the challenge of recruiting participants (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

To address possible participant overlap, homogenous sampling techniques were used to understand the expectations and perceptions of employees in the oil and gas industry through an open-ended as well as a closed-ended survey. To address this challenge a larger amount of responses were collected during the second study. Typically, a smaller amount of responses are collected during the qualitative phase and any overlap would not be significant (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). By increasing the amount of responses collected data would be more representative of a greater portion of the population (projected total population is 198.3 thousand, United States Department of Labor, 2015). This would lessen the overlap possibility as well as allow for easier comparison of data from both studies (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

Another major limitation of this study was the lack of access to local oil and gas companies. At the time of the first study, surrounding oil and gas organizations would not grant access to their employees. This could be due to the sensitivity of the topic of crisis communication. This prevented the researcher from conducting in-depth interviews and caused the study to rely on open-ended online questionnaires. Although the questionnaire only contained ten questions, responses were not as in-depth as would have resulted from an interview. Participants were more comfortable talking about safety and tended to ignore the crisis communication questions. Conducting in-person interviews might have allowed time for the participants to grow comfortable with the interviewer and provide more information about crisis communication.

Finally, because the researcher could not find a gatekeeper to allow access to employees of the oil and gas industry a small amount of participants were obtained for both the qualitative and quantitative portions of this study. This limitation led the researcher to complete the qualitative portion of the study with only ten respondents. In an interview setting the small number of respondents would have been offset by the depth of knowledge that is gained from face-to-face interviews. A total of 100 participants were obtained for the qualitative portion of the study, and while this provided statistical significance, more participants would have provided greater statistical power (Vogt, 2007).

In the future, researchers should consider applying similar techniques as were employed in the present study to study other stakeholder groups. Successful stakeholder management requires an organization to create policies or practices that consider stakeholder concerns (Post et al., 2002). Organizations will not be able to address stakeholder needs unless their expectations for crisis communication are first identified. Employees serve as only one type of stakeholder that an organization needs to tailor messages. Other stakeholder groups that should be interviewed and surveyed include family members, community members, board of directors, shareholders, and media. Further research could also extend beyond the oil and gas industry by surveying stakeholders of other industries. Again, Sturges (1994) suggested future research should continue to customize messages for different stakeholder groups in different crises. Doing so will allow researchers to identify changing stakeholder expectations. By providing the newly constructed measure of employee expectations to other types of stakeholder groups the measure could become more generalizable. Doing so will continue creating a larger tool box of theories as Putnam and Mumby (2014) recently suggested. By conducting further studies, the scientific

community will gain greater knowledge on the impact stakeholders can have when organizations try to move past a crisis.

Based on the results of this study, organizations and crisis managers should consider prioritizing adjusting information above reputation saving strategies. Employees revealed that they expected their organization to communicate to them in a manner that showed employee well-being as the number one priority. It was also found that the oil and gas industry is making a move in a positive direction by creating a stronger safety culture. This stronger culture of safety meshes well with how employees expect their organizations to treat them and other industries would do well to follow suit. In past crises such as the Fukushima Nuclear Disaster and the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill, crisis response strategies were unsuccessful due to both organizations ignoring stakeholder perceptions. This has caused reputational damage to both organizations. Featherstone (2016) recently said it best, "In many ways, rebuilding Fukushima is the easy part. […] Restoring public faith will be much more difficult because trust has no half-life" (p. 77).

References

Albert, S. (1998). The definition and metadefinition of identity. In D. A., Whetten & P. C., Godfrey (Eds.), *Identity in organizations: Building theory through conversations* (pp. 1-13). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

An, S.K & Cheng, I. H. (2010). Crisis communication research in public relations journals: Tracking research trends over thirty years. In W. T., Coombs & S. J., Holladay (Eds.), *The handbook of crisis communication* (pp. 65-90). West Sussex, England: Wiley-Blackwell.

Barton, L. (2001). *Crisis in organizations II*. Cincinnati, OH: South-Western College Publishing.

Benoit, W.L. (1997). Image repair discourse and crisis communication. *Public Relations Review, 23*, 177-186. ISSN 0363-8111

BP. (2014, June). BP statistical review of world energy. Retrieved from http://www.bp.com/content/dam/bp/pdf/Energy-economics/statistical-review-2014/BP-statistical-review-of-world-energy-2014-full-report.pdf

BP. (n.d.a). About BP: BP at a glance. Retrieved from http://www.bp.com/en/global/corporate/about-bp/bp-at-a-glance.html

BP. (n.d.b). About BP: Company information, our values. Retrieved from http://www.bp.com/en/global/corporate/about-bp/company-information/our-values.html

Bryson, J. M. (2004). What to do when stakeholders matter: Stakeholder identification and analysis techniques. *Public Management Review, 6*, 21-53. doi: 10.1080/14719030410001675722

Coombs, W. T. (1999). Information and compassion in crisis responses: A test of their effects. *Journal of Public Relations Research, 11*, 125-142.

Coombs, W. T. (2006a). Crisis management: A communicative approach. In C. H., Botan & V., Hazelton (Eds.), *Public relations theory II*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.

Coombs, W. T. (2006b). The protective powers of crisis response strategies: Managing reputational assets during a crisis. *Journal of Promotion Management, 12*, 242-260. doi: 10.1300/J057v12n03_13

Coombs, W. T. (2007a). *Ongoing crisis communication: Planning, managing, and responding* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Coombs, W. T. (2007b). Protecting organization reputations during a crisis: The development and application of Situational Crisis Communication Theory. *Corporate Reputation Review, 10,* 163-176. doi: 10.1057/palgrave.crr.1550049

Coombs, W. T. (2010a). Pursuing evidence-based crisis communication. In W. T., Coombs & S. J., Holladay (Eds.), *The handbook of crisis communication* (pp. 719-725). West Sussex, England: Wiley-Blackwell.

Coombs, W. T. (2012). *Ongoing crisis communication: Planning, managing, and responding* (3rd Ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Coombs, W. T. & Holladay, S. J. (2001). An extended examination of the crisis situations: A fusion of the relational management and symbolic approaches. *Journal of Public Relations Research, 13,* 321-340. doi: 10.1207/S1532754XJPRR1304_03

Coombs, W. T. & Holladay, S. J. (2002). Helping crisis managers protect reputational assets: Initial tests of the Situational Crisis Communication Theory. *Management Communication Quarterly, 16,* 165-186. doi: 10.1177/089331802237233

Coombs, W. T. & Holladay, S. J. (2007). Consumer empowerment through the web: How internet contagions can increase stakeholder power. In S.C, Duhe (Ed.), *New media and public relations*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc.

Creswell, J. W. & Plano Clark, V. L. (2007). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Creswell, J. W. & Plano Clark, V. L. (2011). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research* (2nd ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Deetz, S. (2001). Conceptual foundations. In F. M., Jablin & L. L, Putnam (Eds.), *The new handbook of organizational communication: Advances in theory, research, and methods* (pp.3-46). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Deetz, S. & Eger, E. K. (2014). Developing a metatheoretical perspective for organizational communication studies. In L. L., Putnam & D. K. Mumby (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of organizational communication: Advances in theory, research, and methods* (pp. 27-45). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

DeVillis, R. F. (1991). *Scale development: Theory and applications*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

DeVellis, R. F. (2012). *Scale development: Theory and applications* (3rd ed). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Fecht, S. (2012, March 8). 1 year later: A Fukushima nuclear disaster timeline. *Scientific American.* Retrieved from http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/one-year-later-fukushima-nuclear-disaster/

Featherstone, S. (2016, March/April). Fukushima five years later. *Popular Science,* 73-77.

Freeman, R. E. (1984). *Strategic management: A stakeholder approach*. Marshfield, MS: Pitman Publishing Inc.

Freeman, R. E. (2001). Stakeholder theory of the modern corporation. *General Issues in Business Ethics,* 38-48.

Frey, L. R., Botan, C. H., & Kreps, G. L. (2000). *Investigating communication: An introduction to research methods* (2nd ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Funabashi, H. (2012). Why the Fukushima Nuclear Disaster is a man-made calamity. *International Journal of Japanese Sociology, 21,* 65-75. doi: 10.1111/j.1475-6781.2012.01161

Funabashi, Y. & Kitazawa, K. (2012). Fukushima in review: A complex disaster, a disastrous response. *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, 68,* 9-21. doi: 10.1177/0096340212440359

Glaser, B. G. & Strauss, A.L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. New York: Aldine De Gruyter.

Gonzales-Miranda, D. R., Gentilin, M., & Ocampo-Salazar, C. A. (2014). Organizational identity: What is the conversation currently dealing with? Paradigms, perspectives, and discussions. *The Business and Economics Research Journal, 7*, 129-146.

Graham, B., Reilly, W. K., Beinecke, F., Boesch, D. F., Garcia, T. D., Murray, C. A. & Ulmer, F. (2011). Deep water: The gulf oil disaster and the future of offshore drilling (Report to the President). Retrieved from http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/GPO-OILCOMMISSION/pdf/GPO-OILCOMMISSION.pdf

Hachisuka, R., Ishibashi, K., Kurokawa, K., Nomura, S., Oshima, K., Sakiyama, H.,…Yokoyama, Y. (2012). The official report of the Fukushima nuclear accident independent investigation commission. *The National Diet of Japan*. Tokyo, Japan.

Heath, R. L., & Ni, L. (2010). Community relations and corporate social responsibility. In R. L., Heath (Ed.), *The SAGE handbook of public relations* (pp. 557-568). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Hearit, K.M. (2006). *Crisis management by apology: Corporate response to allegations of wrongdoing*. Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

Hearit, K. M. (1995). "Mistakes were made": Organizations, apologia, and crises of social legitimacy. *Communication Studies, 46,* 1-17.

Jablin, F. M. (1982). Organizational communication: An assimilation approach. *Social Cognition and Communication,* 255-286.

Jablin, F. M. (2006). Courage and courageous communication among leaders and followers in groups, organizations, and communities. *Management Communication Quarterly, 20,* 94-110. doi: 10.1177/0893318906288483

Jervis, R. (2010, May 17). BP response plan shows lack of readiness. *USA Today*. Retrieved from http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/nation/2010-05-17-oil-plan_N.htm

Keyton, J. (2014). Organizational culture: Creating meaning and influence. In L. L., Putnam & D. K. Mumby (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of organizational communication: Advances in theory, research, and methods* (pp. 549-565). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Keyton, J. (2011). *Communication & organizational culture: A key to understanding work experiences* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Kim, S., Avery, E. J., & Lariscy, R. W. (2011). Reputation repair at the expense of providing instructing and adjusting information following crises. *International Journal of Strategic Communication, 5,* 183-199. doi: 10.1080/1553118X.2011.566903

Kim, S. & Sung, K. H. (2014). Revisiting the effectiveness of base crisis response strategies in comparison of reputation management crisis responses. *Journal of Public Relations Research, 26,* 62-78. doi: 10.1080/1062726X.2013.795867

Krippendorff, K. (2004). Reliability in content analysis: Some common misconceptions and recommendations. *Human Communication Research, 30,* 411-433.

Krippendorff, K. (2013). *Content analysis: An introduction to its methodology* (3rd ed). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Kushida, K. (2014). The Fukushima nuclear disaster and the DPJ: Leadership, structures and information challenges during the crisis. *Japanese Political Economy, 40(1),* 29-68.

Landor. (n.d.). Case studies, BP: Moving beyond on a global scale. Retrieved from http://landor.com/#!/work/case-studies/bp/

Liberman, C. J. (2013). Creating a productive workplace culture and climate: Understanding the role of communication and socialization for organizational newcomers. In J. S. Wrench (Ed.), *Workplace communication for the 21st century: Tools and strategies that impact the bottom line, Volume 1: Internal workplace communication* (pp. 62-81). Santa Barbara, CA: Preager.

Lindlof, T. R. & Taylor, B. C. (2011). *Qualitative communication research methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Lombard, M., Snyder-Duch, J., & Bracken, C. (2003). Practical resources for assessing and reporting intercoder reliability in content analysis research projects. Retrieved from https://archive.is/KS3WQ

Luis, M. R. (1985). An investigator's guide to workplace culture. In Frost, P.J., Moore, L. F., Luis, M. R., Lundberg, C. C., & Martin, J. (Eds.). *Organizational culture* (pp. 73 – 93). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

May, S. K. & Roper, J. (2014). Corporate social responsibility and ethics. In L. L., Putnam & D. K. Mumby (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of organizational communication: Advances in theory, research, and methods* (pp. 767-789). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Maresh-Fuehrer, M. M. (2013). *Creating organizational crisis plans*. Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt.

Miller, K. I. (2008). Organizational communication. In W. Donsbach (Ed.), *The international encyclopedia of communication* (pp.1-10). doi: 10.1111/b.9781405131995.2008.x

Mumby, D. K. (2014). Critical theory and postmodernism. In L. L., Putnam & D. K. Mumby (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of organizational communication: Advances in theory, research, and methods* (pp. 101-125). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Myers, K. K. (2014). Mixed Methods: When more really is more. In L. L. Putnam & D. K. Mumby (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of organizational communication: Advances in theory, research, and methods* (pp. 297-320). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Orts, E., & Spigonardo, J. (2013, October). Special report: Disasters, leadership and rebuilding – tough lessons from Japan and the U.S. *University of Pennsylvania*. Retrieved from http://d1c25a6gwz7q5e.cloudfront.net/reports/2013-10-01-Disasters-Leadership-Rebuilding.pdf

Patterson, M. G., West, M. A., Shackleton, V. J., Dawson, J. F., Lawthom, R., Maitlis, S. Robinson, D. L. & Wallace, A. M. (2005). Validating the organizational climate measure: links to managerial practices, productivity and innovation. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 26*, 379-408. doi: 10.1002/job.312

Post, J. E., Preston, L. E. & Sachs, S. (2002). Managing the extended enterprise: The new stakeholder view. *California Management Review, 45,* 6-28. Retrieved from http://eds.a.ebscohost.com.manowar.tamucc.edu/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=5f0709eb-c7d5-4bfe-910f-e4e83bdfbbb1%40sessionmgr4002&vid=2&hid=4202

Pratt, M. G. (1998). To be or not to be? Central questions in organizational identification. In D. A., Whetten & P. C., Godfrey (Eds.), *Identity in organizations: Building theory through conversations* (pp. 171-207). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Putnam, L. L. (1983). The interpretive perspective: An alternative to functionalism. In L. L. Putnam & M. Pacanowsky (Eds.), *Communication and organizations: An interpretive approach* (pp. 31-54). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Putnam, L. L. & Cheney, G. (1985). Organizational communication: Historical development and future directions. In T.W. Benson (Ed.), *Speech communication in the 20th century* (pp. 130-156). Carbondale and Edwardsville, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.

Putnam, L. L. & Mumby, K. (2014). Advancing theory and research in organizational communication. In In L. L., Putnam & D. K. Mumby (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of organizational communication: Advances in theory, research, and methods* (pp. 1-18). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Rawlins, B. L. (2006). Prioritizing stakeholders for public relations [White paper]. *Institute for Public Relations*. Retrieved from http://www.instituteforpr.org/wp-content/uploads/2006_Stakeholders_1.pdf

Rubin, H. J. & Rubin, I. S. (2005). *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Schein, E. H. (2010). *Organizational culture and leadership.* (4th ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey – Bass.

Schwartz, J. (2015, January 15). Judge's ruling on gulf oil spill lowers ceiling on the fine BP is facing. *The New York Times.* Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/16/business/energy-environment/judge-sets-top-penalty-for-bp-in-deepwater-horizon-spill-at-nearly-14-billion.html

Scott, C. R. & Stephens, K. K. (2009). It depends on you're talking to…: Predictors and outcomes of situated measures of organizational identification. *Western Journal of Communication, 73,* 370-394. doi:10.1080/10570310903279075

Seeger, M. W., Sellnow, T. L., & Ulmer, R. R. (2003). *Communication and organizational crisis*. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers.

Smithson, J. & Venette, S. (2013). Stonewalling as an image-defense strategy: A critical examination of BP's response to the Deepwater Horizon explosion. *Communication Studies, 64,* 395-410. doi: 10.1080/10510974.2013.770409

Strauss, A. & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Strauss, A. & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Sturges, D. L. (1994). Communicating through crisis: A strategy for organizational survival. *Management Communication Quarterly, 7*, 297-316. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com/docview/61376191?accountid=7084

Taylor, J. R. & Van Every, E. J. (2000). *The emergent organization: Communication as its site and surface*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Time. (n.d.). 100 days of the BP spill: A timeline. *Time Magazine*. Retrieved from http://content.time.com/time/interactive/0,31813,2006455,00.html

Tokyo Electric Power Company. (2014, March 31). Profile/TEPCO at a glance. Retrieved from http://www.tepco.co.jp/en/corpinfo/overview/p-glance-e.html

Tokyo Electric Power Company. (n.d.a). Corporate information. Retrieved from http://www.tepco.co.jp/en/corpinfo/index-e.html

Tokyo Electric Power Company. (n.d.b). Corporate Ethics and Compliance. Retrieved from http://www.tepco.co.jp/en/corpinfo/overview/restor-e.html

United States Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board. (2007, March). Investigation report: Refinery explosion and fire (15 killed, 180 injured). Retrieved from http://www.csb.gov/assets/1/19/csbfinalreportbp.pdf

Veil, S. R., Sellnow, T. L., & Wickline, M. C. (2013). British Petroleum: An egregious violation of the ethic of first and second things. *Business and Society Review, 118*, 361-381. doi: 10.1111/basr.12014

Vogt, P.W. (2007). *Quantitative research methods for professionals*. Boston, MA: Pearson.

Walsh, B. (2010, July 25). Oil spill: Goodbye, Mr. Hayward. *Time*. Retrieved from http://science.time.com/2010/07/25/oil-spill-goodbye-mr-hayward/

Waxman, H. & Stupak, B. (2010, June 15). Letter to Tony Hayward, Chief Executive Officer of BP (Rep. Henry Waxman and Rep. Bart Stupak) [Web log post]. *The Hill*. Retrieved from http://thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/energy-a-environment/103255-letter-to-tony-hayward-chief-executive-officer-of-bp-rep-henry-waxman-and-rep-bart-stupak

Weick, K. E. (1985). The significance of corporate culture. In P.J., Frost, L. F., Moore, M. R., Luis, C. C., Lundberg, & J., Martin (Eds.). *Organizational Culture* (pp. 381 – 389). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Wrench, J. S. (2013). Communicating within the modern workplace: Challenges and prospects. In J. S., Wrench (Ed.), *Workplace communication for the 21st century: Tools and strategies that impact the bottom line* (pp. 1-37). Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger.

Zhang, J. & Liu, Y. (2010). Organizational climate and its effects on organizational variables: An empirical study. *International Journal of Psychological Studies, 2*, 109-201. Retrieved from www.ccsenet.org/ijps

Appendix A

RESEARCH ANNOUNCEMENT
Employee Expectations of Crisis Response Messages in the Oil and Gas Industry

My name is Casandra L. Lorentson, a graduate student in the Department of Communication and Media at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. I am currently working on a research project that focuses on employees' expectations of information provided during an industrial crisis, such as an accident. The purpose of this study is to examine what information employees expect to hear from their employers during these crises.

Individuals who are interested in participating in this study will be asked to complete an online questionnaire that will take approximately 15 – 20 minutes. Participants will provide responses to a series of questions about crises in the oil and gas industry. Questions will derive what are/were employee expectations of crisis messages, messages that were/could be provided by their organization, and perceptions of the organization as related to the messages. The questionnaire is available online and you may take it in the comfort of your home.

To participate in this study, you must meet all of the following criteria:

(1) You must be at least 18 years old.
(2) You must currently, or recently (within the past year), have worked in the oil and gas industry.

If you choose to participate in this study, no identifying information will be collected; you will remain anonymous.

You may take the questionnaire at the following link: link will be provided here upon IRB approval

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me:

Casandra Lorentson, Department of Communication and Media

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi

Casandra.lorentson@tamucc.edu

Whom do I contact about my rights as a research participant?

This research study has been reviewed by the Research Compliance Office and/or the Institutional Review Board at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. For research-related problems or questions regarding your rights as a research participant, you can contact Erin Sherman, Research Compliance Officer, at (361)825-2797 or erin.sherman@tamucc.edu.

Appendix B

RESEARCH ANNOUNCEMENT
Employee Expectations of crisis response messages in the oil and gas industry

Research Questionnaire

My name is Casandra L. Lorentson, a graduate student in the Department of Communication and Media at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. I am currently working on a research project that focuses on employees' expectations of information provided during an industrial crisis, such as an accident. The purpose of this study is to examine what information employees expect to hear from their employers during these crises.

Individuals who are interested in participating in this study will be asked to complete a questionnaire that will take approximately 15-20 minutes. Participants will provide responses to a series of questions about crises in the oil and gas industry. Questions will derive what are/were employee expectations of crisis messages, messages that were/could be provided by their organization, and perceptions of the organization as related to the messages. The questionnaire is available online and you may take it in the comfort of your home.

TO PARTICIPATE:

- Be at least 18 years old
- Work, or recently (within the last year), in the oil and gas industry

ALL PARTICIPANTS WILL REMAIN ANONYMOUS

TAKE QUESTIONNAIRE AT LINK BELOW:

CONTACT INFORMATION

Casandra Lorentson

Department of Communication and Media

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi

Insert Link | Insert Link | Insert Link | Insert Link | Insert Link | Insert Link | Insert Link | Insert Link

Appendix C

SOCIAL MEDIA GRAPHICS

Appendix D

EMAIL SOLICITATION
Employee Expectations of Crisis Response Messages in the Oil and Gas Industry

Dear XXXX,

My name is Casandra L. Lorentson, a graduate student in the Department of Communication and Media at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. I am currently working on a research project that focuses on employees' expectations of information provided during an industrial crisis. I am seeking participants who are at least 18 years old and currently, or recently (within the past year), have worked in the oil and gas industry.

I am hoping that you would be so kind as to share the link to the online questionnaire?

You may take the questionnaire here: **Link will be provided here upon IRB approval**.

The questionnaire takes approximately 15-20 minutes to complete. Individuals who chose to participate in this study will remain anonymous and no identifying information will be collected.

If you have any questions, please contact:

Casandra Lorentson at Casandra.lorentson@tamucc.edu

Thank you for considering helping to obtain participants for this project!

Casandra Lorentson
Graduate Student
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi

Appendix E

INFORMATION SHEET
Employee Expectations of Crisis Response Messages in the Oil and Gas Industry

Introduction
The purpose of this form is to provide you information that may affect your decision as to whether or not to participate in this research study. By filling out the questionnaire you are consenting to participate in the study. By participating in this study, you are also certifying that you are 18 years of age or older and that you are currently or recently (within one year) employed in the oil and gas industry. Please do not fill out the questionnaire if you do not consent to participate in the study.

You have been asked to participate in a research project studying employee expectations of information provided during a crisis such as an accident. The purpose of this study is to examine what information employees expect to hear from their company during these crises.

What will I be asked to do?
If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to complete a questionnaire that will ask about the type of information you expect to receive from your company during a crisis. This study will take approximately 15-20 minutes.

What are the risks involved in this study?
The risks associated in this study are minimal, and are not greater than risks ordinarily encountered in daily life.

What are the possible benefits of this study?
The possible benefits of participation are having the opportunity to share your opinions and providing information that can help employers in the oil and gas industry better understand employee expectations during a crisis.

Do I have to participate?
No. Your participation is voluntary. You may decide not to participate or to withdraw at any time without your current or future relations with Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi being affected.

Who will know about my participation in this research study?
This study is anonymous. No identifiers linking you to this study will be included in any sort of report that might be published. Research records will be stored securely on an encrypted website and only the investigators have access to the records.

Whom do I contact with questions about the research?
If you have questions regarding this study, you may contact Casandra L. Lorentson, casandra.lorentson@tamucc.edu.

Whom do I contact about my rights as a research participant?
The Research Compliance Office and/or the Institutional Review Board at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi have reviewed this research study. For research-related problems or questions regarding your rights as a research participant, you can contact Erin Sherman, Research Compliance Officer, at (361) 825-2497 or erin.sherman@tamucc.edu.

Appendix F

PHASE ONE QUESTIONNAIRE
Employee Expectations of Crisis Response Messages in the Oil and Gas Industry

Please answer the following questions about yourself. Spell out any abbreviated words/titles and explain any industry related terms, as if speaking to a general audience:

1. Your sex: Male___ Female___ No Response___
2. Your age: _____
3. Your ethnic background: Caucasian/White African/Black Hispanic/Latino
   Native American Asian American/Asian Other: _____
4. How long have/did you work in the oil and gas industry? _____
5. Describe, in as much detail as you feel comfortable providing, the safety conditions at your organization. Explain, specifically, any actions that have been taken to enhance employee safety.
6. What messages, if any, has your organization communicated to employees regarding their values for employee safety and how do they communicate this information?
7. Describe a specific time when employees demonstrated their agreement or disagreement with the organization's expressed safety values.
8. Does your organization's safety values match with your own personal values? Please explain how your values and your organization's align. If they do not match, please explain why.
9. Has your organization experienced a (major or minor) crisis? Yes/No/Unsure
10. If your organization has experienced a crisis, think of an example that impacted you most. Describe what happened during this crisis in as much detail as you feel comfortable providing. If your organization has not experienced a crisis, proceed to the last question.
11. What did your organization do/say to employees in response to this particular crisis? How did you receive these messages (face-to-face, text message, phone call, social media, alert system, etc.)?
12. Describe your personal reaction to how the organization handled this particular crisis and the information you were provided.

13. In the event of a future crisis, what are your expectations for message content from your organization (i.e. messages pertaining to employee safety, emotional support, organizational reputation, and continuation of work operations, etc.)? Please explain, in detail, why you think crisis messages should contain this type of information.

Appendix G

PHASE TWO SURVEY
Employee Expectations of Crisis Response Messages in the Oil and Gas Industry

Please answer the following questions about yourself:

1. Your sex: Male___ Female___ No Response___
2. Your age: _____
3. Your ethnic background: Caucasian/White African/Black Hispanic/Latino
   Native American Asian American/Asian Other: _____
4. How long have/did you work in the oil and gas industry? _____

Instructions: Imagine your organization experiencing a crisis, accident, or natural disaster. Answer the following questions thinking about what your expectations would be by selecting the appropriate number and placing it in the blank.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

When a crisis occurs I …

____1. Expect to know the details of what happened.
____2. Expect to know who was hurt
____3. Do not expect my company to tell employees specific accident information.**
____4. Do not expect to know who will be affected.**
____5. My company to tell me where and when the accident occurred.
____6. To know what caused the crisis.
____7. Expect my company to communicate messages that show they care about me.
____8. Expect my company to communicate that they care about my overall well-being.
____9. Do not expect my company to tell me that they care about their workers.**
____10. Do not expect employee welfare to be a communication priority.**
____11. Expect messages that communicate employees come first.
____12. Do not expect employee safety to be my company's communication priority.**
____13. Expect emotional support from my company.
____14. Expect to know how my company's future will be affected.
____15. Expect my company to have a recovery plan.
____16. Do not need to know the economic situation of my company.**
____17. Do not need to be told about my company's future plans.**

____18. Expect to be told when I can come back to work.
____19. Expect my company to tell us how we will proceed forward.
____20. Expect information to be shared with employees quickly.
____21. Expect my company to respond quickly.
____22. Do not expect to be told what is happening as soon as possible.**
____23. Do not expect my company to communicate with me right after an accident.**
____24. Expect to be compensated.
____25. Expect anyone affected to be compensated.
____26. Do not expect my company to spend money to fix the accident.**
____27. Do not expect to be compensated if I lost wages.**
____28. Do not expect to be compensated if I get hurt on the job.**
____29. Expect my company to spend money when their employees get hurt.
____30. I expect my organization to have a disaster relief fund.
____31. Expect crisis information to be easily accessible.
____32. Expect my company to communicate with me in person, over the phone, and online.
____33. Do not expect my organization to communicate with me in a variety of ways.**
____34. Expect my company to have established communication options during an emergency.
____35. Expect my company to utilize social media, email, and/or text messages to share information about an accident.
____36. Expect to my company to tell me how they will prevent an accident from repeating.
____37. Do not need to know how my company will keep the accident from repeating.*
____38. Think the company should investigate into what happened.

Instructions: Think of how your company treats employees. Based on your experiences please answer the following questions by placing the appropriate number in the blank.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

____39. This company pays little attention to the interests of employees.

____40. This company tries to look after its employees.

____41. This company cares about its employees.

____42. This company tries to be fair in its actions towards employees.

Instructions: Below is a set of statements that describe how rules are followed in your company. Based on your experiences please answer the following questions by placing the appropriate number in the blank.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

____43. Its considered extremely important here to follow the rules.
____44. People can ignore formal procedures and rules if it helps get the job done.
____45. Everything has to be done by the book.
____46. Its not necessary to follow procedures to the letter around here.
____47. Nobody gets too upset if people break the rules around here.

Instructions: Below is a series of statements that describes your personal feelings about your company. Use the following response format and place the appropriate number in the blank.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

____48. I feel I have a lot in common with others in this organization.
____49. I find it easy to identify with this organization.
____50. I find that my values and the values of those in this organization are very similar.
____51. I view my organization's problems as my problems.
____52. Generally speaking, I am very satisfied with this job.
____53. I frequently think of quitting this job.
____54. I am generally satisfied with the kind of work I do in this job.

Appendix H

Organizational Climate Measure (Patterson et. al, 2005)

Welfare

1. This company pays little attention to the interests of employees*
2. This company tries to look after its employees
3. This company cares about its employees
4. This company tries to be fair in its actions towards employees

Formalization

5. It is considered extremely important here to follow the rules
6. People can ignore formal procedures and rules if it helps get the job done*
7. Everything has to be done by the book
8. It's not necessary to follow procedures to the letter around here*
9. Nobody gets too upset if people break the rules around here*

*are reversed coded

Appendix I

Organizational Identification Scale (Scott & Stephens, 2009)

1. I feel I have a lot in common with others in this organization
2. I find it easy to identify with this organization
3. I find that my values and the values of those in this organization are very similar
4. I view my organization's problems as my problems

Appendix J

General Job Satisfaction Scale (Hackman & Oldham, 1975)

1. Generally speaking, I am very satisfied with this job
2. I frequently think of quitting this job*
3. I am generally satisfied with the kind of work I do in this job

*are reversed coded