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A CULTURAL CONSIDERATION: ELIMINATING THE BARRIERS IN
ORDER TO EFFECTIVELY COMMUNICATE CRISES

by

Morgan Hurt Dunaway

A Thesis
Submitted to the Graduate School
and the Department of Communication Studies
at The University of Southern Mississippi
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Science

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ABSTRACT

A CULTURAL CONSIDERATION: ELIMINATING THE BARRIERS IN ORDER TO EFFECTIVELY COMMUNICATE CRISES

by Morgan Hurt Dunaway

December 2015

This study aimed at gaining a better understanding of the Hispanic American culture in an effort to evaluate how they view and receive messages sent from the government. The purpose of this study was to further the conversation that messages should be designed with careful thought in order to resonate with the target audience involved in the communication process. A previous study found that the majority of the Hispanic American population felt as if they are overlooked and would not be warned properly in a time of crisis (Heath, Lee, & Ni, 2009). Therefore, the present study focused on variables that are assumed to impact an audience's interpretation of a message in the hopes of discovering the most effective way to communicate crises to the Hispanic American population. The need to uncover better methods of communicating to this group in the population is of great importance due to the fact they are now considered the largest ethnic group in America (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Special thanks goes to Dr. Venette for serving as my advisor throughout this research project. Your time and assistance throughout this process has been greatly appreciated. I would also like to extend my gratitude for the other Professors that served on my committee. Thanks to Dr. Meyer and Dr. Jung for agreeing to serve on my thesis committee and all that you have done for my education along the way. Lastly, I would like to thank the Agricultural Nursery that allowed me to come on their site in order to conduct my research for this study.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Risk and crisis communicators continuously face the inevitable challenge of constructing messages that would effectively resonate with the public both before and during a crisis event. These communicators are placed in a unique situation where they strive to appear credible and trustworthy in hopes that the public will follow or accept their recommendations (Cowden, Curry, Littlefield, Novak, & Ulmer, 2009). The critical problem that many crisis and risk communicators commonly face is the presence of multiple publics and perceptions. Sellnow et al. (2009) explained the importance for communicators to consider the various publics as they construct and communicate crisis or risk messages (as cited in Cowden et al., 2009).

The concept of publics is used in this study to represent the various types of audience members who have the potential to receive and act upon messages in a diverse manner due to their cultural outlook (Cowden et al., 2009). The overarching goal of rejecting the one public perspective is to bring the practitioners and audiences into the mindset of a “we” factor as it aims to make society stronger together. This perspective frames the present study as it contributes to promoting sensitivity and gathering the knowledge needed to effectively communicate to the Hispanic population (Heath, Lee, & Ni, 2009).

The United States continues to experience a dramatic transformation as a direct result of the increase in the Hispanic American population. From 2000 to 2010, the Hispanic population increased by 43%, contributing to a significant portion of the population growth in the United States (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). The most significant

population increase occurred in the Southern and Midwestern regions of the United States. In addition, Hispanic American individuals accounted for 57% of the population increase in these regions. More significantly, the Hispanic population is now considered the largest ethnic group residing in the United States (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).

The recent interest in adapting one's communication to various cultures has led to the development of the cultural sensitivity approach (Dutta, 2007). This approach recreates the health information or messages so that they may be appropriate for one's culture. Following this approach one would aim to involve the culture's values and beliefs, along with other cultural facets that would resonate with the cultural members. The cultural sensitivity approach also provides a useful theoretical framework for this study (Dutta, 2007).

A mutual trust, perceived source credibility, and identifying with the source of the message contribute to effective outcomes in crisis and risk communication (Heath et al., 2009). When members of society perceive a similarity in the source of the message along with message sensitivity, individuals are more likely to follow the recommendations of the speaker (Cowden et al., 2009). The Hispanic American population introduces complicating factors to such an equation as they continue to perceive that they are overlooked and underserved in society (Heath et al., 2009). Hispanic Americans avoid accepting that a crisis situation has the likelihood to occur, and feel as if they do not have needed information to reduce their uncertainty if a crisis was to occur. Most importantly, the members of the Hispanic population hold the view that, in times of crisis, they will not be warned in an effective, useful manner (Heath et al., 2009).

This evidence generates immediate attention in determining the tools needed to better communicate with this population before, during, and after a crisis. Of serious importance is discovering how the Hispanic American population receives and processes information. This study focused on a sub group of the Hispanic American population in order to uncover variables that would allow communicators the knowledge needed to communicate more effectively with this group. The present study aims to contribute significantly for the continued effort of careful construction of crisis and risk messages based on the particular audience at hand. Therefore, the current study will assess this sub group's a) distrust in the government, b) assessment of the speaker's credibility, c) and the impact of learning styles concerning this sub group of the Hispanic American population.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Distrust of the Government

Public trust is necessary for government to properly function (Wenzel, 2006). Maintaining the public's trust in the government is essential for a society to thrive. The concept of trust is one of the most vital factors to establish while communicating among any population (Arora, Clayman, Hesse, Manganello, & Viswanath, 2010). This concept regulates the actions of individuals as it has the power to move them to action, or restrain them from action. The audience must both accept and trust the information they receive in order for the communication process to be effective (Arora et al., 2010).

Over the years, scholars have noted a significant decline in the public's trust regarding the national government. Interestingly, previous studies have reported a correlation between one's level of political trust and their ethnicity (Wenzel, 2006). Caucasian Americans indicate a higher level of trust in the national government as opposed to Hispanic Americans. Over 40% of the Hispanic Americans now residing in the United States were born in another country; therefore, many scholars question if this factor could affect their level of trust in the U.S. government (Wenzel, 2006). As diverse cultural groups assimilate into the United States, their level of trust in the national government is suspected to decline due to their perception of their presence in a minority population (Wenzel, 2006).

A previous study provided that as members of the Hispanic community transition into the U.S. society, they express negativity directed toward the U.S. government (Michelson, 2003). Generally, as individuals move to the United States, they are expected

to adopt the beliefs and cultural values of the present society. However, some scholars suggest that Latino Americans are more likely to follow the pattern of what is described in ethnic competition theory (Michelson, 2003). This theory suggests that as immigrants move to the United States, they are less likely to adopt the practiced ways of the mainstream society, and instead uphold their previous cultural beliefs and practices. Interviews involving Mexican Americans in California revealed that third generation Hispanic Americans were more likely to express negative opinions concerning the U.S. government (Michelson, 2003). This generation is described to have had the most time to associate with the U.S. culture, as opposed to first and second generation Hispanic Americans. Moreover, this study provided that first and second generation Hispanic Americans did not express the same degree of negative opinions directed toward the U.S. government (Michelson, 2003). A previous study also confirmed that the process of assimilating into another country's practiced ways has the capacity to lead to an increase in negative opinions directed toward the national government as well (Wenzel, 2006). Therefore, this study questions if trust in the U.S. government increases or decreases as a result of the years lived in America based on the Hispanic American point of view.

Although the Hispanic Americans display low levels of trust in the national government, this group perceives their local government as more trustworthy. This could be due to their local government being more recognizable and closer in proximity as opposed to the national government (Wenzel, 2006). Moreover, many of the border cities surrounding the southern portion of the United States are represented by large number of Hispanic American citizens. Therefore, whenever Hispanic Americans immigrate into these Areas, they are expected to have a positive assimilating experience due to their

similarity among the individuals that are presently residing in these communities (Wenzel, 2006). Wenzel's (2006) study revealed that an individual's level of trust in the government could be affected based on several factors.

Generally, individuals are more willing to trust the government if they view the government's actions as legitimate. Those individuals who place a level of trust in the government are considered to believe the government takes part in good deeds and are more likely to follow the government's suggestions (Clements, Jupka, Rivers, Whitworth, & Wray, 2006). Trust is defined in this study as an, "assured reliance on the character, ability, strength, or truth of someone or something" (Clements et al., 2006). Numerous studies reveal that the government officials who emphasize maintaining and building relationships are perceived as more trustworthy to audiences. Also, these government officials are considered more capable of persuading individuals to act through crisis and risk communication due to their perceived trustworthiness. After the anthrax attacks in 2001, only 50% to 55% of the individuals from areas where anthrax was identified reported that they had received sufficient amounts of information from government officials (Clements et al., 2006). This fact should encourage the government to avoid withholding information during a crisis event as this action leads to a greater distrust of government and its officials (Clements et al., 2006).

Citizens must feel that they are cared for and are of great concern to a government who puts their concerns first (Clements et al., 2006). Individuals who have past negative experiences with the government are more likely to view its agencies as untrustworthy. Also, those individuals who sense they have been unfairly singled out by the government have the capacity to develop significant levels of distrust directed at the government as

well (Clements et al., 2006). Hence, when low levels of care are displayed along with past negative experiences, higher levels of distrust are more likely to emerge (Clements et al., 2006).

Although differences exist among diverse ethnic groups, Hispanic Americans, African Americans, and Caucasians each agree that the government is not fully prepared for an attack to our native soil (Clements et al., 2006). Not surprisingly, each ethnic group, regardless of their differences, requires that the government communicates honest and open information regarding events or potential crises (Clements et al., 2006). Hispanic Americans communicated their beliefs that the government did not tend to the safety of the public first during times of crisis (Clements et al., 2006). A lack of trust within the public can arise if they perceive the Government did not do enough to assist and prepare for a crisis event. Also, distrust in the government can occur when the public perceives that information was withheld during a crisis event (Clements et al., 2006). However, Clement et al.'s (2006) conclusion suggests that it is possible for the government to improve their negative reputation by working to restore the public opinion by striving to be open and honest in their actions.

The confidence people place in the government is a determining factor of its effectiveness when communicating about crisis and risk. The need for trust in the government increases when individuals lack information concerning a crisis (Cowden et al., 2009). For example, Hurricane Katrina evidenced the complexity of communicating with multiple publics as many individuals neglected to evacuate. Regardless of the numerous general warning messages that were sent, many individuals showed resistance to demands of officials (Cowden et al., 2009). A variety of reasons exist as to why many

individuals decided to stay behind. Individuals could have chosen not to evacuate based upon their distrust in the government, cultural beliefs, or not finding similarity in the speaker (Cowden et al., 2009).

Government actions directly impact the process of establishing trust. Continuous monitoring and engagement with publics are necessary in order to establish and maintain trust among these groups (Longstaff & Yang, 2008). In most cases, individuals consider information trustworthy if it comes from a trusted source. Individuals who are perceived as not deceiving are considered trustworthy sources. Also, sources are considered trustworthy if they are assumed to have access to correct information (Longstaff & Yang, 2008). Therefore, trust usually cannot be established quickly, it must be planned and strengthened over time (Longstaff & Yang, 2008). The government holds the responsibility for proper communication planning that will in time promote resilient communities (Longstaff & Yang, 2008). However, in order for this process to begin, it is crucial that a level of trust is established within the Hispanic population concerning the United States government. The Hispanic Americans must trust the government's motives before they will consider their messages trustworthy and credible.

The government faces the challenge to continuously establish credibility and trust among the public (Chen, Cheong, & Li, 2010). Chen, Cheong, and Li, (2010) discussed the importance for the government to effectively communicate large quantities of information, composed of quality messages to the public (Chen et al., 2010). Their study showed the significant need for the government to stay in close contact with the public, while continuously communicating messages to these audiences. Providing large quantities of information to the public is thought to lay the foundation for creating an

atmosphere where the government has a greater likelihood of moving the public to action (Chen et al., 2010). Along with a constant communication to the public, the government is also encouraged to produce quality messages in order to receive positive credibility judgments from the public. The messages sent from the government must be quality messages that are easy to understand, current, and accurate. Also, the messages must resonate with diverse cultures (Chen et al., 2010). Each of these factors contributes to the public's perception of the overall communication effectiveness concerning the government (Chen et al., 2010).

Scholars state that one's communication effectiveness and competency has a positive correlation with the public's trust (Harding & Houston, 2009). As the public perceives the government's messages as competent, their trust in the government's actions is predicted to increase. Competence has been described as one of the most vital aspects associated with the concept of trust (Harding & Houston, 2009). Individuals are thought to judge a speaker's credibility and competence in determining if the speaker can be trusted. Therefore, the public's trust has the capacity to increase when government speakers demonstrate characteristics such as truthfulness, reliability, and principled leadership (Harding & Houston, 2009). However, the public decides whether or not to trust a government speaker based on previous experiences as well. Regardless if a government speaker has the capacity to produce messages composed of compassion and truthfulness during one event, if the government's actions were previously viewed as Unreliable, the public is more likely to distrust the government (Harding & Houston, 2009). Therefore, this additional study confirmed the significant need for the government to continuously produce competent, credible messages that will lead to acquiring the trust

of the public (Harding & Houston, 2009). One of the major goals of the present study aimed to uncover the participant's trust or distrust in the government. This study only focused on the trust levels of the participants toward the government. When this study uses the concept of trust, it is directed specifically to the participant's perception of the government as a whole.

H1: One's level of trust and perceived speaker credibility will be positively correlated among the Hispanic American participants.

RQ1: To what extent does one's level of trust in the U.S. Government increase or decrease as a result of the years lived in the U.S. among the Hispanic American participants?

Perceptions of Source Credibility

The process of moving an audience to action depends greatly on the perceived credibility of the spokesperson. Establishing credibility is also among the most imperative functions of the speaker while communicating with their audience (Cowden et al., 2009). Audiences determine one credible if they perceive one can be trusted, one knows a significant amount of information concerning the subject, and one cares about their concerns and well-being. When these characteristics are established through the speaker's actions that source gains the capacity to persuade (Cowden et al., 2009).

As the United States continues to increase in ethnic diversity, more research has aimed to study how various cultures may perceive a speaker's credibility (Morimoto & La Ferle, 2008). Over the years, scholars have suggested that various characteristics have the potential to contribute to the speaker's credibility concerning the audience. Scholars explain a spokesperson's perceived competence and character influences the audience's

impression of the speaker's credibility (Cowden et al., 2009; McCroskey & Teven, 1999). In addition, a speaker who is perceived as caring and trustworthy can increase or decrease the credibility judgments concluded by an audience (Cowden et al., 2009). Interestingly, scholars have concluded that during a communication event receivers judge the speaker as more trustworthy if they are affiliated with the same race (Morimoto & La Ferle, 2008). Also, spokespersons that express sincerity and considered similar among the audience are suspected to receive more positive judgments in regards to their credibility (Cowden et al., 2009).

In many cases, the similarity between the speaker and the audience can promote a sense of liking and credibility among the listeners. Aristotle pointed out this phenomenon as he discussed how audience members perceive credibility due to their positive or negative opinions of the speaker (Cowden et al., 2009). Aristotle proposed that audience members are more likely to accept persuasion if they can discover similarity or identify a good reputation pertaining to the speaker. The scholars noted that Burke also once confirmed that one could only persuade someone as much as the source could speak the language of the audience (Cowden et al., 2009). These ideas reveal the considerable role a speaker's credibility plays during a crisis event as this concept has great impact on the potential reception of the message by the audience (Cowden et al., 2009).

A recent study questioned the extent to which one's culture may affect perceptions of a source's credibility while specifically testing the level one identifies with ethnic background and race (Morimoto & La Ferle, 2008). Morimoto and La Ferle (2008) confirmed that Asian Americans considered their Asian counterparts as more credible than Caucasian individuals. Moreover, the Asian American participants involved in this

study preferred to collaborate in business interactions with individuals of their same race (Morimoto & La Ferle, 2008). This study suggested that Asian Americans were more concerned with being able to trust the source of a message, as opposed to relying on one's personal appearance or knowledge concerning the source's credibility. Some of the Asian American culture's core beliefs place great significance on establishing strong relationships and being respectful (Morimoto & La Ferle, 2008). These scholars predict that the core values of the Asian Americans influence who they perceive credible and trustworthy. Furthermore, Asian Americans were found to favor a source if they were comparable with their beliefs, or simply displayed knowledge concerning their cultural background (Morimoto & La Ferle, 2008).

Ethos, as viewed by Aristotle, is socially constructed among members of a cultural group (King et al., 1985). Moreover, what one culture deems credible, another may not (Arora et al., 2010). A study that compared differences among Anglo Americans and Japanese Americans examined how the two viewed source credibility somewhat differently (King et al., 1985). While both parties consider the speaker's competence and character as a means to judge the credibility of the source, the Japanese Americans added the consideration and appearance of the speaker as measures of credibility judgments as well. This finding further supports the need to discover how cultures vary in their viewpoints of credibility. Acquiring this information would enhance the capabilities of a culturally sensitive approach (King et al., 1985).

Cowden et al. (2009) found that the members of the Hispanic population judge a message more favorably when the representative speaks Spanish and consider a speaker more credible if they recognize similarity with that source. Peguero (2006) noted that

Latino Americans prefer to receive information pertaining to crises from their family or peers. This evidence further suggests the importance of familiarity in the source concerning the Hispanic American population (Peguero, 2006). Interestingly, although Hispanic Americans desire a speaker that relates to their cultural characteristics, they prefer a speaker communicating crisis or risk events to be affiliated with politics and interests in their local area (Cowden et al., 2009). This information is noteworthy as it asserts that a speaker must do more than simply speak the language with this population in order to receive high credibility (Cowden et al., 2009).

Interestingly, there is a line of research devoted to the insider/outsider debate. This area of research studies immigrants and their process of assimilating into society. One group that has been studied over the years is the Somali culture and their level of trust toward the local government. The study found that the individuals of the Somali culture would not allow members of their same ethnic background to interview them concerning their past experiences in Somalia (Kusow, 2003). The scholar noted that this behavior could be due to the Somali individual's many experiences of political corruptness and hard times over the years. This article found that Somali members searched for an outsider from their group to trust to tell their story (Kusow, 2003). In consideration of the above information, this study aims to determine if a source's similarity has the capacity to increase or decrease a speaker's credibility concerning the Hispanic American population. The current study aims to collect data regarding the participant's perceived credibility based on a speaker's characteristics. Therefore, this study refers to the concept of credibility based strictly on a person's characteristics.

H2: For Hispanic Americans, perceived credibility will be higher for a Hispanic government speaker and lower for a Non-Hispanic government speaker.

Preferred Learning Styles and Culture

Kolb developed the learning style model that concluded feeling, doing, thinking, and reflecting were the four basic learning styles. Since this point, these learning styles have been applied to the classroom and the workforce. Their applicability to numerous situations has offered an interesting insight into the human thought process. By examining the learning styles used by individuals during a learning experience one understands how individuals will view situations and react to their surroundings. Interestingly, the four learning styles developed by Kolb have been applied to the concept of culture (Kolb & Kolb, 2005). Not only does culture impact one's beliefs, values, and opinions, but culture also has the power to influence the way individuals prefer to learn. Yamazaki (2005) suggests each distinct cultural group has their preferred method of learning and processing information.

Kolb and Kolb (2005) discussed that each learner has a preferred way of learning and working through conflict situations. The four basic learning style methods illustrate the diverse processes individuals implement to make sense of an event they are faced with. One's genetic makeup along with the environment are aspects that impact an individual's judgment on preferred learning style (Kolb & Kolb, 2005). Moreover, factors such as one's society and previous experiences have the potential to affect which learning style an individual prefers (Kayes & Yamazaki, 2004). This study suggests that an individual may decipher a conflict by thinking in "concrete" or "abstract" terms and by thinking in "reflective" or "active" terms (Kolb & Kolb, 2005).

Kolb's model distinguished between four learning styles that people are expected to employ, which are concrete experience "CE", abstract conceptualization "AC", reflective observation "RO", and active experimentation "AE" (as cited in Yamazaki, 2005, p. 5). These styles of learning are predicted to differ concerning their implementation among the various cultural groups. The Hispanic American population is considered an interdependent cultural group as its members seek togetherness within a unit. Characteristics that are implied within this classification are a need for close relationships among its members. As interdependent individuals, the Hispanic American population strives for this type of close relationship and bonding (Yamazaki, 2005).

Those individuals who employ the learning styles of concrete experimentation and reflective observation are classified as divergers (Kolb & Kolb, 2005; Kayes & Yamazaki, 2004; Sellnow, 2002). Divergers are assumed to place a large significance in cultural aspects, enjoy working on tasks with other people, and are fond of receiving input concerning their work (Kolb & Kolb, 2005). Due to their ability to learn through concrete experience, the importance of spending time together, and their respect for their environment are considered most important. These individuals are most concerned with what faces them directly rather than ideas that seem further away (Yamazaki, 2005). Individuals that are considered divergers favor learning information that they consider applicable to their personal lives (Sellnow, 2002). Furthermore, divergers are also assumed to find enjoyment in "feeling" and "watching" (Sellnow, 2002, pg. 15).

Hispanic Americans place emphasis on the thoughts and concerns among those within their cultural unit which adds to their practice of concrete experience. The members affiliated with the Hispanic American culture learn most efficiently through

observing and mimicking what others practice; these members thrive by viewing others as they learn and acquire the information needed (Yamazaki, 2005). Additionally, individuals that prefer the “RO” or “CE” learning styles are expected to show delays in their efforts of taking action. These members are assumed to prefer thinking about the potential actions, rather than jumping to action immediately (Kolb & Kolb, 2005; Sellnow, 2002).

Each learning style is associated with particular talents concerning learning behaviors and characteristics. Individuals who prefer the reflective observation learning style are assumed to excel at collecting information, as well as critiquing the information they receive (Kayes & Yamazaki, 2004). Due to this evidence, one would suspect the significant importance of meeting the Hispanic American population’s expectations concerning a credible message. If a message fulfilled the expectations of this population, crisis communicators could potentially experience more success with moving this cultural group from reflection to action.

Previous studies have confirmed that individuals who dislike uncertainty desire to learn by reflective observation (Kayes & Yamazaki, 2004; Kolb & Kolb, 2005; Yamazaki, 2005). Due to Hispanic Americans relying on reflective observation one would assume this culture would dislike experiencing feelings of uncertainty as well. Cultures that dislike uncertainty strive to avert situations of this nature (Joy & Kolb, 2009). During events that produce levels of uncertainty, these cultural groups recommend that their members follow their daily routines or their practiced religion in order to ward off any unsure perceptions. Interdependent cultures, such as the Hispanic American culture, are hesitant that their actions might lead to an unsuccessful outcome and

therefore encourage its members to strictly follow their previously established procedures (Joy & Kolb, 2009).

RQ2: Does one's preferred learning style affect the perception of trust and perceived speaker credibility?

CHAPTER III

METHOD

Participants

The present study specifically focused on the experiences, beliefs, and opinions of the Hispanic American population. Forty-two Hispanic Americans from the southern region of the United States participated in the present study. Numerous Hispanic Americans are employed in the local agriculture industry. The data for the current study was collected on-site at an agriculture industry facility where Hispanic Americans have been employed for years. The participants range in age from 18 to 65. Each participant in the present study is either a United States Citizen or employed legally on a United States work visa.

Use of Cultural Agents

Studies have advised the necessary use of cultural liaisons while attempting to study diverse cultural groups (Cowden et al., 2009). Many diverse cultural groups display levels of distrust for members outside of their group; therefore, relying on the assistance of a cultural agent provided this study unique insight concerning this cultural group (Cowden et al., 2009). The cultural agent used in the present study is a trusted group member of the Hispanic American group that participated in this study, and is fluent in both the English and Spanish language. Due to the fact that an individual must go to great lengths in order to gain the trust of the Hispanic American people, the use of this cultural agent allowed instant access to the group. The cultural liaison offered advice regarding how one should act in order to be viewed as credible and trustworthy among the members of this specific Hispanic American group.

Procedure

This study was conducted at the organization's site in the southern region of the United States. This company is the place of employment of the Hispanic Americans involved with this study. During a portion of the survey, the participants viewed pictures of government speakers before completing a questionnaire. Although both officials represented the government, one official was a Hispanic American and the other official was a Non-Hispanic American. Therefore, this study compared the two officials' race to determine if this variable had the capacity to impact the audience's perceptions of government officials. This location was chosen for the present study as it was a comfortable atmosphere for the Hispanic American participants. Both the cultural agents along with the participants in the study were informed of their rights and responsibilities (as per the IRB protocol), and each participant signed a consent form in order to participate in the present study.

The surveys used in this study were translated from English into Spanish by a Spanish instructor. The survey was also back translated to test its validity. This procedure is effective due to following a previous study based on their positive findings (Au et al., 2003). The study was conducted in the organization's main office. Rotations of five participants at a time came in the office to complete the questionnaires. Participants had the choice to complete the questionnaires in either the English or Spanish language.

One of the present study's goals was to determine if one's race had the capacity to impact one's perception of the speaker; therefore, the data gathered during this study was divided among two groups. The first group was labeled Trust A which was the results from participant's perception of the Hispanic American government official. The second

group was labeled Trust B which were the results concerning the non Hispanic government official.

Measures

Perceived distrust of the government.

Historically, Hispanic Americans are described as a group that has struggled to trust government systems including the American government (Clements et al., 2006). Hypothesis one aimed to discover if trust and perceived speaker credibility are positively correlated. Also, this study questions if a Hispanic American's level of trust increases or decreases due to the number of years they have lived in America.

Instrument.

In 1989 and 1990, a national survey took place which focused on the Latino American population and their level of trust in the government. This instrument was titled the Latino National American Survey (LNPS), and data was collected based on two statements that requested information from the participants concerning their trust and the U.S. government (Michelson, 2001). The present study used the two statements from the LNPS instrument as its trust survey (see Appendix A). The first statement states, Government officials do what is right: just about always, most of the time, some of the time, or almost never. The second statement states, Government is run: by the few in their interest, or for the benefit of all. Respondents were encouraged to choose the answer which best matched their opinion. This present study joined the two questions to one scale which was considered the trust scale.

Analysis.

H1 predicts that trust and perceived speaker credibility will be positively correlated. Also, RQ1 questions if a Hispanic American's level of trust increases or decreases due to the number of years they have lived in America. Peters, Covello, and McCallum (1997) studied individuals from the public in order to determine how they perceived an industry, the government, and citizen groups in terms of their trust and credibility. This study aimed to conclude if a relationship exists between one's perceptions of a source's commitment and one's perceptions of the source's level of caring (Peters et al., 1997). The correlation coefficient for industry was .41, for government was .43, and for citizen groups was .39; each case was considered statistically significant. This data confirmed a relationship between a source's perceived level of commitment and their perceived level of caring (Peters et al., 1997). In consideration of Peters et al.'s (1997) beneficial use of applying correlations to determine the presence of relationships among the variables, the present study also implemented correlations to answer RQ1 and H1.

Perceptions of source credibility.

Perceived communication competence, goodwill, and trustworthiness are considered the three main components that contribute to a source's credibility. These three components are crucial for a speaker to exert on its audiences in order to be perceived as credible and trustworthy concerning the messages that they communicate (McCroskey & Teven, 1999). Hypothesis two indicated that Hispanic Americans will perceive Hispanic American government officials more credible than Non-Hispanic American government officials.

Instrument.

McCroskey and Teven's (1999) study focused on determining how individuals perceived different sources in terms of their credibility. The researchers showed the participants a picture of a politician, a local individual, and one of their former professors in order to determine how their credibility judgments differed. The instrument used was developed by McCroskey and Teven (1999) and was divided into three sections according to the three components of credibility: Competence, Goodwill, and Trustworthiness. Each of the three sections of credibility had six bipolar adjective pairs that were developed to determine the level at which participants perceived the individual in terms of their credibility. Between each of the bi-polar adjective pairs on the credibility survey were the numbers one through seven. The participants were asked to choose the number that best represented their opinion of each of the individuals (see Appendix B). The adjectives chosen for the survey were done so after a rigorous process of pre-testing and post-testing (McCroskey & Teven, 1999). Cronbach's alpha revealed that the three components of credibility were highly reliable to use for study considering the following: Competence, .85; Trustworthiness, .92; and Goodwill, .92. When all three components were tested as a single measure of credibility, Cronbach's alpha suggested a high reliability as well, .94 (McCroskey & Teven, 1999).

The present study implemented this instrument developed by McCroskey and Teven (1999) due to its proven reliability and validity. This instrument was labeled by the present study as the credibility survey. The adjectives developed by McCroskey and Teven (1999) were easily translated into the Spanish language due to the universality of the adjectives used. However, instead of showing a video, the present study displayed

two separate pictures of government officials. One picture displayed a Non-Hispanic government official, and the other picture displayed a Hispanic American government official. First, the participants viewed the picture of the Hispanic American government official, and then completed the credibility survey based on their impression of the individual in the picture. Next, the participants viewed the picture of the Non-Hispanic American government official and then completed the same credibility survey. This survey aimed to measure how each of the government officials was viewed in terms of their perceived credibility. Following this method one would gather the necessary data to determine if differences exist in the credibility judgments concerning the Hispanic American participants based on the two government speakers (McCroskey & Teven, 1999).

In order to conduct the present study in a timely fashion, three adjectives were omitted from each of the three sections from the credibility instrument developed by McCroskey and Teven (1999). In the competence category on the survey the following adjectives were used: intelligent and unintelligent, inexperienced and expert, and bright and stupid. The adjectives omitted from the competence portion of the survey were the following: incompetent and competent, untrained and trained, and informed and uninformed. In consideration of the goodwill category, the following adjectives were used: cares about me and doesn't care about me, self-centered and not self-centered, and not understanding and understanding. The following adjectives were omitted from the goodwill category: has my interests at heart and does not have my interests at heart, insensitive and sensitive, and concerned and unconcerned with me. In the trustworthiness category the following adjectives were used: honest and dishonest, untrustworthy and

trustworthy, and unethical and ethical. The adjectives that were omitted from the trustworthiness category were the following: honorable and dishonorable, moral and immoral, and phony and genuine.

Analysis.

H2 indicated that the participants would perceive a Hispanic American government speaker as more credible than a non-Hispanic government speaker. The credibility survey chosen for this study would reveal a broad range of credibility judgments based on the Hispanic American's interpretations concerning the source of a message. This portion of the survey would also provide if differences exist in the participant's perceptions concerning the speaker's race. Jarvenpaa and Leidner (1999) implemented a t-test to conclude if the participants differed in their level of trust based on their cultural background. These researchers tested the participants at two different times in order to compare each set of data recorded (Jarvenpaa & Leidner, 1999). The data was insignificant concerning the two variables, $t = -.68$, $p = .5$ at time 1; $t = .07$, $p = .9$ at time 2 (Jarvenpaa & Leidner, 1999). Thus, this study used a t-test to determine if differences exist in perceptions based on a Hispanic government speaker and a non-Hispanic government speaker.

Learning styles and information processing.

Cultures vary depending upon their preferred method of learning. In crisis and risk communication, health officials are striving to better understand how Hispanic Americans process information and respond to messages so that they may better construct effective messages for this specific population. According to a previous study, Hispanic Americans are expected to learn most efficiently through Kolb's reflective observation

and concrete experiment styles (Joy & Kolb, 2009). In consideration of previous findings, RQ2 questions if one's preferred learning style would affect the perception of trust and perceived speaker credibility.

Instrument.

This study will use the Sellnow Learning Style Quiz to determine the participant's preferred style of learning. This instrument is gauged at uncovering an individual's opinion concerning a wide variety of learning situations (Sellnow, 2001).

Analysis.

RQ2 questioned if one's preferred learning style would affect the perception of trust and perceived speaker credibility. Myers, Romero, Anzaldua, and Trinidad (2011) studied various factors that contributed to inactivity among Hispanic American college students. Their survey measured various variables that could have impact on one's exercise behavior. This study used a MANOVA due to the numerous independent variables that could impact the dependent variable. A MANOVA was implemented to determine how one's ability to exercise was impacted when feeling tired ($F=8.89$, $p=.004$) encountering a lack of time ($F=6.96$, $p=.01$) and when it is raining outside ($F=11.08$, $p=.001$). These factors could result in a student not exercising. Following Myers et al. (2011) recommendation for implementing an MANOVA, the present study used a MANOVA to test multiple variables. The multiple variables that were tested in the present study were one's preferred learning style, trust, and perceived speaker credibility.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The present study aimed to better understand how Hispanic Americans process and evaluate messages. Previous studies have indicated that this group in society feels they cannot trust crisis communication sent from government officials (Cowden et al., 2009). Therefore, the below variables were tested in order to draw conclusions based on the findings. Frequency tables were calculated in order to have a visual interpretation of the data.

Table 1

Frequencies

	TrustA	TrustB	Trust BAdj	Comp1A	Comp1B	Comp1C	Good1A
N Valid	41	39	39	40	40	40	40
Missing	43	45	45	44	44	44	44
Mean	3.32	1.33	2.00	4.15	3.80	3.70	4.225
Median	4.00	1.00	1.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
Std. Dev.	.986	.478	1.433	1.6726	1.5225	1.6672	1.7170
Range	4	1	3	6.0	5.0	6.0	6.0

Table 2

Frequencies

		Good1B	Good 1C	Trust 1A	Trust 1B	Trust 1C	Comp 2A	Comp 2B
N	Valid	40	40	41	40	40	39	39
	Missing	44	44	43	44	44	45	45
Mean		3.85	2.80	4.43	2.92	3.55	4.178	4.231
Median		4.00	3.00	5.00	2.00	3.00	5.00	4.00
Std. Dev.		1.7766	1.4711	1.6889	1.5087	1.8390	1.6535	1.6297
Range		6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	5.0

Table 3

Frequencies

		Comp 2C	Good 2A	Good 2B	Good 2C	Trust 2A	Trust 2B	Trust 2C
N	Valid	40	38	40	40	40	40	41
	Missing	44	46	45	44	44	44	43
Mean		4.525	5.447	4.62	4.20	5.10	4.00	4.512
Median		5.00	6.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	5.00
Std. Dev.		1.663	1.5369	1.5869	1.6361	1.4987	1.2195	1.6298
Range		6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	5.0	6.0	6.0

In the current study, a portion of the survey allowed the participants to evaluate pictures of two government officials. One government official was Hispanic American while the other government official was Non-Hispanic American. After the participants viewed the picture of the Hispanic American, they rated the speaker on their competence, goodwill, and trustworthiness. The same took place for the Non-Hispanic government official. The above frequency tables provide a visual on how the participants answered the survey questions based on both of the government officials' competence, goodwill, and trustworthiness.

Hypothesis one predicted that one's level of trust and perceived speaker credibility would be positively correlated among the Hispanic American participants. Perception of the Hispanic government official's credibility was strongly correlated with perceived trust of that person ($r[38]=.90$, $p=.000$, $r^2=.81$). Perception of the non-Hispanic government representative's credibility was also strongly correlated with perceived trust ($r[38]=.80$, $p=.000$, $r^2=.64$). The results are consistent with previous findings that trust and credibility or inter-related.

Table 4

Trust in Government

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	3	1	1.2	2.6
	4	8	9.5	23.1
	5	19	22.6	48.7

Table 4 (continued).

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	6	2	2.4	5.1
	7	5	6.0	12.8
	8	4	4.8	10.3
	Total	39	46.4	100.0
Missing	System	45	53.6	
Total		84	100.0	

Table 5

Credibility Concerning the Hispanic Speaker

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 12.0	1	1.2	2.6	2.6
16.0	1	1.2	2.6	5.3
18.0	1	1.2	2.6	7.9
22.0	3	3.6	7.9	15.8
23.0	2	2.4	5.3	21.1
24.0	1	1.2	2.6	23.7
25.0	2	2.4	5.3	28.9

Table 5 (continued).

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	29.0	3	3.6	7.9	42.1
	32.0	1	1.2	2.6	44.7
	34.0	2	2.4	5.3	50.0
	35.0	4	4.8	10.5	60.5
	36.0	1	1.2	2.6	63.2
	37.0	1	1.2	2.6	65.8
	38.0	2	2.4	5.3	71.1
	39.0	2	2.4	5.3	76.3
	41.0	1	1.2	2.6	78.9
	44.0	2	2.4	5.3	84.2
	45.0	1	1.2	2.6	86.8
	47.0	2	2.4	5.3	92.1
	48.0	1	1.2	2.6	94.7
	53.0	1	1.2	2.6	97.4
	55.0	1	1.2	2.6	100.0
	Total	38	45.2	100.0	
Missing System		46	54.8		
Total		84	100.0		

Table 6

Credibility Concerning Non-Hispanic speaker

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 14.0	1	1.2	2.6	2.6
23.0	1	1.2	2.6	5.3
24.0	1	1.2	2.6	7.9
32.0	1	1.2	2.6	10.5
33.0	1	1.2	2.6	13.2
34.0	1	1.2	2.6	15.8
36.0	4	4.8	10.5	26.3
37.0	2	2.4	5.3	31.6
38.0	3	3.6	7.9	39.5
39.0	1	1.2	2.6	42.1
40.0	2	2.4	5.3	47.4
41.0	4	4.8	10.5	57.9
42.0	1	1.2	2.6	60.5
43.0	1	1.2	2.6	63.2
44.0	1	1.2	2.6	65.8
45.0	2	2.4	5.3	71.1
46.0	2	2.4	5.3	76.3
47.0	1	1.2	2.6	78.9
49.0	2	2.4	5.3	84.2

Table 6 (continued).

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 50.0	1	1.2	2.6	86.8
51.0	2	2.4	5.3	92.1
54.0	2	2.4	5.3	97.4
63.0	1	1.2	2.6	100.0
Total	38	45.2	100.0	
Missing System	46	54.8		
Total	84	100.0		

Hypothesis two predicted that for Hispanic Americans, perceived credibility would be higher for a Hispanic government speaker and lower for a Non-Hispanic government speaker. A t-test was used to identify a significant difference between the variables ($t = -5.28$, $p < .000$, $m[\text{Hispanic}] = 33$, $m[\text{non-Hispanic}] = 40$). Thus, Hypothesis two was not confirmed. This sub group placed more trust in the Non-Hispanic government official. Based on the participants, the mean score for the Hispanic government official was ($M=1.33$), and the mean score concerning the Non-Hispanic government official was ($M=3.32$).

Research question one asked, to what extent does a Hispanic American participant's trust in the government increase or decrease as a result of the years lived in the U.S. among the Hispanic American participants. There is not a significant relationship between trust in the government and speaker credibility ($r=-.02$, $p=.912$). In

consideration of these findings, one's level of trust concerning the government is not impacted as a result of the number of years lived in America.

Table 7

Trust for Hispanic Speaker

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 3.0	1	1.2	2.5	2.5
4.0	1	1.2	2.5	5.0
5.0	2	2.4	5.0	10.0
6.0	2	2.4	5.0	15.0
7.0	3	3.6	7.5	22.5
8.0	3	3.6	7.5	30.0
9.0	4	4.8	10.0	40.0
10.0	4	4.8	10.0	50.0
11.0	5	6.0	12.5	62.5
12.0	4	4.8	10.0	72.5
14.0	4	4.8	10.0	82.5
15.0	1	1.2	2.5	85.0
16.0	1	1.2	2.5	87.5
17.0	1	1.2	2.5	90.0
19.0	2	2.4	5.0	95.0
20.0	1	1.2	2.5	97.5
21.0	1	1.2	2.5	100.0

Table 7 (continued).

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Total	40		47.6	100.0
Missing System		44	52.4	
Total	84		100.0	

Table 8

Trust in Non-Hispanic Speaker

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 6.0	1	1.2	2.5	2.5
7.0	1	1.2	2.5	5.0
8.0	2	1.2	2.5	7.5
9.0	2	1.2	2.5	10.0
10.0	3	2.4	5.0	15.0
11.0	3	1.2	2.5	17.5
12.0	4	6.0	12.5	30.0
13.0	4	10.7	22.5	52.5
14.0	5	3.6	7.5	60.0
15.0	4	7.1	15.0	75.0
16.0	4	7.1	15.0	90.0

Table 8 (continued).

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 17.0	1	1.2	2.5	92.5
18.0	1	1.2	2.5	95.0
20.0	1	1.2	2.5	97.5
21.0	2	1.2	2.5	100.0
Total	40	47.6	100.0	
Missing System	44	52.4		
Total	84	100.0		

Table 9

Years in the United States

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1-3	18	21.4	43.9	43.9
4-6	17	20.2	41.5	85.4
7-9	4	4.8	9.8	95.1
10+	2	2.4	4.9	100.0
Total	41	48.8	100.0	
Missing System	43	51.2		
Total	84	100.0		

Research question two aimed to answer if one's preferred learning style would affect the perception of trust and perceived speaker credibility. Box's M test revealed the data did not violate the assumption of homogeneity of variances (Box's M = 12.70, F [10, 344.65] = .657, p = .764). A one-way MANOVA failed to reveal a significant multivariate effect (F = .998, p = .48). Pillai's trace was used due to this test being more resilient to the violation of assumptions (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996). Thus, one's preferred learning style does not have an impact on one's level of trust and perceived credibility based on the method the present study used to measure these variables.

Table 10

Sellnow Learning Styles Quiz Frequencies

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1.0	5	6.0	11.9	11.9
1.5	3	3.6	7.1	19.0
2.0	7	8.3	16.7	35.7
2.5	4	4.8	9.5	45.2
3.0	4	4.8	9.5	54.8
3.5	6	7.1	14.3	69.0
4.0	5	6.0	11.9	81.0
4.5	8	9.5	19.0	100.0
Total	42	50.0	100.0	
Missing System	42	50.0		
Total	84	100.0		

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The focus of the present study was to better understand the Hispanic American population concerning their trust in the government, how they perceive race concerning government speakers, if the number of years spent in the United States impacted their level of trust toward the government, and if preferred learning style would have an impact on their levels of trust and how they perceive speakers. This study aimed to gather insight concerning these variables in order to better construct messages concerning crises. Gaining a better understanding of the impressions of Hispanic Americans based on their views of government speakers and their trust in these officials would assist in this process of communicating to this population.

This study found that for this particular population, trust and credibility were highly correlated. This finding was consistent for both the Hispanic and non-Hispanic government official. Hypothesis one predicted a relationship between these two variables based on findings from previous research (Harding & Houston, 2009). Harding and Houston (2009) discovered a positive correlation between how one perceives a speaker and their level of trust. These scholars confirmed that if the government's messages are viewed as competent, then they will be trusted by the public more favorably. The present study was to confirm these findings.

The present study hypothesized that the Hispanic Americans would perceive the Hispanic American government official to be more credible, as opposed to the non-Hispanic American government official. However, this study could not confirm this prediction. According to the participants involved in this study, the Hispanic

representative was actually perceived as less credible than the Non-Hispanic person. Kusow (2003) noted that members of the Somali culture were less trusting toward members of their same cultural background, and were more willing to offer information to individuals outside of the Somali group. This assumption supports the findings of the current study. The participants involved in this study viewed the Non-Hispanic government official as more credible and trustworthy. This finding provides the importance of better understanding the targeted group before sending messages. Previous studies have shown the importance of evaluating multiple variables before sending messages to the various publics (Harding & Houston, 2009).

This study then questioned if one's level of trust would increase or decrease due to the number of years lived in the United States. The participants involved in the present study did not show an increase in trust due to their years spent in the U.S. Time spent living in the U.S. was not found to be significantly associated with a Hispanic person's level of trust. This result could be due to this group's belief that the government is not worthy of trust. A previous study has concluded that through positive experiences with the government one would grow to view the government in a more positive light (Harding & Houston, 2009). One might predict that thus far this particular group of participants has not experienced many positive outcomes with the U.S. government. It would be interesting to see how their trust levels would be impacted if the government devoted special attention in creating positive experiences for this group of Hispanic Americans. As confirmed in a previous study, these positive experiences would have the potential to increase the Hispanic American's level of trust in order for this population to receive and accept the messages sent from the government (Harding & Houston, 2009).

Additionally, some of the participants travel to different locations for different seasons. Perhaps these people who have a weak or absent connection to local government perceive that they are not truly members of the community. As such, they may believe that the government is not responsive to their needs. Trust builds slowly over time. For these Hispanic people, there is not enough time, and there are too few positive interactions, to build trust.

This finding provides insight into how crisis communicators should send messages to this population. If messages are sent to the Hispanic American population by a speaker who is also Hispanic, one should predict that this particular group of individuals will not trust the message. Based on the previous research and the findings of this study, communication practitioners may be well advised to reinforce a targeted message using cultural liaisons who are not perceived to be associated with the government.

The way an individual prefers to learn has led to many interesting findings in multiple situations (Kolb & Kolb, 2005). Many scholars question how this concept reflects the thought processes concerning the human mind. The present study questioned if one's preferred learning style would affect their perception of trust and perceived speaker credibility. Unfortunately, this study was unable to confirm this finding; however, this could be a result of the lack of trust displayed by the participants. In other words, perceptions of trust and credibility were found to be low, regardless of learning style preferences. This finding is important because it might suggest that the way that people prefer to approach new information is not major influence on evaluations of trust or credibility. Additional research should be conducted to test this supposition.

From an applied perspective, in order for this group of Hispanic Americans to change their views of the government, future action must be taken to alter the way they learn about the government and their doings. In the context of this study at least, this population seems to believe that the government is untrustworthy. The literature suggests that this group of people is unlikely to acquiesce to a course of action if the message is not credible or trustworthy. The findings from this study point to major problems for risk and crisis communicators targeting this population. These practitioners either must use a speaker that the audience does find credible, or they must use a messaging strategy that overcomes the apparent limitations.

For the future, in order to test message effectiveness it would be of use to show the participants a video clip of both a Hispanic American government official and a non-Hispanic American government official. This study relied on pictures of government officials because the use of video was not practical in this context. However, this approach limited the study's effectiveness.

This present study was conducted at an agriculture industry facility, and at the time the study was conducted the majority of employees present were male workers, with the exception of one female. Therefore, the data concerning the present study largely reflects the opinions of the male population concerning the Hispanic American population. This was a limitation of the present study due to the fact that data was not collected equally among the gender groups.

As noted earlier, the present study was conducted at the working site of the participants. During the time of year the study was conducted, many of the employees were in transition to another location. Therefore, the number of participants involved in

this study was another limitation for this study. In the future, it would be of great use to discover a way to involve more participants in order to draw more significant conclusions.

Lastly, the time of day the current study was conducted could be considered a limitation. The present study was conducted in the late afternoon after the employees had finished their job for the day. It was very clear that the participants involved were ready to leave their work site after a full day of labor. It is a possibility that the participants could have rushed through the surveys in order to continue with their evening activities elsewhere. It would be of interest to examine the data collected from the same participants if the study was conducted in the morning before they began work.

This study offers crisis communication scholars significant insights concerning the Hispanic American population and how to best send messages to this group. One should be aware of this population's distrust in the government, including using a speaker that may be viewed as someone in relation to the government. Any speaker that is viewed as a government official will likely be viewed unfavorably by this population, and thus will likely not be trusted. This finding provides for the importance for the awareness of this issue, and for new procedures of communication to be adopted. One may predict that a message would be viewed more favorably by the Hispanic American population simply if the speaker did not look like a government official. This study encourages crisis communicators to make some necessary changes in order to better send messages that are acceptable to the Hispanic American population.

APPENDIX A

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD NOTICE OF COMMITTEE ACTION



INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
 118 College Drive #5147 | Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001
 Phone: 601.266.6820 | Fax: 601.266.4377 | www.usm.edu/irb

NOTICE OF COMMITTEE ACTION

The project has been reviewed by The University of Southern Mississippi Institutional Review Board in accordance with Federal Drug Administration regulations (21 CFR 26, 111), Department of Health and Human Services (45 CFR Part 46), and university guidelines to ensure adherence to the following criteria:

- The risks to subjects are minimized.
- The risks to subjects are reasonable in relation to the anticipated benefits.
- The selection of subjects is equitable.
- Informed consent is adequate and appropriately documented.
- Where appropriate, the research plan makes adequate provisions for monitoring the data collected to ensure the safety of the subjects.
- Where appropriate, there are adequate provisions to protect the privacy of subjects and to maintain the confidentiality of all data.
- Appropriate additional safeguards have been included to protect vulnerable subjects.
- Any unanticipated, serious, or continuing problems encountered regarding risks to subjects must be reported immediately, but not later than 10 days following the event. This should be reported to the IRB Office via the "Adverse Effect Report Form".
- If approved, the maximum period of approval is limited to twelve months. Projects that exceed this period must submit an application for renewal or continuation.

PROTOCOL NUMBER: **12062801**
 PROJECT TITLE: **A Cultural Consideration: Eliminating the Barriers
 in Order to Effectively Communicate Crises**
 PROJECT TYPE: **Thesis**
 RESEARCHER/S: **Morgan Hurt**
 COLLEGE/DIVISION: **College of Arts & Letters**
 DEPARTMENT: **Communication Studies**
 FUNDING AGENCY: **N/A**
 IRB COMMITTEE ACTION: **Expedited Review Approval**
 PERIOD OF PROJECT APPROVAL: **07/24/2012 to 07/23/2013**

Lawrence A. Hosman, Ph.D.
Institutional Review Board Chair

APPENDIX B
CONSENT FORM

“A Cultural Consideration: Eliminating the Barriers in Order to Effectively Communicate Crises”

This is a research project that aims to describe Hispanic American’s thought processes regarding crisis and risk messages. This is a research project that asks and records answers from participating individuals. This study uses three surveys that will enable the participants to choose the answer which best represents themselves. The participants will view two different pictures after which they will be asked questions concerning their perception of the speaker. This study should take no longer than 10 to 15 minutes. Participation in the present study is completely voluntary, and the participants may leave at any point during this survey process. The risks in this study appear to be minimal. During the study, Jessica Duran (the liaison), will be present to interpret any confusing information or offer any other additional assistance that may be requested. If for any reason you may become uncomfortable during this study do not hesitate to speak with Jessica Duran or Morgan Hurt. The data recorded in this study will be completely confidential as there will be no names recorded throughout this process. The data collected will be properly disposed in a secure location. If for any reason you may have any questions regarding this research project, you may contact Morgan Hurt at 601-508-1798.

"This project has been reviewed by the Human Subjects Protection Review Committee, which ensures that research projects involving human subjects follow federal regulations. Any questions or concerns about rights as a research subject should be

directed to the chair of the Institutional Review Board, The University of Southern Mississippi, 118 College Drive #5147, Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001, (601) 266-6820."

Signature of the Research Participant

Date

Signature of the Person Explaining the Study

Date

APPENDIX C
TRUST SURVEY

Feelings of Political Trust- LNPS questions

Hispanic American

Government officials do what is right

Just about always

Most of the time

Some of the time

Almost never

N

Government is run:

By the few in their interest

For the benefit of all

Source. (Michelson, 2001)

* The above table represents the 1989-1990 LNPS survey questions (Michelson, 2001).

These questions were used to test the participant's feelings toward the government. Also, the data collected from the 1989-1990 LNPS study was compared to the data gathered in the present study.

APPENDIX D

CREDIBILITY SURVEY

Perceived source credibility scale (McCroskey & Teven, 1999)

Please indicate your impression of the person by circling below the appropriate number between the pairs of adjectives below. The closer the number to an adjective, the more certain you are of your evaluation.

Competence

Intelligent 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Unintelligent

Inexpert 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Expert

Bright 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Stupid

Goodwill

Cares about me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Doesn't care about me

Self-centered 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Not self centered

Not understanding 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Understanding

Trustworthiness

Honest 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Dishonest

Untrustworthy 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Trustworthy

Unethical 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Ethical

Source. (McCroskey & Teven, 1999)

APPENDIX E

LEARNING STYLE SURVEY

Learning Styles Quiz III

Step 1: For each question, circle the letter next to the response that is MOST LIKE YOU. Work quickly and circle only one answer. Record your first thought.

1. I tend to learn best when I can:
 - A. trust my feelings and intuition.
 - B. observe and reflect.
 - C. analyze and evaluate.
 - D. actively experiment.

2. When I learn:
 - A. I am receptive and open-minded.
 - B. I am careful and reflective.
 - C. I am rational and analytical.
 - D. I am practical and active.

3. I enjoy learning when I focus on:
 - A. concrete experiences.
 - B. reflective observations.
 - C. abstract concepts.
 - D. active experimentation.

4. I tend to enjoy learning most when there are lots of:
 - A. real life examples.
 - B. visual aids.
 - C. abstract concepts.
 - D. opportunities for active experimentation.

5. I tend to learn best when:
 - A. I am presented with actual examples from and experiences of people.
 - B. I have time to reflect.
 - C. I can examine facts and statistics.
 - D. I can try to actively solve a problem.

6. If I were asked to choose only one, I'd say that I generally act based on:
 - A. my intuition.
 - B. careful observations.
 - C. logical reasoning.
 - D. my actual experiences.

7. When I learn, I prefer to:
 - A. feel personally involved in things.

- B. take time to reflect.
 - C. examine theories.
 - D. see results from my work.
8. I prefer working in an environment where I can:
- A. interact with others.
 - B. take time to process things.
 - C. critique things.
 - D. try things out myself.
9. I especially like workshops that encourage me to learn about concepts by:
- A. having fun with others.
 - B. reflecting privately.
 - C. analyzing and critiquing.
 - D. actively experimenting/applying.
10. When discussing ideas with others, I am best at:
- A. considering a variety of points of view.
 - B. taking time to reflect before responding.
 - C. using logic to analyze and evaluate.
 - D. getting things done and accomplishing goals.
11. When learning an entirely new procedure, I am most likely to BEGIN by:
- A. asking about the experiences of people who've done it before.
 - B. reading through the directions and pondering them carefully.
 - C. researching all I can about it origins, pros, cons, etc.
 - D. trying it out and moving forward based on trial and error.
12. I learn best when I:
- A. have an opportunity to hear actual personal stories about the topic.
 - B. can take time to think about the material.
 - C. can rationally evaluate theories.
 - D. am fully involved in the experience.
13. When I am learning something new, I am typically:
- A. accepting and open-minded to it.
 - B. reserved and take time to think reflectively about it.
 - C. critical and want to evaluate it based on logical reasoning.
 - D. wanting to try it out for myself.
14. If I were to describe myself, I would say I prefer to learn by:
- A. lots of real experiences from others.
 - B. Reflecting quietly about my observations.
 - C. Evaluating and critiquing concepts and theories.
 - D. Experimentation and application of concepts and theories.

15. If I were to describe myself when I am learning something new to me, I would say I enjoy:
- A. being receptive to lots of new ideas.
 - B. being careful as I proceed.
 - C. analyzing and critiquing new ideas.
 - D. experimenting with new ideas for myself.

Step 2: Calculate the sums of each letter you circled.

A = _____

B = _____

C = _____

D = _____

Step 3: Calculate the sums as follows:

A + B = _____ **(Stage 1/Diverger)**

B + C = _____ **(Stage 2/Assimilator)**

C + D = _____ **(Stage 3/Converger)**

D + A = _____ **(Stage 4/Accommodator)**

This LSQ III is adapted from Sellnow, D. D. (2001). *Public speaking: A process approach*. Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.

APPENDIX F

DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY

Demographic information

Place a check besides the term that best describes you

1. Gender: Male _____ Female _____
2. Place of birth: United States _____ Mexico _____ Other _____
3. Years lived in U.S. 1-3 _____ 4-6 _____ 7-9 _____ 10 + _____

APPENDIX G

CONSENT FORM IN SPANISH

Formulario de consentimiento:

“Una consideración cultural: Eliminando las barreras en orden para comunicarse efectivamente durante las crisis” Esto se trata de un proyecto de investigación que tiene como objetivo describir los procesos de pensamiento de los Hispano- Americanos en respecto a las crisis y los mensajes de riesgo. Por lo tanto, este estudio evaluará lo siguiente: a) la desconfianza de los hispanos-americanos en el gobierno, b) evaluación Hispano- Americana en relación a la credibilidad del orador (persona que habla), c) y los estilos de aprendizaje de los Hispano- Americanos. El presente estudio se enfoca específicamente en las experiencias, creencias y opiniones de la población hispanoamericana. Se basa en un proyecto de investigación que pide y registra las respuestas de los individuos participantes. Este estudio utiliza tres encuestas que permitirán a los participantes elegir la respuesta que mejor los representa. En adición los participantes verán una serie de fotos antes de llenar el formulario. El estudio no tomará más de 10 a 15 minutos. La participación en el presente estudio es completamente voluntaria, y los participantes pueden irse en cualquier momento que lo deseen durante el proceso de la encuesta. Los riesgos de este estudio parecen ser mínimos. Durante el estudio, Jessica Duran (la enlace) estará presente para interpretar cualquier información confusa, y para ofrecer cualquier otro tipo de ayuda adicional que pueda ser solicitada. Si por alguna razón usted llegase a sentirse incómodo durante este estudio, no dude en hablar con Jessica Duran o Morgan Hurt. Los datos registrados en este estudio serán completamente confidenciales ya que no habrá ningún nombre registrado a lo largo de este proceso. Los datos obtenidos serán eliminados apropiadamente en un lugar seguro. Si por alguna razón es posible que usted tenga alguna pregunta relacionada con el proyecto de investigación, usted puede contactar o comunicarse con Morgan Hurt al siguiente número 601-508-1798.

“Este proyecto ha sido revisado por el Comité de revisión de la Protección de Sujetos Humanos, que garantiza que los proyectos de investigación en seres humanos siguen las regulaciones federales. Cualquier duda o pregunta acerca de los derechos como sujeto de

investigación, debe ser dirigida a la presidencia de la Junta de Revisión Institucional de la Universidad del Sur de Misisipí, 118 College Drive # 5147, Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001, (601) 266-6820.

Firma del participante en la investigación

Fecha

Firma de la persona que explica el estudio

Fecha

APPENDIX H
TRUST SURVEY IN SPANISH

Encuestas:

La desconfianza percibida entre la escala de gobierno

Los sentimientos de confianza política- preguntas LNPS

Hispano- Americano

Los funcionarios de gobierno hacen lo correcto:

Casi siempre

La mayor parte del tiempo

Parte del tiempo

Casi nunca

Nunca

El gobierno está dirigido:

Por los pocos en su propio interés

Para el beneficio de todos

Fuente: (Michelson 2001)

✦ El cuadro anterior representa las preguntas de la encuesta de los LPNS 1989-1990.

Estas preguntas se utilizarán para poner a prueba el sentir de los participantes hacia el gobierno. Además los datos recogidos en el estudio 1989-1990 LPNS serán comparados con los datos recogidos en el presente estudio.

APPENDIX I

CREDIBILITY SURVEY IN SPANISH

La percepción de la escala de credibilidad (McCroskey y Teven 1999)

Por favor, indique su impresión de la persona, circulando el número adecuado entre los pares de adjetivos a continuación. Cuanto más se acerque el número a un adjetivo, más seguro usted está de su evaluación.

Capacidad
(competencia)

inteligente 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 poco inteligente

Inexperto 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 experto

Brillante 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Tonto

Buena voluntad

Se preocupa por mí 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 No se preocupa por mí

Egoista 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 No egoista

No comprensivo 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Comprensivo

Integridad

Honesto 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Dishonesto

No confiable 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Confiable

No Ético 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 ético

Fuente. (McCroskey y Teven, 1999)

APPENDIX J

LEARNING STYLE QUIZ IN SPANISH

Estilos de aprendizaje: Prueba corta III

Paso 1: Para cada pregunta, circule la letra al lado de la respuesta que se parece más a usted. Trabaje con rapidez y circule una sola respuesta. Grabe su primer pensamiento.

1. Yo tiendo a aprender mejor cuando puedo:
 - A. confiar en mis sentimientos e intuición.
 - B. observar y reflexionar.
 - C. analizar y evaluar.
 - D. experimento activamente

2. Cuando yo aprendo:
 - A. Soy receptivo y de mente abierta
 - B. Soy cuidadoso y reflexivo.
 - C. Yo soy racional y analítico.
 - D. Yo soy práctico y activo.

3. Disfruto aprender cuando me enfoco en:
 - A. experiencias concretas.
 - B. observaciones reflexivas
 - C. los conceptos abstractos.
 - D. experimentación activa

4. Tiendo a disfrutar mayormente del aprendizaje, cuando hay muchos:
 - A. ejemplos de la vida real.
 - B. ayudas visuales.
 - C. conceptos abstractos.
 - D. oportunidades para la experimentación activa.

5. Yo tiendo a aprender mejor cuando:

- A. se me presenta con ejemplos reales de las experiencias de la gente.
- B. tengo tiempo para reflexionar.
- C. puedo examinar los hechos y las estadísticas.
- D. puedo tratar de resolver un problema activamente

6. Si yo tuviese que elegir sólo una, yo diría que en general, actúo en base a:

- A. mi intuición.
- B. observaciones cuidadosas.
- C. razonamiento lógico.
- D. mis experiencias reales.

7. Cuando aprendo, yo prefiero:

- A. sentirme personalmente involucrado en las cosas.
- B. tomar tiempo para reflexionar.
- C. examinar las teorías.
- D. ver los resultados de mi trabajo.

8. Yo prefiero trabajar en un ambiente donde pueda:

- A. interactuar con los demás.
- B. tomar tiempo para procesar las cosas.
- C. criticar las cosas.
- D. probar las cosas por mí mismo.

9. Me gustan especialmente los talleres que me animan a aprender acerca de los conceptos, a través de:

- A. divertirse con los demás.
- B. reflexionar en privado.
- C. analizar y criticar.
- D. experimentando activamente / aplicando

10. Cuando se habla de ideas con los demás, soy mejor:

- A. considerando una variedad de puntos de vista.
- B. tomándome tiempo para reflexionar antes de responder.
- C. usando la lógica para analizar y evaluar.
- D. hacer las cosas y lograr metas.

11. Cuando estoy aprendiendo un procedimiento completamente nuevo, es más probable que yo comience:

- A. preguntando sobre las experiencias de personas que lo han hecho antes.
- B. leyendo a través de las instrucciones y meditando cuidadosamente sobre ellas.
- C. investigando todo lo que pueda acerca de sus orígenes, pros, contras, etc
- D. intentándolo y continuando basándome en prueba y error

12. Aprendo mejor cuando:

- A. tengo la oportunidad de escuchar historias reales y personales sobre el tema.
- B. puedo tomar tiempo para pensar en el material.
- C. puedo racionalmente evaluar las teorías.
- D. estoy plenamente involucrado en la experiencia.

13. Cuando estoy aprendiendo algo nuevo, estoy por lo general:

- A. en aceptación y con la mente abierta a ello.
- B. reservado y tomando tiempo para pensar reflexivamente al respecto.
- C. crítico y deseando evaluarlo basado en un razonamiento lógico.
- D. queriendo probarlo por mí mismo.

14. Si tuviese que describirme a mí mismo, yo diría que prefiero aprender a través de:

- A. variedad de experiencias reales de otros.
- B. reflexionando tranquilamente acerca de mis observaciones.
- C. evaluando y criticando los conceptos y las teorías.
- D. experimentando y aplicando los conceptos y las teorías.

15. Si tuviese que describirme a mí mismo cuando estoy aprendiendo algo nuevo para mí, yo diría que disfruto:

- A. ser receptivo a muchas ideas nuevas.
- B. siendo cuidadoso a medida que procedo.
- C. analizando y criticando ideas nuevas.
- D. experimentando con ideas nuevas para mí.

Este LSQ III es una adaptación de Sellnow, D.D. (2001). Hablar en público: Un proceso de acercamiento. Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.

APPENDIX K

DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY IN SPANISH

Información Demográfica:

Coloque una marca de cotejo al lado del término que mejor lo describa

1. Género: Masculino_____ Femenino_____
2. Lugar de nacimiento: Estados Unidos_____ México_____ Otro_____
3. Años vividos en Estados Unidos: 1-3___ 4-6___ 7-9___ 10+___

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