

HOW DOES THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT USE SOCIAL MEDIA
TO REACT TO SOCIAL CRISIS
A CONTENT ANALYSIS

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HOW DOES THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT USE SOCIAL MEDIA TO REACT TO SOCIAL CRISIS

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Dr. Fritz Cropp, Committee Chair

Abstract

In order to examine the Chinese government's strategies and stances reflected on its social media account during a social crisis, this research uses a content analysis of 391 Weibo posts from four official government accounts. The researcher uses one-way ANOVA, Chi-square and independent-sample *t* test to compare the strategies and stance reflected in different phrases and between two types of government accounts.

The results reveal that the Chinese government tended to adopt an accommodative stance towards social crisis. Among four government accounts, the posts from government-controlled media accounts showed a less accommodative stance. Moreover, posts from government-controlled media accounts are more likely to try explaining the cause of crisis, while the posts government-agency accounts are making promises for the future like establishing policies to secure a better environment and clean the air. Finally discussion focuses on the speculations that might lead to the results.

Introduction

I came to study at the Missouri School of Journalism in 2009. I have completed my undergraduate studies in Strategic Communication in 2012, and right now in the graduate program with the same emphasize area.

During my undergrad years, I took basic journalistic classes like reporting, which I learned how to write and edit in AP style. I also took several strategic communications classes like account management, visual design and strategic communication research. I was lucky to meet a lot of helpful professors that guided me through the whole process. Finally, I discovered my passion in public relations.

I didn't have chance to take any public relations classes until I was in graduate program. At the first semester I took principles of public relations and found myself really into it. I also took crisis management class, which would guide me through the research component of my project. At second semester, I took public relations writing and public relations technique (event planning). The skills I learned from these classes enhanced my professional performance in work settings.

Since I have an international background, I really want to know how PR works in a different cultural context. PR is actually a new industry in China, but in United States and other western countries, it is pretty mature. I want to compare how the PR industry differs in United States and China and how I can bring back the newest knowledge of it.

I had an internship at MSL Group in Shanghai, China last summer. It is one of the top 10 public relations agencies in United States. I assisted with media relations,

such as keeping in touch with the major media outlets around China to dispatch press releases, especially before and after our brand's major events. I also edited various English written materials, such as fact sheets, feature stories, and blog posts. As I was doing this internship, my professional goal got clearer and clearer that I wanted to be a public relations specialist.

Besides working in PR agencies, I also had experience working for non-profit organizations. I had an internship in my junior year that was related to public affairs and government relations. I went to Brussels and worked for Ertico-ITS Europe, which was a non-profit organization and leading members of the European Commission, Ministries of Transport and the European Industry. During my internship, I needed to get in touch with global manufactures and several government agencies including agencies from other European Union countries. I really enjoyed working in the governmental settings. This experience directed to pursuit my professional project at Washington D.C, since it is much like Brussels that both cities are political capitals. Also, there are lots of non-profits organizations in Washington D.C. that handle international issues, from which I can gain great experience to better prepare for job market.

This project would help me achieve both of my academic and career goals. After my graduation, I want to work for a public relations agency or a non-profit organization that analyze public affairs issues, such as manage government's crisis responses, promote a particular policy or advise for relationship management between government and its stakeholders. This goal also goes along with my research part of

project that I want to analyze Chinese government's crisis response through social media. I have learned content analysis and the use of SPSS software to interpret data from quantitative research class. These skills would help me through my research component.

Professional Skills

I have been accepted in School of Journalism's Washington Program this summer and will finish my project there. I will work at Bridging Nations Foundation as Marketing/ Social Media intern. My internship will start at June 2, 2014 to September 4, 2014. I will work 30 hours a week from Monday to Thursday and attend seminars offered by the program on Friday.

Since my title includes both marketing and social media, my duties are also contain two parts. For the marketing part, I will help maintain marketing database and social media platforms while creating and distributing content that promotes the mission of the organization; coordination with event planning and other teams to integrate social media and marketing strategies into overall operations; research to stay current with relevant social media and marketing trends; assist program coordinator with programming strategy; occasionally create ads and promotional materials to promote events, initiatives, and programs.

For the social media part, I will help pitch and/or write featured content for blogs and social media for the organization, coming up with marketing strategies, reaching out to niche bloggers, and researching current events.

This internship fits well with my project since my research component is about social media and China's environmental crisis. One of the missions of Bridging Nations Foundation is about environment and sustainability of developing countries. I can get a better idea about environment issues while working there. Also, I can work in a social media environment throughout the internship, which would help me keep catching the trending in social media area.

My cultural (Chinese) background is really helpful in pursuing this internship. The Bridging Nations Foundation I will work for has an Indian-China-US center that I can use my bilingual skills.

Also, my education background is going to help me do my job. After five years of study in strategic communication, I am equipped with the skills to complete this internship. Because of my journalism background, I can write fast with appropriate AP style. My previous experience in public relations provides me with the knowledge of event planning, brand promotion and social media management. The visual design classes I took can help me with crafting promotional materials. Moreover, I earned a Business minor in my undergrad years that I am familiar with various marketing skills such as marketing research and strategic planning.

Throughout this internship, I will include the following materials into my final project report – blog articles, pitch letters, fact sheets, social media promotional materials, and client correspondence. My direct supervisor will be Rosemarie Johnson, the head of communication/social media department. Professor Wesley G. Pippert from Washington Program will also visit me at workplace and provide onsite

assistance in Washington D.C.

Field Notes

Week One

This is my first week in Washington D.C. I enjoyed the orientation and Friday seminar.

The topic for Friday seminar was very interesting. The gender discrimination has always been an issue in journalism and strategic communication field. Although ironically public relation is a female-dominant field in China, there is still gender discrimination. Sometime I wonder, why there are more girls in school of journalism, but fewer in management level in real work?

This issue not only happened in United Stated. In my home country, the situation is worse. I can still remember my friends told me some companies stated publicly they didn't want female on their job requirement. I don't know how many years it still going to take to get the true equality for women in working field, but it is something that worth fighting for.

For the future seminar suggestion, I do have an interest in international issues, but I wish they could be from a strategic communication perspective. One of my friends was a Washington Program alumna. She once told me this program was all about broadcasting and print sequences. Since she was in strategic communication, she sometime felt a little bored and irrelevant during the similar.

I wish for this summer, the instructors could bring in more experts from strategic communication, such as public relations experts (like people from

FleishmanHillard, Edelman and BGR PR) that handles international corporation relations or government affairs.

Week Two

Professional Component: Although it's my second week at Washington, it's the first week interning at Bridging Nations Foundation. During this week, I got a general impression about this organization and its plans for the summer.

BN Foundation is a fairly small organization. I have seven other colleagues working on different projects, such as China-India relations research and higher education. According to my supervisor Rosemarie Bundoc, there are several other colleagues working directly from home and a team in Maharashtra, India to do the maintenance of their official website.

On the first day of work, I read through the office manual, reviewed some materials from their previous events and conferences and chose a main project to work on during the summer. I decided to work on the Higher Education and Student Employability Monthly Seminars/Annual Oct Conference, since it's more relevant to my interest area (marketing and communication). I also got familiar with their social media accounts by looking through their past content. I also learned to use tools like HootSuite to manage social media posts.

For the rest of the week, I got two media contact list from my supervisor and helped to find the media outlets (related to education and technology) that we were going to invite to our next seminar, which is about community college and

employment. Although it's kind of boring to look through hundreds of media outlet, I understood it was something all public relations practitioner needed to handle. Another exciting thing was, I started to learn how to use MailChimp to do email marketing. It was something new for me. I used to learn the A/B test from the textbook, but I could conduct that test by myself.

Overall, I am satisfied with both my workload and content right now.

Seminar: I loved this week's seminar. It totally changed my mind about lobbyists. I used to think them as the people who tried to use money to manipulate the policy making process. But it turned out to be they served more like a bridge to connect policy makers and real situation.

I was so excited to meet Donna Leger. She gave us some real practical advices about writing and how to be a great journalist. Her stories were so interesting that I wish she could talk more about them.

Research Component: I coded all my data into SPSS during this week. I will work on running statistic tests and data analysis.

Week Three

Professional Component: This week I started to learn Google Mail Merge. It was a quite challenge for me, since I have never learned a lot of things about email marketing. I just started to learn MailChimp last week, and for now I needed to get familiar with Google Mail Merge. I felt overwhelmed a little bit, but I still enjoyed it.

I am also working on booking the venue and reception for our seminar next month. I needed to choose the right wines and appetizers. It was a very good practice of my event planning skills that I needed to negotiate with different vendors and compare their offers.

Another project I was working on was researching Community Colleges' ability to answer to the skills gap, compared to university/4-year institutions. This would be our topic for August seminar. I was looking specifically for data that reflect the following questions:

1. How many students graduate from community colleges and go onto universities?
2. How many students graduate from community colleges and go into the workforce? What type of job they are doing right now.

I liked this assignment, because I always love to dig into data. I also enjoyed the moment when I finally got what I want and combined the results to a report. I looked through tons of government websites and reports, such as labor statistics and census. It was challenge for me to find useful information in an area I was not familiar with. I still managed to finish this assignment and got some data list from National Center for Education Statistics.

Seminar: This week's seminar was about Watergate. The movie was very interesting. It basically was about how two journalists Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward from Washington Post working hard to dig into the Watergate burglary and tried to link it to President Nixon.

During following afternoon's discussion, we talked about how the Watergate had shaped today's journalism practice. I always feel the First Amendment of Constitution, freedom of the press, is what ensures the future of United States.

When I used to tell my parents I want to be a journalist, either of them really supported me on that, because of the government regulation in China. However, I have the faith that one day the freedom of press would be effectively executed in my country.

Research Component: These are not much progress on my research part. I am still working on my results part.

Week Four

Professional Component: There were several highlights for my professional component. First, I started to learn how to measure the effectiveness of our social media communication strategies. I haven't taken any classes at school about how to track online marketing effectiveness, so I had to start from beginning.

At the beginning of this week, Mr. Dean sent me several links about how to measure online marketing efforts. I immediately asked my supervisor Rosemarie if I could spend a day to look at it. She agreed. After reading through each article, I decided to start from Google Analytics, because it's easy to use and free.

I set up an account for Bridging Nations Foundation, and generated a tracking code for their official website. The last step for me was just to copy paste this code into each webpage I wanted track. However, I had no access to change the code of the

webpage (the BNF website is managed by a team in India). Then, I sent the code to my supervisor and she called the Indian office to ask them to do so.

If it were successful, I would try to use it in the other social media accounts of BNF. I was so excited that I had this chance to learn and practice how to track online marketing performance.

The second thing I have done was doing the research about community college and employment. It was the topic we would use in our August seminar. I worked with two colleagues in our team to dig into this topic and try to find some interesting points. I researched about if students from community college degrees (associate degree) might get better paid for some positions than students with bachelor's degree. It was an interesting process to do such research, since it was an area that I never had chance to know about.

The third thing I did for this week was to contact Chinese Embassy in Washington D.C. and offered them help during the Folklife Festival (China and Kenya). I met some people from Chinese Embassy at the lunch gathering at FleishmenHillard last week. They were looking for some journalists to help promote this event on social media. This week, I had several email communication with their secretary of cultural and got a lot of background information about the festival. I might also conduct several interviews with the artists from China to write blogs for them.

Starting from next week, each of our team members would do a presentation in front of everyone about the work progress. I like this idea. I didn't used to be a big fan of presentation, but I really want to practice my presentation skills.

Seminar: This week's seminar was exciting. A lot of thoughts stroke me when I was in Newsume. Journalism has long being a crucial profession in the history. They are the ones that record the history. Although I am not in a pure journalism side, I can still feel my passion of being a witness of this changing world. If there were no journalists in the world, there history would be incomplete.

Research Component: There is no significant progress for my research during this week. I was working on the discussion part right now.

Week Five

Professional Project: I did several things this week. The most important one was managing the Twitter account. Although Bridging Nations Foundation has been on Twitter for almost two years, they still don't have many Twitter followers. On Monday, I had a meeting with my supervisor and other colleague to talk about this issue. At that time, we only had 350 followers.

My main goal for this week was to boost the Twitter followers for Bridging Nations to more than 400. First, our team had a brainstorming about different ways to attract attention on Twitter. We found out that, we could track hop topics that related to our cause (like higher education, US-India relations), created our own hashtags or

used existed hashtags, replied the relevant tweets from popular account and retweeted relevant issues.

By the end of this week, our Twitter followers had grown to 414, which met our goal on Monday. For a long-term goal, I planned to reach 1000 followers by the end of my professional project.

The other major thing I have done was also on Twitter. We tried to promote the new Prime Minister of India Modi and urge Congress to invite him to address the joint meeting of Congress. I sent out several mass emails about it to our contacts, which included academic professors, politicians and other international organizations that devoted to India-US relations. Right now, I have been getting positive feedbacks from our contacts.

I also tweeted about it every day on our account and tried to retweet news about it from other popular account. I even got in touch with Indian Embassy in Washington to ask them to support our effort. We also got mentioned in an article on First Post, an online news media (<http://www.firstpost.com/world/indian-americans-lobby-to-get-us-congress-to-invite-pm-modi-1588265.html>).

Seminar: This week's seminar had two parts. I love morning's Capital tour. It was very interesting to see what's inside that building that always showed up in the news and movies. The afternoon's seminar was the most interactive one I had ever had. I loved how it went and enjoyed answering all kinds of questions that made me think deeper about my professional project and my audience. Although it was also fun

to listen to the professional journalists talked about their work and life, I preferred this kind of seminar that could really make me think about myself.

Research Component: I am still working on the discussion part. I am expecting to have the first draft for you to review by the end of this weekend or next week, since this weekend is the 4th of July.

Week Six:

Professional Component: My main concentration for week five was about Twitter. By the end of the week, though our twitter followers had grown to 417, the growth rate was slower than week before.

I scheduled six to eight tweets per day during the weekdays and two to three during weekend. The topics were mainly about higher education, India-US relations and Indian's new Prime Minister Modi. Below are the examples I did for Bridging Nations, as requested by Mr. Pippert.

In order to get the first-hand information for my twitter content, I started to learn how to use Google Alerts. It was a very useful tool that would send news I want to my email, so I could pick ones I found useful to tweet, instead of browsing online. It sounds like an easy thing to do, but the effectiveness of the news pushed is depended on how I set up the alerts, which means if I had the wrong key words, I would never had useful content for the Twitter. I tried different combinations of key words like "US-India", "Modi" and "India-Education", and ran some tests on Monday. Right now it works well for me.

The other new tool I have learned was Tweriod. It's a free online tool to help analyze our followers about when they would be on Twitter. I found this tool useful because it could tell me when is the best time to schedule my tweets that could get the maximize exposure. Through its report, I found most of our followers would be on twitter at 10 o'clock in the morning and 2-4 o'clock in the afternoon. To my surprise, they were not very active at night (7-10 pm).

Seminar: There is no seminar this week, due to the 4th of July.

Research Component: This is no research progress this week. I will send you the results and discussion parts by the end of this week.

Week Seven

Professional Component: Last week my concentration was still on social media. I used to only schedule posts on Twitter, but right now I was also managing the Facebook and LinkedIn accounts.

There was one big problem on our Facebook that Bridging Nations Foundation had multiple Facebook accounts. One account was registered as people with more than friends. The other account was an organizational page that only had less than 200 likes. However, at last my manager decided to only use the organizational page, instead of the personal one. Now I had to post on our personal account every day to ask our friends follow the new page.

Last week I had scheduled 47 tweets and 12 replies. One thing I noticed was that our followers actually decreased. At the beginning of the week we had 412

followers. Until Wednesday we had 417 followers. However at the end of the week, we only had 415 followers. I tried to figure the reasons for that. It might because of the number of the tweets or contents. I want to increase the number of tweets for next week to see how it goes.

The other thing I have done was writing a report about our official website to critique its design and content. The last thing I did was to write four short bios for our speakers on August 14th event. That event was about US-India Skill Development & Job Creation Partnership.

Seminar: This week's seminar, we went to the office of Wall Street Journal. One funny thing is that I always thought their office would be in New York City, since it's related to Wall Street. It's a very interesting trip that I learned a lot of things about investigating reporting.

Also, I learned the importance of knowing how to read all kinds of documents for journalists. I feel if a journalist could find some leads on just documents, it would be much easier for him/her to develop a full story ahead of others.

The afternoon's seminar was very informational. It felt like refreshment for my Jour 4000 Communication Law class. However, this sessions gave me a lot of real examples, which were much interesting than the dry textbook from class. A lot of information was very practical that pointed out some legal issues that might happen during our work or even professional project.

After reading through the syllabus for future seminars, I am a little disappointed. Although I know the major seminars are for the students from non-

strategic communication sequence, I still hope we could have a chance to visit some PR firms in DC.

Research Component: I have already finished my first draft. I will send it to my committee to review as soon as possible. I am looking forward to the comments and suggestions.

Week Eight

Professional Component: Last week was a little slow for me. Most of things I did were to regularly post on social media (Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook). One highlight was that I made a Twitter account for our CEO, who recently developed some interests in social media and tried to connect others on it.

It was easy to sign up a Twitter account and build his profile. The hardest part was to get him enough followers to make proper exposure on Twitter. I first talked to him about what kind of people he wanted to follow. Then I started to follow policy makers (Senators and House of Representatives), education related accounts, and India related accounts.

Also we sent a mass mail to promote his account and asked all the email receivers to follow his account. However, how effective it would be was still unknown. By the end of the week, he only had 17 followers.

It was a great experience for me since I needed to learn how to start to promote someone on social media – the same as how to promote a brand or product

on social media. Although I have done some work before to promote an event on social media, I never did it for a person. It was also a great challenge.

Seminar: This week's seminar was very interesting that we went to the office of Washington Post in the morning. I was kind of surprised they still had a big office when newspaper industry went downside in recent years.

The topic we talked about during the seminar reminded me about the PR writing class I took last semester. I spent a whole semester in that class to write a profile story for a J-School alumnus. I knew how hard it was to write a person's life story, so it was a very interesting experience to hear about Marisa Bellack's editing process of that kind of stories.

I have to say that the afternoon's seminar was not that exciting as usual. Although his work was similar to investigative reporting, Bob didn't get lot useful or informational answers for us. Maybe that's because of the nature of his work (confidential?), so he didn't go a lot detail.

Research Component: There is no progress in my research part for this week. I sent my first draft to my committee on Monday. I am still waiting for their reply.

Week Nine

Professional Component: This week I did normal things like scheduling tweets and Facebook posts. However, my concentration started to shift to promote our August 14th event about higher education and skill development.

Other than just scheduling tweets, I used other websites to promote. I posted our event on event promotion websites like American Town and Eventful, that people could see it if they were interested in educational or political topic. I also search for bloggers that related to community colleges or India's education and contacted them to see if they would like to promote our event on their blog posts. It surprised me that how many free event promotion tools were out there online. I could very easily access them and try to make them work for us.

Also, as I mentioned last week, I started a twitter account for our CEO. In order to get him more followers, I imported his Gmail contacts (around 9000) into his twitter to search for friends and business partners. After that I sent them the invitations about our CEO's new account to ask them following him. By the end of the week, our CEO had 50 followers. I might send another mass mail later next week.

It's very interesting to try to promote a personal account. I needed to consider a lot of things like how private should this account be, to how much extent that I should include our organization into his account, or what's the main function of his account. They were very tough decisions to make. I could only go and see how different things would work out.

Finally, I started to get in touch some administrative work for our CEO about his November trip to China. I will assist him about it in the future.

Seminar: This week's seminar was short (only one session) but very fun. I was really happy to see a speaker from strategic communication side. The speaker's

experience was very valuable. She was actually in broadcast sequence, but ended up in strategic communication.

The most curious question I had was about how to deal with journalists, and maintain good relationship with them; also on the other side, how to deal with difficult journalists that hard to work with. I got a great answer for these questions from her. To my surprise, the definition of good journalists was not based on personality, but the accuracy of their stories.

Even some journalists never write things we as PR people want to see on the newspaper, they are good journalists that we should get along with if they did their research and had both sides in their stories. Overall, I was very satisfied about this seminar.

Research Component: There is no progress of my research part. I am still waiting for the comments and suggestions from my committee.

Week Ten

Professional Component: The major work I have done for this week was similar to last week. I scheduled tweets, Facebook and LinkedIn posts every day. The major effort was still on promoting our August 14th event about higher education and skill development.

In order to better promote it on social media; we had a meeting on Monday about hashtags. Hashtag has been an important topic right now on twitter, since it is an aggregator that could help people to find a specific topic.

Our original hashtag was #USIndiaCC, which was created by us. However, I found it might be better to use existed hashtags like #US, #India, or #commcollege, because people who were interested in these topics would more likely search for these key words, instead of our new hashtags. Our final decision was to use existed hashtags in each individual tweet to see how it worked.

The other major project I did for the week was to write a more personalized mass mail. My supervisor gave me a list of India-US companies, universities and colleges around D.C. and other education related organizations. I needed to search online to find their contact information. For some organizations, it was very hard to get a specific email address, since they only posted a general email address like infor@XXX. I did the best I could to get some specific person that handled media relations or events and sent them an email about our event.

For the universities, I decided to go with their career center to see if they would like to post our event on their career event website. I was still waiting for the responses from them.

Finally, for the companies that did business in both United States and India, I tried to find the email address of their CEOs, so that we could have a direct contact. However, it didn't work out really well, so I tried another way ---- to find the CEOs on LinkedIn. This was actually a successful action since many of the CEOs were in the same group as Bridging Nations, which means we could send them within group mails through LinkedIn. This experience taught me that there always would be other ways to reach out people.

Seminar: There was not much to say about the seminar for this week because it was the quiz. However, I did have a comment about the quiz. The content was fine and straight to the point. But if it was quiz, it's supposed to have a time limit (like final exams that have two hours). If we had to wait everybody to finish it, which took about two hours, we didn't even need to be in the classroom to finish it.

Research Component: There is no progress of my research component. I am still waiting for the feedback from my committee members. I started to do some grammar and word editing.

Week Eleven

Professional Project: The major project I did was a media kit for our August 14th event. I was glad that I learned how to make a media kit during my sports and entertainment management class.

However, this media kit was a little different than what I had for that class, because it was for a seminar instead of a concert. It took me sometime to figure out what should be included in it. I originally wanted to have press releases, organization and CEO's bios, speakers' bios and event program.

Then I did some research online to see what other media kits had. I found most of them had event pictures. We didn't have any pictures since this media kit was supposed to be out before the seminar. I didn't feel it was right to put pictures of our previous events in it. I guessed I can add some pictures if we wanted to send it again after the event.

This was a great practice for me to make a media kit, since I didn't get any chance to make one after I finished that class. I learned that I should not follow exactly the same thing I did in the past, because all events were slightly different based on purpose and audience. So, depending on the content and purpose of the event, the content of the media kit should be also different.

The other things I did was kind of same as previous weeks – scheduling the social media posts. However, after the news of the Prime Minister Modi would not address the joint meeting of Congress during his visit to United States, our concentration had totally shifted to the higher education seminar next week.

Seminar: This week's seminar was very fun. First we talked a little about the quiz we had last week. Actually I didn't do it very well, because I didn't take too many notes from some speakers, if I was not that interested in the topic (which was proved to be wrong). Also I found I lost part of my notes when I tried to review them. It was really regretful since some of them had very great insights about my future career, especially the ones related to strategic communication.

Then we were having lunch with a white house correspondent. I was very interested in the topic about how he could balance hard news and the private life of the celebrities like president and first lady. He gave us some really good insights about it. Although I will not be a reporter in my future, his passion about the career he had really impressed me a lot. It was very lucky that one can do something he or she really likes as a career.

Research Component: There is no significant progress in my research part since I still didn't get any feedback from my draft. However, I started to do some edits on the grammar and wording.

Week Twelve:

Professional Project: This week my main goal on social media was to send out the recap for our last week's community college event. Even though our event had already finished successfully, it's still important to do some post-event promotion that might be helpful for our future events.

However, in order to do that, I needed to first compile notes we had during the event. I went through all the presentations of our speakers and listed the important point they made. After that, I collected some notes from my colleagues. I also tried to match the notes with the presentation slides so that I could post the slides on social media when I talked about some points.

The other post-event promotion I did was to edit our press kit. I picked out some pictures and added them into our press kit. However, when I asked my supervisor if we need a post-event press release, she said no, because it might make our press kit too long for reading. Then I sent the press kit to major news outlets in Washington DC, and other organizations that interested on community college and skill development.

During our event, there were some people from organizations like US-India Business Council, Virginia Community College System. I also sent them our media

kit and some photos I took from the event, so that they had materials to use if they wanted to write some articles about our event or even this topic.

The last thing I did was very interesting --- we created a petition. Since there were news coming out saying that the Indian Prime Minister Modi would not address the joint meeting of congress during his visit to United States this September, we decided to Pledge to give India's Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, the opportunity to address a joint session of Congress before the end of 2014.

I created an account at Change.org and wrote the content of the petition. Here is the link of our petition page --- <https://www.change.org/p/u-s-senate-pledge-to-give-india-s-prime-minister-narendra-modi-the-opportunity-to-address-a-joint-session-of-congress-as-soon-as-possible>

Some of my future social media effort might be shifter on this topic.

Seminar: There was no seminar this week.

Research Component: Since I still haven't gotten any feedback from my research component, I continued to edit some grammar and wording issues. I really want to get some suggestions as soon as possible, so that I could schedule my defense on late September.

Week Thirteen:

Professional Project: For this week, I still worked on Bridging Nations social media. I scheduled tweets and Facebook post as I normally did for the rest of the week.

Since next week would be my final week at Bridging Nations, I started to wrap up some project I have done. The first thing I did was to compile a Facebook analytics report for my manager. I started my internship on early June, so I got all data (such as likes, comments, visitors, most liked posts, etc...) from Facebook and made it a excel document. This was the first time that Bridging Nations had a system to track all its Facebook activities. I was glad to be the one to start it.

I found social media right now is still confusing for some organizations, especially NGOs. They major problem is that they don't know how to track and analyze the effectiveness of it. It was great I could have this experience to compile a report, because I went through the process of picking up variables that were most important for analytics.

After that I was asked to do the same thing to twitter analytics. However, unlike Facebook, most twitter analytics tool are not free. So I made a small document and listed five most popular online twitter analytics tools and explained their main functions and prices. This was a very fun experience for me. I never knew that there were so many useful tools an organization could choose to analyze one specific area of twitter (for example: followers' habits, tweets exposure...).

The other thing I did on social media was to suggest regular tweets for our CEO. As I mentioned in my earlier report, I made him a personal twitter account. However, our CEO sometimes was too busy to tweet by himself. He asked me to write him several tweets a week for him to review. If he confirmed they were good, I would post them on his personal account.

It was very different between tweet as an organization and tweet as a person. For our organization's account, I basically tweet more links than personal opinions. However, for personal account, our CEO wanted to express himself and made every tweet thoughtful and inspiring. I will get more into it for next week.

The other major project I did was to ask our India IT team to edit the website of Bridging Nations. They were all very small edits such as taking down the banner of our August 14th event, changing the “register online” option, putting on our media kit. Although these were very little problems, we needed to fix them as soon as possible, so that it wouldn't mislead our audiences.

Finally our new intern Xushuang from School of Journalism was coming. Since she would also do some social media project, I started to hand over some of my duties to her.

Seminar: This was no seminar for this week.

Research Component: I still didn't get any feedback for my research component. I started to compile other elements for my final report like field notes and physical evidence. However, I really hope I can get some suggestions as soon as possible so I can go back to China for October's hiring season.

Week Fourteen:

Professional Project: This was my last week at Bridging Nations and I only worked for two days (Monday was the Labor Day and I took Thursday off to pack my stuff).

Most of things I have done for this week were to make a smooth transition to next intern: I wrote a transition document with the current projects I was working on and what still needed to be done in the future.

I also created a file of all research/data/write-ups and put them into a USB to transfer everything over (including google docs). After that, I completed the Exit Interview document, which looked like a class evaluation that I needed to list things I have learned, problems and recommendations for future intern.

Finally, in order to give the next intern a better idea about what type of contents to post on social media, I wrote some general topics/ideas that I have been using to tweet and some of the google alerts/filters I have used.

Wrapping up my work for the whole summer was not a very easy thing, because I have to consider the transition between me and next intern. I needed to make sure I gave her everything I had and enough guidance.

Especially for social media, the content posted could be changed a lot depending on different intern's using styles. However, for an organization like Bridging Nations, it has to maintain a very consistent image for its audience to avoid confusing. I really wish my transition document could help the future intern.

I also scheduled the social media posts for the rest of the week as I normally did. In addition to that, I did some research about our potential speakers of Bridging Nations' September seminar and compiled a short bio for them.

Seminar: There was no seminar for this week.

Research Component: I continued to edit some grammar and wording issues.

Since I will be back to Columbia next week, I could talk to my committee face to face to get some ideas.

Evaluation

My professional project at Bridging Nations Foundation was overall a great experience. I was their social media and marketing intern because of my strategic communication background. The goal for my intern position was to promote and maximize Bridging Nation's online presence, and attract and interact with more people who might be interested in our causes. I also wanted to see if the working environment at non-government organizations would attract me, since most of my previous experience was in public relations agencies (commercial side) I have never done internship in NGOs (government side).

The major work I did was to manage their different social media platforms, even planning, online marketing and other administrative works. I always finished assigned work on time and professionally, so I feel I had a satisfied performance. I also asked my supervisor frequently to see if there were other things I could help with like the researches on various topics.

I have never done social media public relations before. All my previous internships were about traditional public relation, which contained more event planning and execution. This internship provided me with great experience in the social media area and other various online marketing areas.

Although I had a pretty slow start (I took about a week and half to get a media list for major news outlet in D.C.), I soon took over the entire social media role in the organization. By learning how to use tools like Hootsuite and MailChimp, I quickly got my hands on the daily social media posting.

Also during this internship, I created a Twitter account for our CEO Dr.P, and started to do his personal branding. Sometimes it was quite easy to take over an existed social media account and continued what has already been done. However, starting from the beginning was really hard. I have never done any works about personal branding, though I assumed it was similar to product branding.

First it was not very easy to get initial followers. I tried several ways like sending mass mails, personal invitations and used other accounts we have already had to promote our CEO's account. Right now he had around 200 followers and he started to tweet frequently on the account. This was also a crucial point that the owner of the account was active and willing to interact with his or her audiences. This was a brand new experience that taught me how to start a new account and how to change the ways of promoting it at different stages.

The other major marketing project I have done was to promote our August event, which was about US-India skill development and job creation, and how community colleges played a role in the process. It was a very interesting experience for me since I used to familiar with using a lot of traditional media tools to promote events instead of social media. However, the basic ideas are the same that I had to actively reach out to different social media accounts, blogs, and even people's personal accounts, which might be relevant to our event. I also used lots of online event promotion tools and website to post our event.

I think I had a really experience working in this non-profit organizations. The social media skills I learned from here are very useful for my future work in similar

work settings. More than that I also learned how to maintain great relationships with colleagues, and had effective internal communications. Those soft skills are also valuable for my to pursue my future career.

Physical Evidence

Organization Report

WIF

The WIF is an investment of \$146.9 million in competitive four-year grants to 26 grantees across the nation by the U.S. Department of Labor. The WIF supports innovative approaches to the design and delivery of employment and training services that generate long-term improvements in the performance of the public workforce system.

WIF is one of several new Federal grant programs in which grantor agencies support projects that seek to design evidence-based program strategies. The WIF supports innovation at the systems and service delivery levels.

Contacts: workforce.innovation@dol.gov

Workforce Initiative Association (Ohio)

Three Rivers Workforce Investment Board (Pennsylvania)

Meetings:

Stakeholder Engagement Series

Advancing System Alignment and Career Pathways Innovations (June 4)

August 20, 2014: Harnessing the Power of Data-Driven Innovations: Discuss the potential for aligning data systems and using sound labor market information to drive decision-making in ways that can provide the highest return on investment.

Speakers:

Thomas E. Perez, U.S. Department of Labor Secretary

Kate McAdams, Senior Advisor to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Commerce.

David Tremblay Rhode Island Department of Labor & Training

Lisa Salazar City & County of Los Angeles Workforce Investment Board

CETL (Center for excellent teaching and learning)

The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) is dedicated to assisting faculty and staff in improving the quality of teaching and learning services.

CETL Faculty Advocates inspire, guide and mentor faculty in areas of pedagogy and classroom management.

CETL is based on Annandale campus, below is the link for there website.

<http://www.nvcc.edu/faculty-and-staff/teaching-support/cetl/index.html>

Their goals for 2015 are:

To promote the culture of excellence for NOVA

To increase enrollment, retention and student success

To share access to excellent instructional practices and technology

To build on faculty strengths to enrich professional development

To support a committed faculty and staff through collegial mentoring and student-centered learning

To support teaching and learning assessment.

Interim coordinator : Cindy Miller

Email : lmiller@nvcc.edu

Introduction of the CETL team

<http://www.nvcc.edu/faculty-and-staff/teaching-support/cetl/contactus.html>

Achieving the Dream

This non-governmental organization called Achieving the Dream, their goal is to help more community college students to succeed. They are based in Silver Spring, and I think we can ask them to be partner with us to hold this event because they seems have more resource on this topic. Below are the links to their website and their staff contacts.

<http://achievingthedream.org/>

<http://achievingthedream.org/contact-us/staff-contacts>

Community College Research Center

Teacher College, Columbia University

Home Page: <http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/>

Staff Information: <http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/Staff.html>

General Inquiries:

Phone: (212) 678-3091

Fax: (212) 678-3699

ccrc@columbia.edu

Media Inquiries:

Georgia West Stacey

Communications Strategist

Email: georgia.stacey@tc.columbia.edu

Tel: (212) 678-3394

American Association of Community Colleges

Home page: <http://www.aacc.nche.edu/>

AACC staff page: <http://www.aacc.nche.edu/About/Pages/staff.aspx>

Dr. Walter G. Bumphus

President and CEO

Phone: 202-728-0200 x235

Email: wbumphus@aacc.nche.edu

Workforce Innovation Fund

The Workforce Innovation Fund is one of the several new Federal grant programs in which grantor agencies fund projects that seek to use evidence to design program strategies. These funds support innovative approaches to the design and delivery of employment and training services that generate long-term improvements in the performance of the public workforce system, both in terms of outcomes for job seeker and employer customers and cost-effectiveness.

Headquarters Office:

Gina King Wells

200 Constitution Ave, NW, S4209, Washington, District of Columbia 20210.

Email: wells.gina@dol.gov

Phone: 202-693-3763

For general questions, email: workforce.innovation@dol.gov

Careerfolio Website Evaluation:

I like the overall design of the website. It is simple and clean, which makes it user-friendly. I also like the idea that I can use my LinkedIn account to sign in for the website.

However, I tried several times to do that today, but failed. The same situation came as I tried to login with my Facebook ---- always error messages. Maybe it because this website is still at the early stage. I assume if I can log in with my LinkedIn account, I don't need to upload my resume or fill out my experience, since it will automatically get my information.

Finally I registered with my email. When I filled out the information, I found one thing extremely confusing. The name of school and stream did not go by alphabet order. I tried really hard to find my major. Also I am a little confused by the "Years of Passing". I am not sure if it means the "Graduation Date" or the time I have been in my academic program.

Overall the registration process was quite fast and easy. I might use it in the future depending on how many companies and organizations would post their job on it.

Emails for the organizations:

-USIBC: info@usibc.com

-Atlantic Council: info@AtlanticCouncil.org

-CEIP, South Asia department: online form

-Brookings: online form

-CFR: communications@cfr.org

-Heritage: HeritagePress@heritage.org

-FICCI: ficci@ficci.com

-CII: online form

-Indian-American companies

-Sanjay Kamlani, Pangea3- NY, NY: P3info@thomsonreuters.com

-Anshu Bhatnagar, 2Pi Solutions- Washington, DC: They don't even have a website

-Bhavna Vasisht and Anuj Khurana, ARK Solutions- Chantilly, VA: error when request email

-Promod Sharma, Criterion Systems- Vienna, VA: info@criterion-sys.com

-Ways to advertise on college campuses- forums to post events, etc

Georgetown: tweet them

AU: careercenter@american.edu

GWU: gwcareercenter@gwu.edu

JHU: career@jhu.edu

Howard: cedarrecruiting@howard.edu

Catholic:careers@cua.edu

UMD: ucc-employerhelp@umd.edu

Mason: careers@gmu.edu

UDC: careerservices@udc.edu

-State Department general emails:

-Department of Education general emails:

-Online event forums

-Indian Diaspora

Community College Research Report

Education

How many students graduate from CC and go onto universities?

In an analysis using Beginning Postsecondary Students (BPS) data, Hoachlander, Sikora, and Horn (2003) found that about 29 percent of all first-time community college students transferred to a four-year institution within six years.

Community College transfer rate is somewhere in the mid-20% range (summarized from data 1990-2001).

The analysis showed that of those students who transferred, about 62 percent earned a bachelor's degree or higher within six years after transfer and another eight percent, still enrolled, were making steady progress toward baccalaureate attainment.

Students who transferred to a four-year public institution had the highest baccalaureate completion rate (65 percent) six years after transfer,

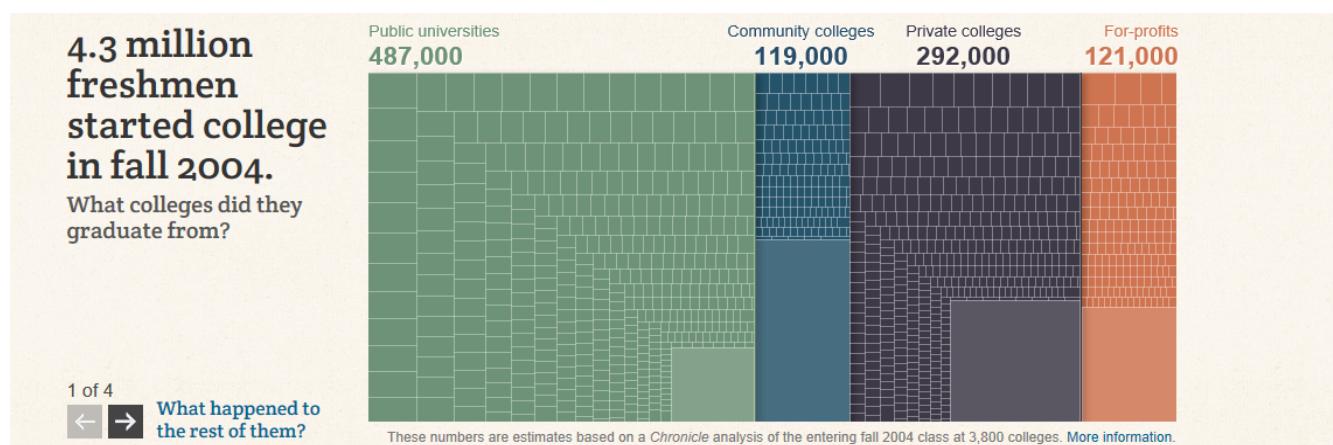


Figure 1 Data for all students enrolled in higher education institutions in United States - 2013

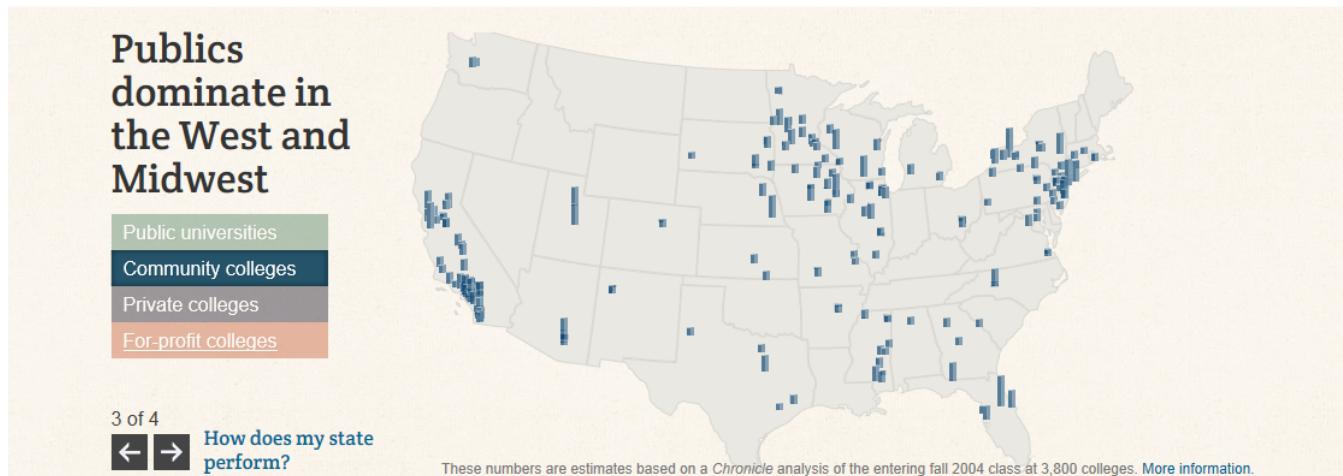


Figure 2 Data for public community colleges in United States - 2013

How many students started from community colleges?

28% of bachelor's degree earners started at a community college and 47% took at least one course at a community college. - National Student Clearinghouse Research Center Signature report.

How to define transfer students from community college?

Transfer rate can be defined as: All students entering the two-year college in a given year who have no prior college experience and who complete at least twelve college credit units [we will refer to this group as the Cohen cohort], divided into the number of that group who take one or more classes at a university within four years.

Most community college students who transfer do so without having first completed an associate's degree, the report said, and they are slightly less likely to get a bachelor's degree than students who graduate from the community college first—56 percent versus 72 percent, respectively.

http://hechingerreport.org/content/new-figures-suggest-community-college-grad-rates-higher-than-thought_12824/

Community College Workforce Development Program:

Example from University of District of Columbia

WDP: Purpose:

1) Building community

2) Promoting feedback loops and

3) Helping student's transition

- Assistance with college applications and the enrollment process.
- Help filling out the Financial Aid Applications (FAFSA).
- Identifying additional financial resources for college expenses.
- Conducting degree audits and reviews of prior college transcripts).

Class Offered:



For more information, contact:
274-7181 801 North Capitol
274-7209 Berrie Backus
274-5617 Marion Shadd
274-6999 PR Harris
574-6854 United Medical Center

**Workforce Development and Lifelong Learning
Summer 2014 Class Schedule**

Or email us: workforce@udc.edu

Class	Building	Days	Start Date	End Date	Start Time	End Time
HVAC 608 Refrigerant Recovery	801NC	FSa	4/25/2014	4/26/2014	9:00 AM	5:00 PM
HVAC 608 Refrigerant Recovery	801NC	FSa	5/9/2014	5/10/2014	9:00 AM	5:00 PM
Customer Service - Hospitality	Backus	MTWTh	5/27/2014	6/11/2014	9:00 AM	3:00 PM
Customer Service - Retail	Backus	MTWTh	5/27/2014	7/2/2014	9:00 AM	3:00 PM
Electronic Health Records	Backus	MTWTh	5/27/2014	8/20/2014	6:00 PM	9:00 PM
HVAC Installation	Backus	MTWTh	5/27/14	8/20/14	5:30 PM	8:30 PM
IT for Seniors	Backus	MW	5/28/14	8/13/14	1:00 PM	2:30 PM
Language Arts/Reading Skills Development	Backus	MTWTh	5/27/14	8/14/14	5:00 PM	8:00 PM
Mathematics Skills Development	Backus	MTWTh	5/27/14	8/14/14	5:00 PM	8:00 PM
Medical Billing and Coding	Backus	MTWTh	5/27/14	8/20/14	5:00 PM	8:00 PM
Medical Office Administrative Assistant	Backus	MTWTh	5/27/14	7/9/14	9:00 AM	3:00 PM
Medical Terminology & Anatomy	Backus	MW	5/28/14	8/13/14	10:00 AM	12:00 PM
GED Preparation	Ballou STAY	MTWTh	6/30/14	8/6/14	5:00 PM	8:00 PM
Medical Billing and Coding	Ballou STAY	MTWTh	7/9/14	8/21/14	9:00 AM	3:00 PM
Pharmacy Technician	Ballou STAY	MTWTh	5/27/2014	8/20/2014	12:00 PM	3:00 PM
Customer Service - Hospitality	HarrisPR	MTWTh	5/27/2014	6/24/2014	5:00 PM	8:00 PM
Digital Literacy & Introduction to Computers	HarrisPR	MTWTh	5/27/14	8/6/14	5:00 PM	8:00 PM
Mathematics Skills Development	HarrisPR	TTh	5/27/14	8/13/14	1:00 PM	3:00 PM
Medical Assistant	HarrisPR	MTWTh	5/27/14	9/9/14	6:00 PM	8:00 PM
Medical Billing and Coding	HarrisPR	MTWTh	5/27/14	8/20/14	12:00 PM	3:00 PM
Medical Billing and Coding	HarrisPR	MTWTh	5/27/14	8/20/14	5:00 PM	8:00 PM
Medical Office Administrative Assistant	HarrisPR	MTWTh	5/27/14	8/6/14	5:00 PM	8:00 PM
Medical Terminology & Anatomy	HarrisPR	MW	5/28/14	8/18/14	4:30 PM	6:10 PM
Medical Terminology & Anatomy	HarrisPR	MW	5/28/14	8/18/14	6:20 PM	8:00 PM

Registration Period: April 9 - May 16, 2014. Call or email for details.

05/05/2014: Page 1 of 2

Figure 3 Class offered by University of the District of Columbia

Employment

How many students graduate from CC and go into the workforce?

In the year of 2011-2012, 1,017,538 associate degrees were offered. Among all the degrees offered, business administration, management, and operations, Computer and information sciences and support services, medical assisting, Nursing, registered nurse and other, criminal justice and corrections and personal and culinary services were the most popular ones. Error! Not a valid link.Error! Not a valid link.

Type of job, filed, etc

The total employment included high school degree, some college, associate degree,

bachelor's degree and master's degree.

11% of job went to associate's degree students (CC students). Among all the professions, CC students got more professional and related, preschool and kindergarten teachers, sales and office, and natural resources, construction, and maintenance.

When compare to a bachelor's degree:

In 2012, the unemployment rate nationwide for those with an associate's degree was **6.2 percent**, compared with **8.3 percent** for those with a high school diploma and **4.5 percent** for those with a bachelor's degree.

Opening positions for Associate degree:

Table 1
Projected Annual Openings and Median Wages in Oregon for Occupations With an Associate's Degree as the Minimum Education Level

	2010-2020 Projected Annual Openings			2013 Median Hourly Wage
	Growth	Replacement	Total	
Registered Nurses	810	640	1,450	\$38.84
Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education	125	156	281	\$11.29
Biological Technicians	42	104	145	\$17.63
Dental Hygienists	64	70	134	\$39.55
Graphic Designers	47	83	130	\$21.68
Radiologic, CAT, and MRI Technologists and Technicians	68	42	110	\$31.85
Electrical and Electronic Engineering Technicians	43	60	104	\$27.84
Life, Physical, and Social Science Technicians, All Other	21	54	75	\$23.50
Paralegals and Legal Assistants	32	32	64	\$24.42
Veterinary Technologists and Technicians	30	27	57	\$16.20
Respiratory Therapists	27	24	50	\$29.62

Table 1 Projected annual opening and median wages in Oregon for occupations with an associate's degree as the minimal education level

Table 2

Projected Annual Openings and Median Wages in Oregon for Occupations With an Associate's Degree as the Competitive Education Level

	2010-2020 Projected Annual Openings			2013 Median Hourly Wage
	Growth	Replacement	Total	
Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	484	308	792	\$17.33
Wholesale and Manufacturing Sales Representatives, Except Technical and Scientific Products	305	403	707	\$25.60
Supervisors and Managers of Office and Administrative Support Workers	273	434	706	\$23.09
Secretaries, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	352	300	653	\$16.32
Teacher Assistants	204	432	636	\$29,449
Executive Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	214	166	380	\$22.82
Social and Human Service Assistants	117	153	271	\$13.98
Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics	80	120	200	\$20.32
Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers	30	149	179	\$31.54
Supervisors and Managers of Non-Retail Sales Workers	60	105	165	\$28.38

Table 2 Projected annual openings and median wages in Oregon for occupations with an associate's degree as the competitive education level

According to new [data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics](#), the following are the 23 highest-paying jobs that require only an associate's degree. Each has a median annual [salary](#) of at least \$51,000.

1. Air Traffic Controller
2. Radiation Therapists

3. Dental Hygienists
4. Nuclear Medicine Technologists
5. First-line Supervisors of Non-retail Sales Workers
6. Nuclear Technicians
7. Funeral Service Directors
8. Diagnostic Medical Sonographers
9. Registered Nurse
10. Magnetic Resonance Imaging Technologists
11. Web Developer
12. Aerospace Engineering and Operations Technicians
13. Engineering Technicians
14. Computer Network Support Specialists
15. Electrical and Electronics Engineering Technicians
16. Electrical and Electronics Drafters
17. Avionics Technicians
18. Radiological Technologists
19. Occupational Therapy Assistants
20. Geological and Petroleum Technicians
21. Physical Therapist Assistants
22. Cardiovascular Technologists and Technicians
23. Mechanical Engineering Technicians

Read more: <http://www.businessinsider.com/high-paying-jobs-with-associates-degree-2013-12?op=1#ixzz355saJAS5>

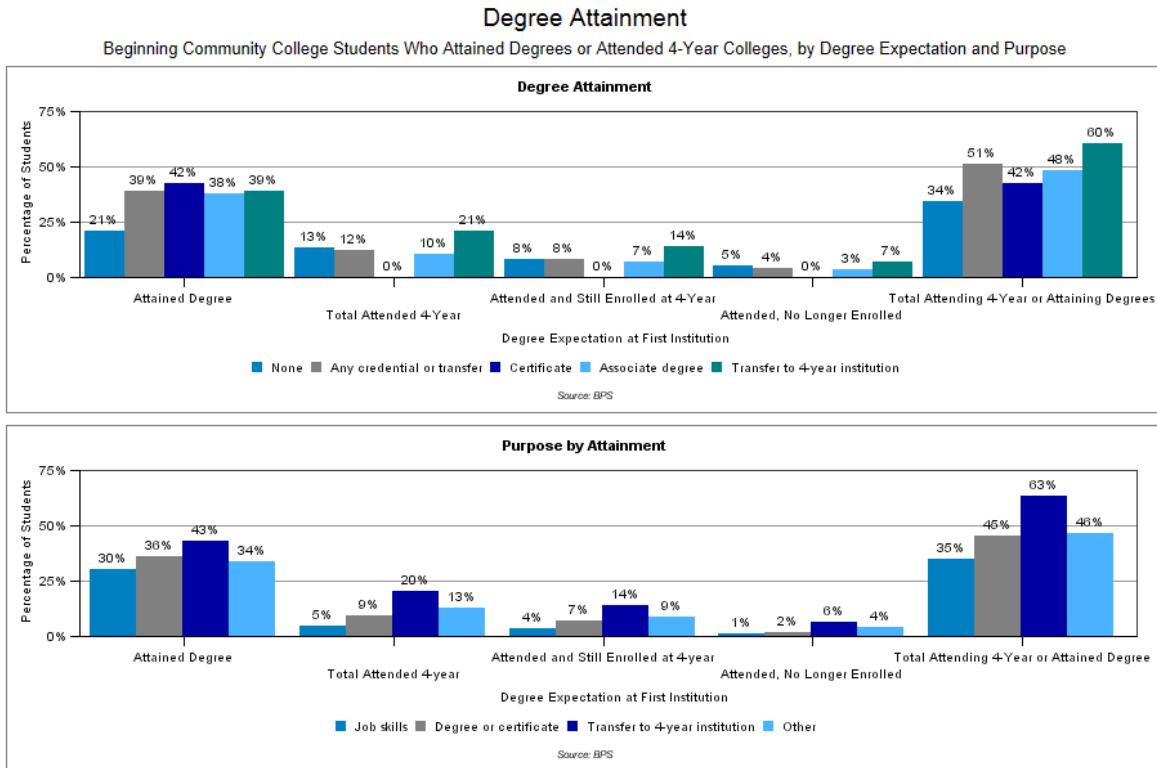


Figure 4 Beginning community college students who attained degrees or attended 4-year colleges

Summary

Though the majority of projected job openings do not require post-secondary education, an associate's degree can give an individual a competitive advantage in the job market. Community colleges and other institutions in Oregon offer a range of associate's degrees that can match a student's personal interests and skills.

In fact, some 18 percent of the companies surveyed by [CareerBuilder](#) said they'd recently hiked their education requirements. Now more than half of employers require some college, such as a two-year associate's degree, and 44 percent demand a 4-year degree.

<http://www.cbsnews.com/news/got-college-hiring-standards-are-rising>

News Presents

The screenshot shows a news article titled "Indian-Americans lobby to get US Congress to invite PM Modi" from Firstpost.com. The article was published on June 25, 2014, at 14:07 IST. The main content discusses Indian-American groups launching a campaign to win more lawmakers' support for inviting Prime Minister Narendra Modi to address a joint session of the US Congress. The sidebar features a "LA MER" advertisement with the text "The Concentrate" and "Complimentary Shipping & Samples with every purchase". Below the sidebar is a video player showing a scene of people running on a beach. At the bottom of the page, there is a Best Buy advertisement for "SAVINGS END SATURDAY WITH FREE SHIPPING".

You are here: Latest News > World News

Indian-Americans lobby to get US Congress to invite PM Modi

Jun 25, 2014 14:07 IST

#Indian-Americans #Modi #Narendra Modi #NewsTracker #PM Modi #US congress

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3 Facebook Share

0 Google + Share

Email

Print this Article

ALSO SEE

Congress hits out at Modi for asking MPs not to comment on

India is reducing divide by criticising Hindi on social media.

Modi lays foundation stone of a-power project in Jharkhand

"As you know, India is a critical partner of the United States. In every aspect - whether it be in political, economic or security relations - the United States has no more important partner in South Asia," they wrote. Following up on the letter, the US India Political Action Committee (USINPAC), which calls itself the voice of Indian-Americans, has launched a "state-by-state grassroots campaign" to win support for a Congressional invitation to Modi.

Three former Indian Prime Ministers, Rajiv Gandhi, Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Manmohan Singh have all been accorded this honour, noted USINPAC Chairman Sanjay Puri thanking Royce for his move.

USINPAC activists and chapter leaders in North Carolina, Indiana and New York among others have actively reached out to members of Congress in their states to win

close

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Free Shipping limitations apply. See BestBuy.com/FreeShipping

© 2014 Best Buy Narendra Modi

LA MER

The Concentrate

Complimentary Shipping & Samples with every purchase

SHOP NOW

II

Figure 5 Bridging Nation's news presents on Firstpost.com

Text:

Washington: Indian-American groups have launched a campaign to win more lawmakers' support for a move to invite Indian PM Narendra Modi to address a joint session of US Congress when he visits US in September. The ball was set rolling last

week with Ed Royce, Republican chairman of the House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee and a fellow House member George Holding writing to House Speaker John Boehner with the suggestion.

"As you know, India is a critical partner of the United States. In every aspect - whether it be in political, economic or security relations - the United States has no more important partner in South Asia," they wrote. Following up on the letter, the US India Political Action Committee (USINPAC), which calls itself the voice of Indian-Americans, has launched a "state-by-state grassroots campaign" to win support for a Congressional invitation to Modi.

Three former Indian Prime Ministers, Rajiv Gandhi, Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Manmohan Singh have all been accorded this honour, noted USINPAC Chairman Sanjay Puri thanking Royce for his move.

USINPAC activists and chapter leaders in North Carolina, Indiana and New York among others have actively reached out to members of Congress in their states to win their support for such a Congressional invitation, USINPAC said.

Bridging Nations Foundation, a nonprofit policy and advocacy organisation founded by Indian-American entrepreneur Prakash Ambegaonkar, to "promote shared prosperity by developing international dialogue through collaboration and learning," has also initiated a similar move. By granting "Prime Minister Modi the honour of addressing a joint meeting of Congress, the US would show to the Indian people and the world our sincerity in rebooting and elevating US-India relations,' it said.

The foundation urged Indian-Americans to "pick up your phone to contact your own congressmen" and request them to write to Boehner in support of the invitation. The

Speaker's office has not yet announced a response to the two lawmakers' letter, but an invitation to Modi is considered highly likely given how US leaders from President Barack Obama down have reached out to the Indian leader since his resounding victory.

The previous Bush administration had revoked Modi's tourist/business visa in 2005 for his alleged inaction during the 2002 Gujarat riots under a 1998 US law barring entry to foreigners who have committed "particularly severe violations of religious freedom".

Though late in reaching out to Modi in the run up to the elections, the US quickly made amends with Obama congratulating him on his victory and inviting him to visit Washington. Modi has accepted the invitation, though no dates have been announced.

Social Media:

Twitter:

Hashtags (main):

#India-US (we created it)
#USCongress (existed)
#US-India (we created it)

Alternative Hashtags (not been chosen):

#Modi (existed)
#NarendraModi (existed)
#PM_Modi
#Modi_US

Twitter Analytics:

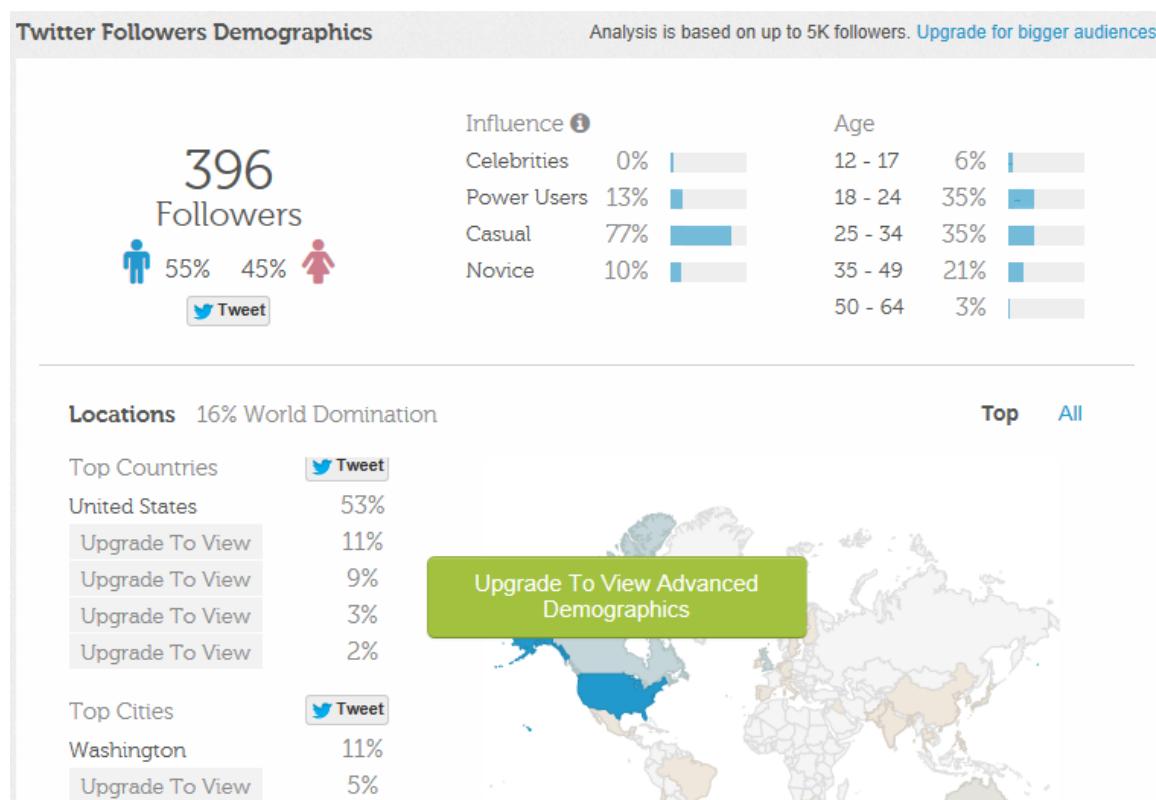


Figure 6 Bridging Nation's followers demographic

One thing it pointed out was that most of our Twitter followers are casual accounts, which means they might not our core audiences. We would try to get more power users that are more influential. Also the age range of our follower is from 18 to 34, which is pretty young.

When would our followers be on Twitter?

I scheduled out tweets based on this report.

On weekdays, the peak hours are 2pm to 4pm.

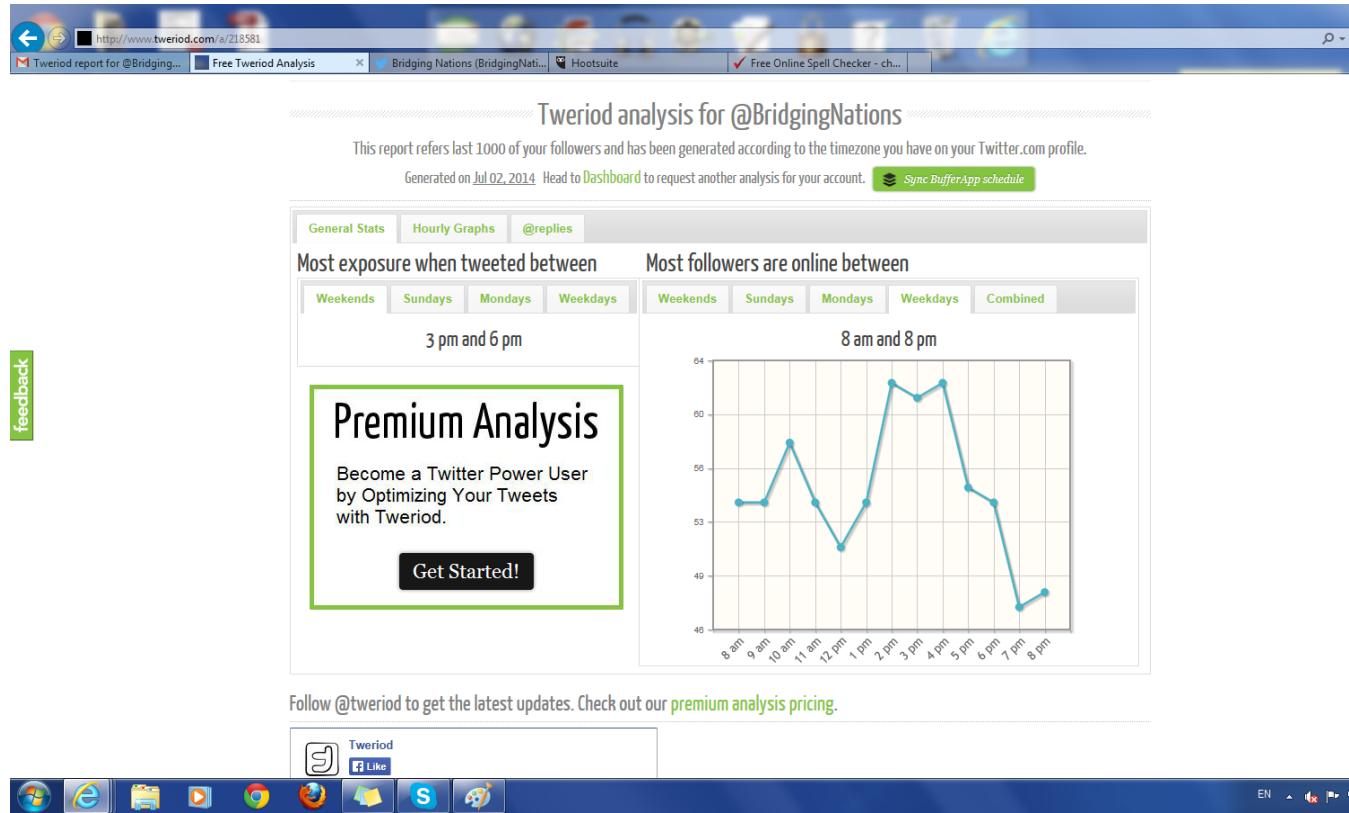


Figure 7 Bridging Nation's followers' online time during weekdays

On weekend the peak hours are 11am and 2pm.

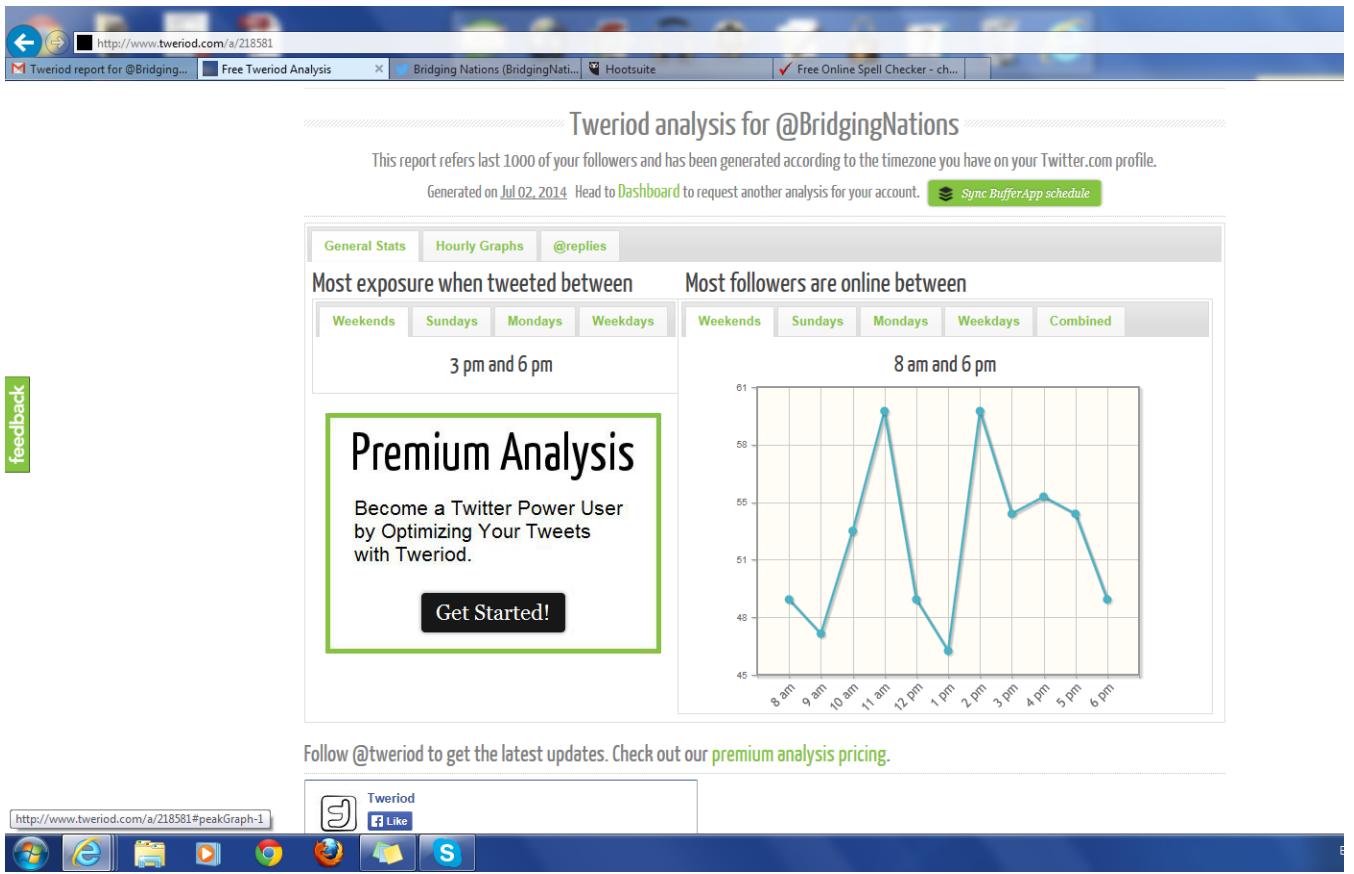


Figure 8 Bridging Nation's followers' online time during weekend

Twitter content analysis:

Most of our contents are just news links that related to our topics, such as education, US-India relations. We might need to do more pictures to attract attention from our audience.

Network Breakdown Analytics

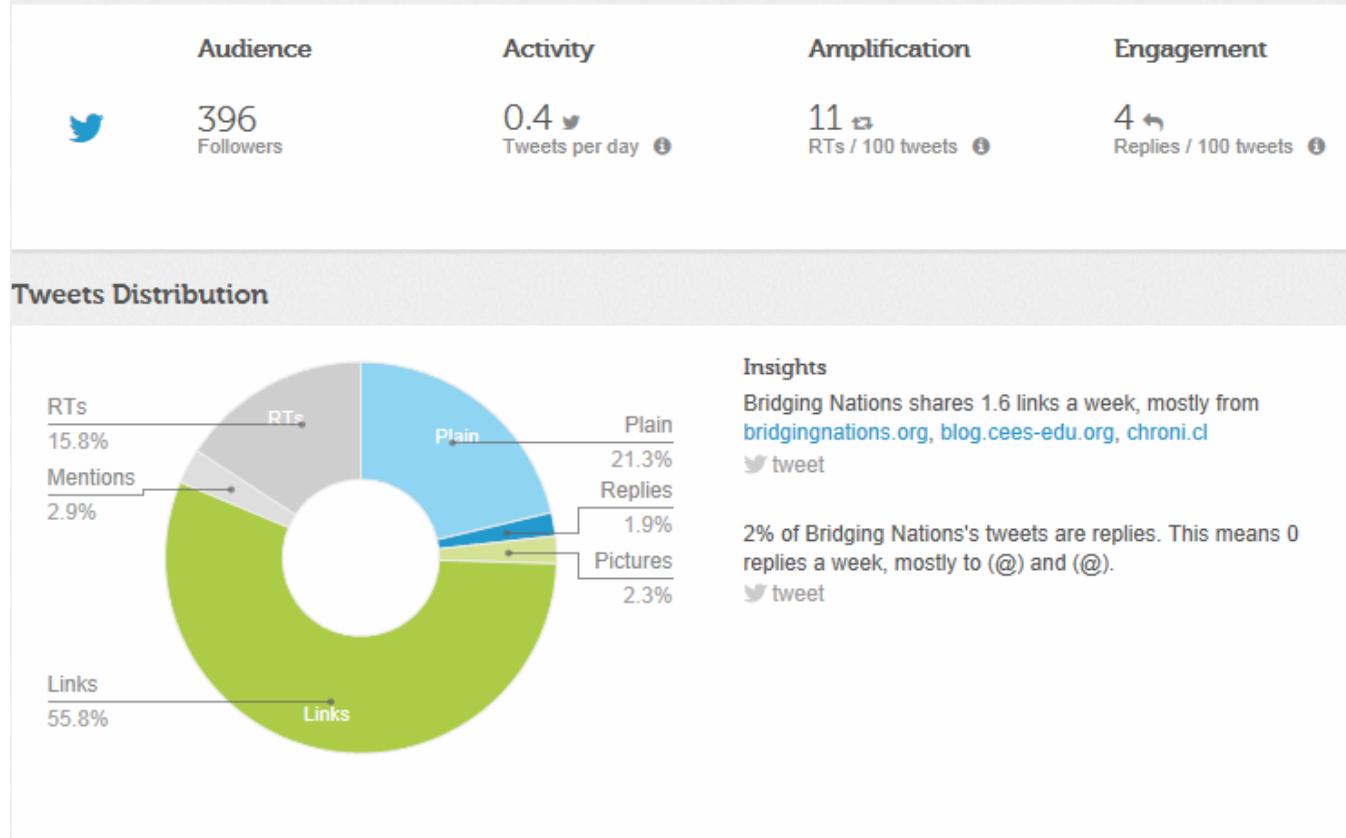


Figure 9 Bridging Nation's Twitter content type

Event Promotion

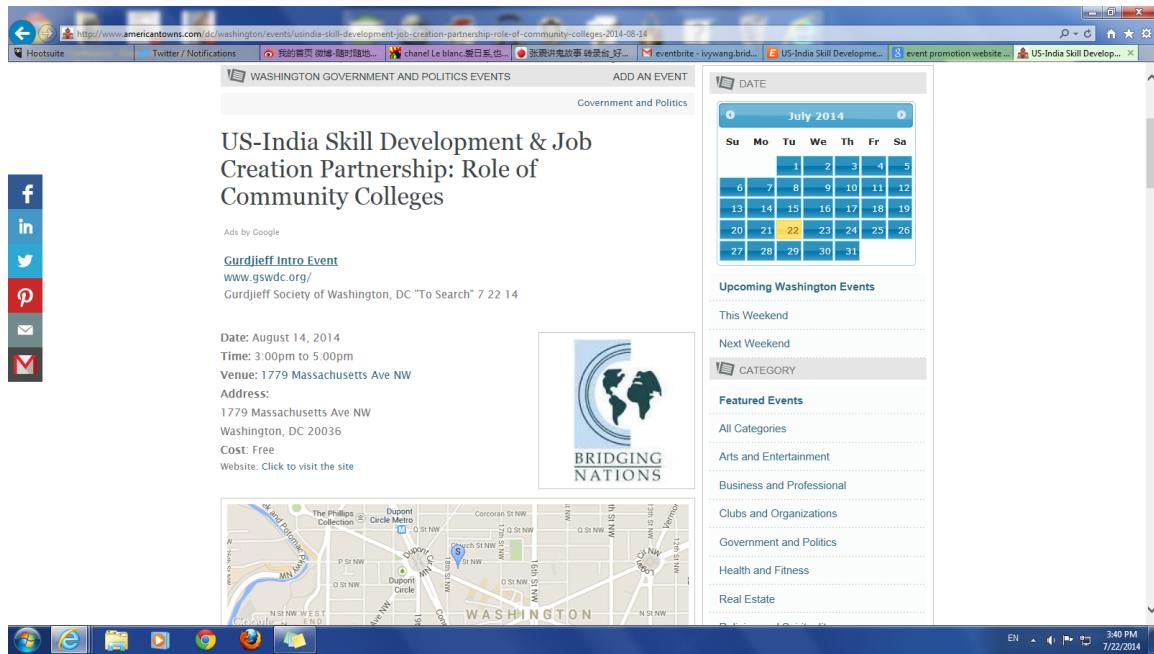


Figure 10 Bridging Nation's event information on Evenbrite.com

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <http://washingtondc.eventful.com/events/usindia-skill-development-job-creation-partnership/EO-001-073126941-0?vs=1>. The page title is "US-INDIA SKILL DEVELOPMENT & JOB CREATION PA... IN WASHINGTON". The main content area features a logo for "BRIDGING NATIONS" with a globe graphic. Below the logo, it says "August 14, 2014" and "Thursday 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM". To the right, there are sections for "EDIT EVENT", "PROMOTE EVENT", and "TOP CONCERT TICKETS" listing various artists like Dave Matthews Band, WPOC Welcomes Rascal, Linkin Park, etc. The bottom of the page has a "EVENT DETAILS" section with social sharing icons for Windows, Internet Explorer, Firefox, Chrome, and others.

Figure 11 Bridging Nation's event information on eventful.com

Brochure:

Advisors

Mr. Varghese George
President and CEO of the Westex Group, Inc.

Mr. Vijay M. Nilekani
Technical Advisor, Nuclear Energy Institute, Washington DC

Amb. Devinda Subasinghe
Former Ambassador of Sri Lanka to the United States

Founder and CEO



Dr. Prakash is the founder and CEO of Bridging Nations Foundation, a global think tank founded in 2002 and based in Washington D.C. Bridging Nations Foundation is a nonpartisan, nonprofit 501 (c)(3) organization that empowers leadership for an interconnected world and concentrates on forming and executing innovative approaches to bridge peoples and nations. Bridging Nations Foundation follows the belief that a healthy economy at all levels is the ultimate bridge capable of spanning across divisions between nations and peoples. This economic bridge is upheld by two primary pillars, technological innovations and visionary leadership.

The Ambegaonkars have been active for many years in philanthropic, civic, and political affairs. Together with his wife, Dr. Ambegaonkar has contributed to numerous causes including the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Asia Society, the Orphan Foundation, Habitat for Humanity, the Smithsonian, the National Museum of Women and the Arts, Georgetown University, George Mason University, The George Washington University, and the World Affairs Council.

Dr. Ambegaonkar's nonprofit work follows his highly successful entrepreneurial career, which included the formation of three high-tech companies. Tellus Technologies was one of the first software companies in India, while E-Lock created the digital signature products that President Clinton used to sign the e-signature law making internet transactions legally enforceable. Frontier Technologies was named one of Information Weeks Top 25 Intranet Companies and was honored as one of Upside Magazine's Hottest 100 Companies. In all, Dr. Ambegaonkar's companies have won over 30 industry awards, including LAN Magazine's Product of the Year three times running.



**BRIDGING
NATIONS**

Promoting Shared Prosperity
Through Technological
Innovations and
Global Leadership

Mass Mail:

August 14th Event



The Bridging Nations Foundation cordially invites you to:

**US-India Skill Development & Job Creation Partnership:
Role of Community Colleges Seminar**

Speakers:

Dr. John Ebersole

President, Excelsior College

Dr. Craig Herndon

Vice Chancellor of Workforce Development,
Virginia Community College System

Dr. Sanjay Rai

Vice President of Academic Affairs,
Montgomery College

Dr. Bryan Albrecht

President, Gateway Technical College

Moderated by:

Dr. Prakash Amebgaonkar
CEO, Bridging Nations Foundation

Thursday, August 14, 2014

3:00-5:00 PM

1779 Massachusetts Ave NW, Washington DC 20036

Please join us August 14th for a discussion on the US-India Skill Development and Job Creation | Role of Community Colleges Seminar. The skill gap and lack of job readiness are issues that hinder growth in both the US and India. Nearly 83% of US companies report that there is a moderate to serious shortage of skilled workers, while in India hundreds of millions of their citizens will be of working age within the decade. In the US, community colleges have been highly effective in providing necessary job skills to students. Come listen as our experts present what has been successful in US community college's workforce and skill development programs and how it can be applicable to India.

RSVP today, space is limited!

Follow us at [@BridgingNations](#)

Text:

Please join us August 14th for a discussion on the US-India Skill Development and Job Creation Partnership: Role of Community Colleges Seminar. The skill gap and lack of job readiness are issues that hinder economic growth in both the US and India. Nearly 83% of US companies report that there is a moderate to serious shortage of skilled workers, while in India hundreds of millions of their citizens will be of working age within the decade. In the US, community colleges have been highly effective in providing necessary job skill sets to their students. Come listen as our experts present what has been successful in US community college's workforce and skill development programs and how it can be applicable to India.

Bring Modi to address Joint Meeting of Congress



Bring Prime Minister Modi to Address a Joint Meeting of Congress

Bridging Nations Foundation sincerely invites you to join our shared effort to ensure Narendra Modi get the honor of addressing a Joint Meeting of Congress during his visit this September.

As Congressmen Edward R. Royce and George Holding emphasized in their letter “It is an overstatement to say that the U.S.-India relationship will be one of the defining partnerships of the 21st century.” By granting Prime Minister Modi the honor of addressing a Joint Meeting of Congress, the US would show to the Indian people and the world our sincerity in rebooting and elevating our relations. This will not only contribute to the welfare of people who live in these two countries, but also present our goodwill to embrace the prospects of a promising development agenda.

Therefore, Bridging Nations Foundation kindly asks you to read the elegant [letter of invitation](#) and encourage your Congressmen, pick up your phone to contact your own congressmen to show your support and request them to write to Speaker of the House, John A. Boehner, in support of this initiative.

We thank you in advance and invite you to actively participate in Bridging Nations’ **“Rebooting and Sustaining US-India Relations”**.

Please contact Rosemarie Bundoc at rbundoc@bridgingnations.org if you want more information about this initiative.

Sincerely,

Bridging Nations Team

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[unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

Text:

Bridging Nations Foundation sincerely invites you to join our shared effort to ensure Prime Minister Narendra Modi get the honor of addressing a Joint Meeting of Congress during his trip to Washington, D.C. this September.

As Congressmen Edward R. Royce and George Holding emphasized in their letter of request, “it is not an overstatement to say that the U.S.-India relationship will be one of the defining partnerships of the 21st century.” By granting Prime Minister Modi the honor of addressing a Joint Meeting of Congress, the US would show to the Indian people and the world our sincerity in rebooting and elevating US-India relations. This will not only contribute to the welfare of people who live in these two great democracies, but also present our goodwill to embrace the prospects of a promising development agenda.

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Initiative:

Rebooting and Sustaining US-India Relations

Please contact Rosemarie Bundoc at rbundoc@bridgingnations.org if you want more information on this initiative.

Sincerely,

Bridging Nations Team

Research Compiled for Aug 14th Seminar:

The U.S economy appears to be recovering from the great recession of 2008.

April marked the strongest job increase since January 2012, with 304,000 nonfarm jobs being filled.¹ This was followed by an unemployment rate of 6.1% in June, the lowest level since September 2008.² While we are seeing an increase in jobs, the U.S., and global, economies are changing at a faster rate, with job seekers finding their skills inadequate. The mismatch between what employers are looking for and the skills gap of job seekers, is turning into a crisis, ~~and~~ predicted to become worse.

Two major contributors to job creation in the U.S. are in the healthcare and manufacturing industries. Although workers in manufacturing have had heavy layoffs due to increased worker productivity from technology and outsourcing, it is the less-educated who are laid-off, and the higher educated who are now being rehired and demanding increased wages. Yet, even with more highly skilled workers, 83% of companies report a moderate to serious shortage of skilled workers, and 69% expect this shortage to worsen in the new few years.³ According to SkillsUSA, 600,000 skilled jobs are going unfilled.⁴ Employers also reported having trouble finding employees to fill job openings.

One solution to filling these skills gaps is the community college system, which is able to provide practical skills and training for the workplace along with theoretical knowledge. The community college is particularly successful in provided the needed

¹ House , Jonathan. "U.S. Jobs Report: 288,000 Positions Added." *The Wall Street Journal* , July 4, 2014, sec. Economy. <http://online.wsj.com/articles/u-s-jobs-report-unemployment-falls-to-6-1-as-288-000-positions-added-1404390904>

² Ibid

³ SkillsUSA. "America's Skills Gap." . <http://www.skillsusa.org/about/skillsgap.shtml>

⁴ Ibid

skills in the job market due to their connection and response to the local economy. They are supported by the local community and by business investment. With 60% of the students in community colleges over the age of 22, this further indicates that the majority of students are working adults, enrolled to gain the skills needed for better work opportunities.⁵

The U.S. is not alone in this skills gap. Globally, there is expected to be a shortage of 38 to 40 million college-educated workers in 2020,⁶ and a potential shortage of 45 million workers with secondary education qualified to work in labor-intensive manufacturing and services in developing economies.⁷ It is also predicted that by 2030, the global workforce will grow to 3.5 billion.⁸

In 2010, there were 75 million unemployed young workers- aged fifteen to twenty-four years old- in the global labor market.⁹

Even with increasing college-completion rates, there could be a shortage of sixteen to seventeen million college-educated workers in 2020 (for advanced economies).¹⁰ This imbalance has longer-term and more permanent effects on unemployment, as the gap will continue to increase, and those lacking high-skills will be unable to enter, or re-enter, the job market.

⁵ World Bank. *World Development Report 2004: A Better InvestmentClimate for Everyone*. New York, 2013.

⁶The McKinsey Global Institute (MGI), *The world at work: Jobs, Pay, and Skills for 3.5 Billion People*, McKinsey & Company, 2013,
http://www.mckinsey.com/insights/employment_and_growth/the_world_at_work

⁷ Ibid

⁸Ibid

⁹Ibid

¹⁰ Ibid

India, which has long been of interest for the Bridging Nations Foundation, currently has 340 million working adults without job relevant skills.¹¹ This skills gap is expected to drastically increase, as hundreds of millions of their citizens will be old enough to enter the job market in the next decade. India hopes to have 40 million students enrolled in university by 2020, but to do this will require an additional 800 universities.¹² Currently, India has more than 500 community colleges, helping students gain the skills needed in the job market.¹³ These community colleges in India are viewed as “for the community, by the community and of the community”, offering education to all socioeconomic members of society.¹⁴ Unlike vocational schools, community colleges are designed to meet the needs of the workforce, offering a wide range of programs and continuing education while vocational systems only offer apprenticeship training and vocationalization of the first-degree level. They allow students to gain tangible skills relevant to the marketplace in a flexible atmosphere. Going a step further, 152 community colleges have connected with 2,680 industries providing employment for approximately 75% of students upon graduation.¹⁵

One concern with higher education in India is student employability. Numerous studies have found that of the hundreds of thousands of graduates produced every year, not even half are employable.¹⁶ While there are many reasons for this, major factors

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Georgetown Public Policy Institute Center on Education and Workforce , *Recovery: Job Growth and Education Requirements Through 2020*, Washington D.C.: Georgetown University, 2013, <https://georgetown.app.box.com/s/tll0zkxt0puz45hu21g6>

¹³ World Bank. *World Development Report 2004: A Better InvestmentClimate for Everyone*. New York, 2013.

¹⁴ Ibid

¹⁵ Ibid

¹⁶ <http://indiai.org/higher-education/>

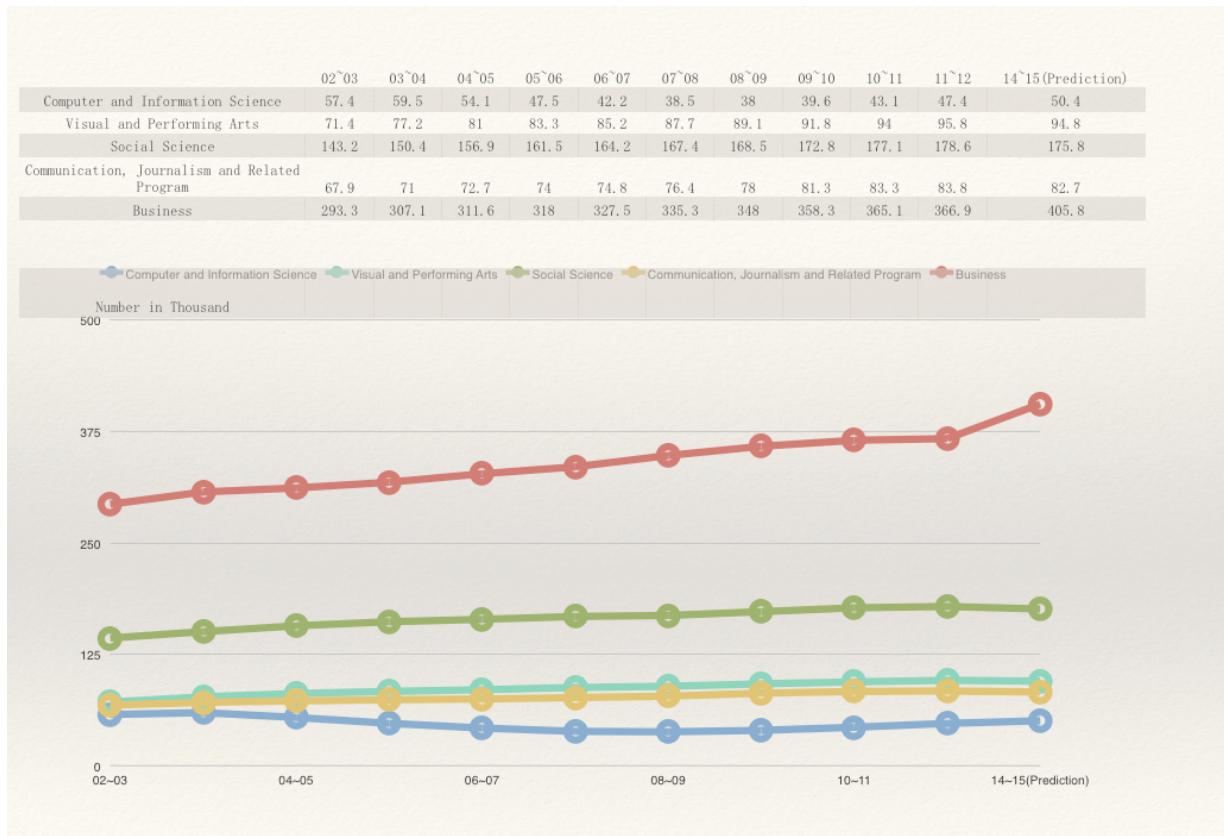
include poor quality of teachers, a focus on exams as opposed to knowledge acquired, lack of quality in the institution itself, and lack of market transparency.¹⁷

One organization working to battle this skill gap in India is the National Skill Development Corporation. NSDC is a Public Private Partnership created to facilitate the development and upgrading of work skills through skill training programs. The organization funds skill training and development programmes, as well as work in advocacy and training programmes, research to determine skill gaps, and development of accreditation norms.

Here at the Bridging Nations Foundation we have compiled research from the past 10 years to determine what the job market for 2014-2015 will look like. Our supply side consists of recent college graduates, quoted from the National Center for Educational Statistics. The demand side is the change in a certain sector of the job market, found from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. To make our data easier to understand, we have broken jobs and majors in five main categories: computer and information science, visual and performing arts, social science, business, and communication/journalism and related programs. The two graphs show the change in both the number of graduates (Demand Side) and changes in jobs for that sector (Supply Side). We have concluded that students who have studied computer science and business have a better chance of employment than other majors. Even with the growing number of students in these majors, the amount of jobs in these sectors would outnumber the university graduates.

17

Demand side:



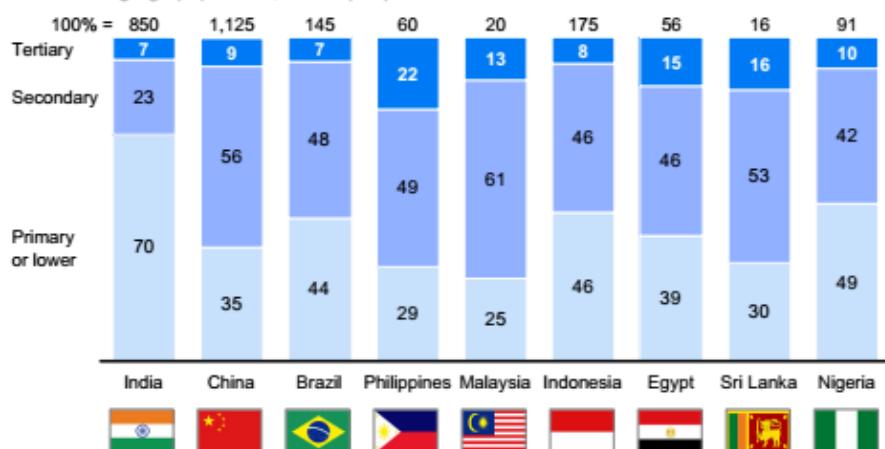
Supply Side

Exhibit 6

India has significantly more workers with only primary schooling or less and far fewer with secondary education than other developing economies

Educational attainment, 2010

% of working age population; million people



NOTE: Numbers may not sum due to rounding.

SOURCE: United Nations Population Division (2010 revision); IIASA; ILO; local statistics for India and China; McKinsey Global Institute analysis

Exhibit E1

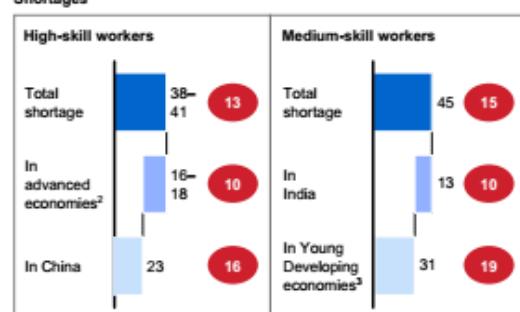
In the “momentum” case, the world is likely to have too few high-skill workers and not enough jobs for low-skill workers

Gap between demand and supply of workers by educational attainment, 2020E

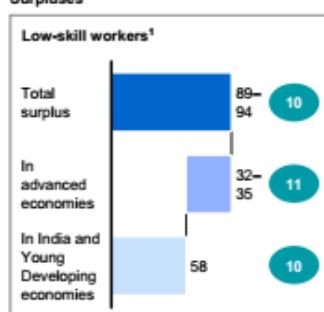
● % of supply of skill cohort
● % of demand for skill cohort

Million workers

Shortages



Surpluses



¹ Low-skill defined in advanced economies as no post-secondary education; in developing, low skill is primary education or less.

² 25 countries from the analyzed set of 70 countries, that have GDP per capita greater than US\$ 20,000 at 2005 purchasing power parity (PPP) levels in 2010.

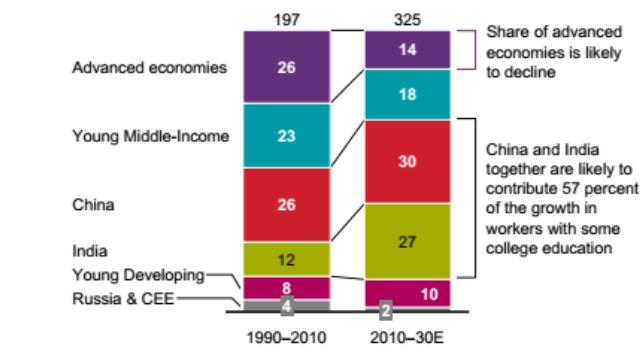
³ 11 countries from the analyzed set of 70 countries, from South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, with GDP per capita less than \$3,000 at 2005 PPP levels in 2010.

SOURCE: McKinsey Global Institute analysis

Exhibit 22

China and India are likely to contribute more than half of the world's supply of new workers with a college education through 2030

Net labor force additions with college education
%; million workers



1 Includes Young Advanced, Aging Advanced and Southern Europe clusters.

NOTE: Numbers may not sum due to rounding.

SOURCE: United Nations Population Division (2010 revision); ILO; IIASA; local statistics for China and India; McKinsey Global Institute analysis

Press Kit

Press Kit

US-India Skill Development and Job Creation Partnership: Role of Community Colleges Seminar



Hosted by Bridging Nations Foundation

Aug 7th, 2014

Program

US-India Skill Development and Job Creation Partnership: Role of Community Colleges Seminar

August 14, 2014

Time: 3:00-5:00 PM

Previously, the program was set for 2-5PM with two separate panels. We decided to consolidate the two panels and create **one two-hour panel** consisting of all four speakers from 3-5PM. Each speaker will have approximately 20 minutes to present and we kindly ask you to please assemble a powerpoint presentation to accompany your discussion.

The schedule for August 14th will be as follows:

2:30-3:00 PM Set-up (please arrive 10-15 minutes before the start of the program)

3:00-3:10 Introduction and Welcome by Dr. P

3:10-3:30 Speaker 1 presentation

3:30-3:50 Speaker 2 presentation

3:50-4:10 Speaker 3 presentation

4:10-4:30 Speaker 4 presentation

4:30-5:00 Q&A

5:00-6:30 Reception at Bridging Nations' Suite

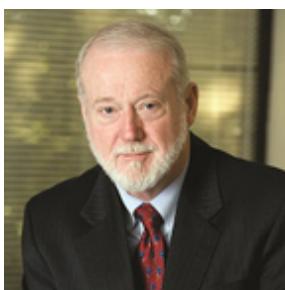
Speakers' Bio



Dr. Craig Herndon Dr. Craig Herndon is the Vice Chancellor for Workforce Development at Virginia Community College System. Dr. Herndon currently provides leadership to workforce training programs and services at Virginia's 23 community colleges while overseeing the state's 15 workforce investment boards. In April 2012, Dr. Herndon and VCCS hosted the India delegation to community colleges throughout Virginia.



Dr. Bryan Albrecht Dr. Bryan Albrecht has served as Gateway's President since 2006. Dr. Albrecht supports a comprehensive and vision-driven college, by increasing student support, contemporary programming, positive community partnerships, and innovative classrooms and facilities that reflect the business and industry. Dr. Albrecht is also a member of the Manufacturing Institute's Education Committee and has helped open job training centers across the nation and abroad.



Dr. John F. Ebersole John F. Ebersole is president of Excelsior College in Albany, N.Y., one of the oldest accredited, private, nonprofit distance education institutions in the country. In his 25-year career in higher education, Dr. Ebersole's personal experience as a post-traditional student has informed his approach to adult education.



Dr. Sanjay Rai Dr. Sanjay Rai, senior vice president for academic affairs, is an outspoken champion and ardent supporter of innovations that advance community college student success in academic, career, technical, and workforce development programs. Dr. Rai played an active role in Montgomery College's India Initiative in delivering the March 2011 National Symposium to India.

About Bridging Nations

Bridging Nations Foundation is a nonprofit 501(3) C, policy organization based in Washington, D.C. that promotes shared prosperity by developing international dialogue through collaboration and learning. We believe that technological innovation, particularly in areas of shared concern such as energy and the environment, will promote economic cooperation and secure the earth for future generations. Bridging Nations Foundation offers diverse, educational programs that build cultural, political, and economic bridges between the United States, China, and India in order to address the realities of an increasingly interdependent world.

About the Founder:



Dr. Prakash Ambegaonkar founded the Bridging Nations Foundation as a nonprofit policy and advocacy organization in Washington, D.C. Bridging Nations works on issues of leadership, technology, and education, including the India-China Center in Pune, India and the establishment of a graduate program in Energy Science and Technology. Bridging Nations has developed a "Declaration of Education Rights" to make education a universal birthright. Currently, Bridging Nations is privately funded by Dr. Ambegaonkar and his wife Nunda.

Press Release
For Immediate Release Only

Bridging Nations Foundation aims to close the skill gap in both US and India

Washington, DC (Aug. 07, 2014) – Bridging Nations Foundation is holding an US-India Skill Development and Job Creation Partnership: Role of Community Colleges Seminar on Aug. 14th from 3:00-5:00 PM.

The skill gap and lack of job readiness are issues that hinder economic growth in both the US and India. Nearly 83% of US companies report that there is a moderate to serious shortage of skilled workers, while in India hundreds of millions of their citizens will be of working age within the decade. In the US, community colleges have been highly effective in providing necessary job skill sets to their students.

One solution to filling these skills gaps is the community college system, which is able to provide practical skills and training for the workplace along with theoretical knowledge. The community college is particularly successful in provided the needed skills in the job market due to their connection and response to the local economy.

“event related quote quote,” said Dr. P, the founder of Bridging Nations.

The event will take place at 1779 Massachusetts Ave NW, Washington DC 20036.

###

For more information, please contact:

Rosemarie Bundoc

xxx-xxx-xxxx

Tweets suggestions for Dr. P:

Higher Education:

Community College:

Skill Development:

1. How could Modi's government carry out the skill development program in next 5 years? [@MyGovIndia](#) (maybe add a pic)

Career:

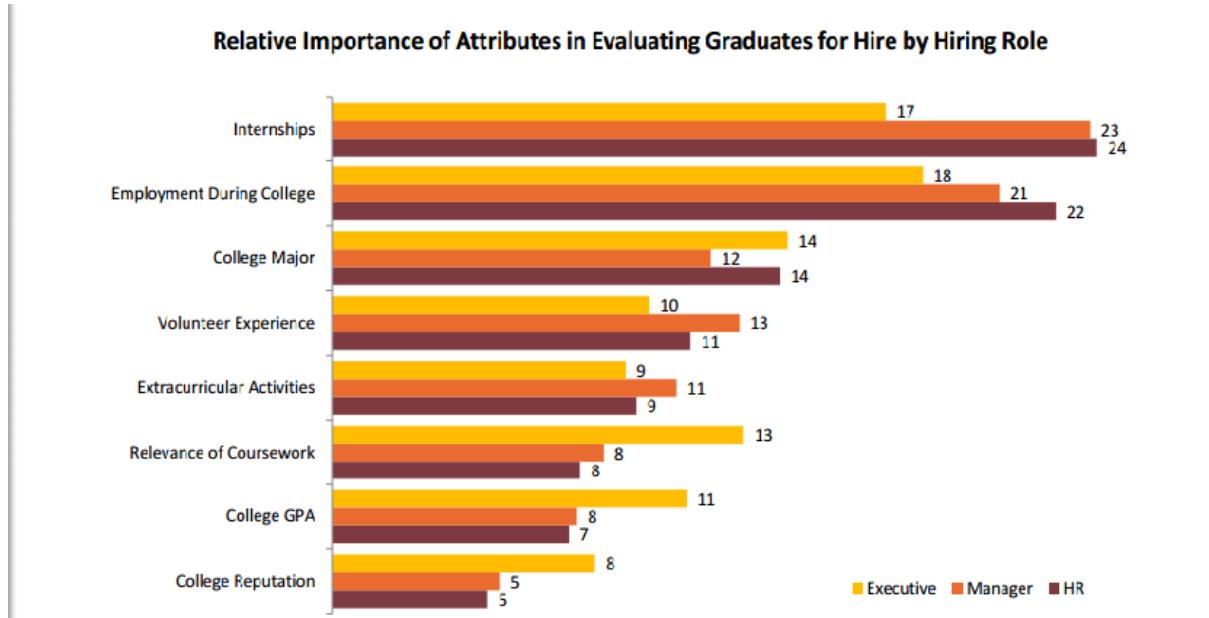
Career gap:

1. Hiring the right employee is difficult. Check out these helpful tips.
<http://goo.gl/gCtDFM> (link to article on Careerfolio)
2. What are employers looking for? Some insights from [@chronicle](#)

Key Findings: What are employers looking for?

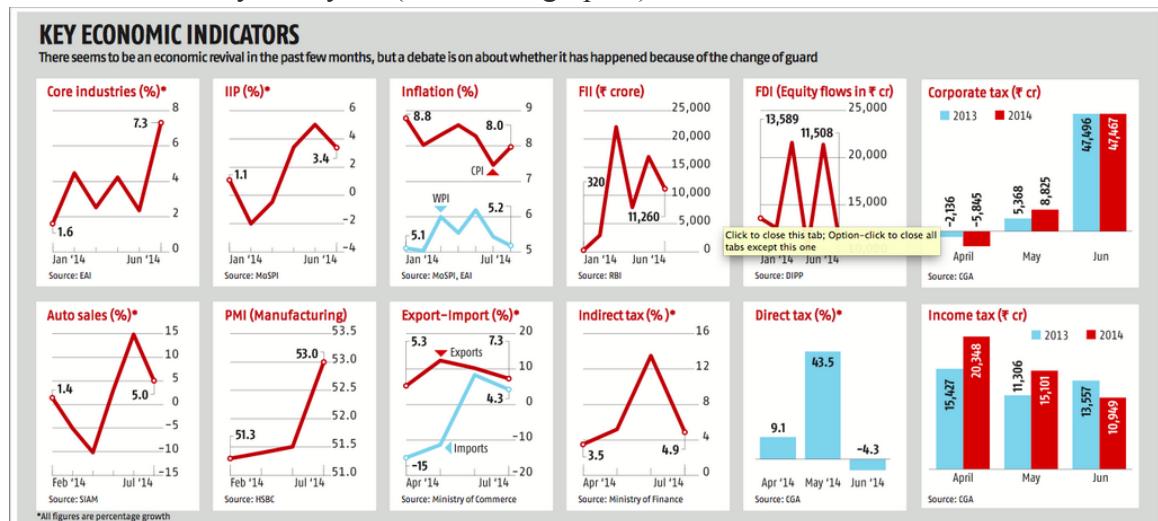
- Employers place more weight on experience, particularly internships and employment during school vs. academic credentials including GPA and college major when evaluating a recent graduate for employment.
- All industries and hiring levels place slightly more weight on student work or internship experiences than on academic credentials.
- Science/Technology, Services/Retail, and Media/Communications segments tilt the scale toward experience more than other industries.
- Weighted results show that college major is the most important academic credential to employers; however, internships and employment during college are the top traits employers consider in evaluating recent graduates for a position.
- College major comes in third, overall, except at Health Care organizations where it is neck and neck with employment during college, and at organizations with fewer than 50 employees where employers value volunteer work and extracurricular activities more, dropping college major to fifth on the list of all traits examined in this study.
- Extracurricular activities, like professional clubs, athletics, and service, are valued more than GPA, relevance of coursework to position, and college reputation except by Executives who emphatically place more weight on coursework relevance and GPA, closely trailing college major.
- An internships is the single most important credential for recent college graduates to have on their resume in their job search among all industry segments with Media/Communications placing the highest value on internships in comparison to other industries.

- Check out this interesting graphic.



US-India Relations:

- Modi's 1st 100 days analysis: (with a infographic)



- Retweet this one: How **Modi** can leverage China-Japan rivalry to India's advantage: <http://bit.ly/1luR1VY>

Transition Doc from Ivy Wang:

Current projects:

- Maintain regular activities on social media through Hootsuite.
- Maintain Dr. P's twitter account
 - Get him more follower
 - Prepare topics and tweets for him to review (higher education, innovation, skill development, India_US relations, PM Modi's policy...)
- Follow up google alert every day to get materials for social media

What still needs to be done:

- The three projects above need to be carried on.
- Dr. P's upcoming trip to China
- Keep tracking Facebook analytics (once a week)
- Look for potential Twitter analytics tool

General topics/ideas that I have been using to tweet:

- It basically follows the topic I listed on google alerts filters. Pay more attention to the ones related to Modi's visiting to US for next two month.
- Education policies, skill development procedures in both India and US
- Schedule three to four tweets per day, including weekend.
- Look for related tweets throughout the day and retweet them
- No more than three tweets per hour

Google alerts/filters used:

- Community College, India

- India, US
- Narendra Modi, education
- Narendra Modi, US
- Skill development
- Higher education
- Innovation

Facebook Analytics:

Time	Post Reach	Post Shares	Post Comments	Post Likes	Post Clicks	Visits
Aug 21 - Aug 27	222	10	0	5	10	3
Aug 13 - Aug 30	330	13	0	10	5	7
Aug 05 - Aug 12	251	15	0	12	0	6
July 28 - Aug 04	329	15	0	16	11	19
July 20 - July 27	335	21	1	24	10	37
July 12 - July 19	353	19	1	14	4	8
July 04 - July 11	404	15	0	17	11	6
June 26 - July 03	96	10	0	6	0	8

Research Component

It is hard to image that only 10 to 15 years ago, Chinese people only got information from traditional media like newspapers, TV, magazines and the radio. Since China has a highly centralized government system, the traditional media was mainly controlled by the national or state government. In my childhood memories, I only knew the national station CCTV (China Central Television) or SCTV (Sichuan Television), which was a local station. However, everything has changed.

As the internet and social media have grown, China has become the country with the most internet users. It not only changes the way people receive information, but also offers them an opportunity to actively seek for or even post information. Since 2008, social media has been booming in China. Millions of people started to use blogs, Weibo (Chinese Twitter) and Renren (Chinese Facebook).

Since majority of traditional media are still under the censorship of the Chinese government, social media have been a new platform for Chinese people to criticize government activities. As this situation goes further, the Chinese government has realized the power of social media. In recent years, hundreds of accounts have been created by the government agencies to post the newest information (government issues, political decisions, breaking news...) and to even accept comments.

Several studies have been conducted to analyze how citizens use social media to influence government activities. However, how does the government use this new tool during an extreme case such as a crisis? In order to explore how Chinese government agencies utilized social media during a particular social crisis, this study employed the

contingency theory to analyze the social media posts (Weibo posts) by several Chinese government accounts and government controlled news accounts.

Literature Review

Crisis Response Strategies and Crisis Responsibility

Coombs (1998) defined that “Crisis responsibility represents the degree to which stakeholders blame the organization for the crisis event” (p.180). There are three factors that would potentially affect the perception of crisis responsibility: crisis attribution, organizational performance and severity of the crisis (p.181).

Weiner introduced the Theory of Attribution in the 1980s. In his model, he pointed out the three causal dimensions of attribution, which are the locus of the behavior, the stability of the behavior and the controllability of the behavior. If we combine his model to a crisis situation, we can see that the locus of behavior indicates whether a crisis is caused by an internal or external factor, stability means whether the crisis is temporary or constantly happening and controllability shows if a crisis is within or without an organization’s control (Weiner, 1985).

The Theory of Attribution has been used in the crisis communication field for a long time, especially for post-crisis guidance. As people are curious about the cause of an event that is related to them (Weiner, 1985), it is natural for stakeholders to attribute responsibilities after a crisis. Then, the attributions people made after a crisis would in turn affect organizations’ reputations (Coombs & Holladay, 2005).

Coombs (1998) mentioned in his research that crisis communication strategies could be used to protect an organization’s image. Then he identified seven different strategies ranging from full apology (accommodative) to attack (defensive). Crisis responsibility and strategies are linked together. Benoit (1995) also concluded that if an

organization was seen as more responsible for a crisis, it was more effective to choose an accommodative strategy than defensive one to protect its image.

Internet Censorship in China

During the past decade, the Internet has been a booming industry in China. According to a survey conducted by the China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC), the number of Internet users in China has reached 253 million by July 2008, which surpassed the users in the U.S. and became the world's largest Internet market (CNNIC, 2010). In 2010, the number continued to grow to 420 million (Yu, Asur & Huberman, 2011).

Although China has the most Internet users around the world, the Internet penetration is still as low as 5.1% in rural areas. By contrast, in the metropolitan cities such as Shanghai, the Internet penetration rate is over 45% (CNNIC, 2010). Along with the growth of the Internet, social networks have become a major platform for millennials in China to get information and make connections to each other (Yu, Asur & Huberman, 2011).

One major part of China's Internet censorship is filtering. Internet filtering is the process by which users accessing the Internet from a particular network are blocked from visiting certain Web sites (MacKinnon 2009). “Censorship of this sort is by definition designed to be complete, in that it aims to prevent *all* access to such resources.” (Bamman, O'Connor, & Smith, 2012, p. 2). There are various levels at which filtering can be done: the household; local business or residential networks; Internet service providers (ISPs); regional networks or at the national gateway level (Villeneuve, 2006).

In China, filtering is achieved at the gateway points through which information travels between the domestic Chinese Internet and the global Internet. By plugging “blacklisted” Web site addresses and keywords into the routers and software systems, the Chinese government is able to control the Internet traffic across Chinese domestic networks (Clayton, Murdoch & Watson, 2006).

MacKinnon (2009) identified several methods that the Chinese government has used to censor Internet content. The major methods are: the user is prevented to post at all; posts are “held for moderation”; posts are published in “private view,” but they are never visible to the public; posts are successfully published at first, but deleted or “unpublished” some time later; sensitive keywords or phrases are replaced with “***”, but the posts are otherwise published; the content is successfully published but blocked to viewers attempting to read it from inside mainland China (p.6).

Social Media in China

Right now the Chinese government has blocked some popular oversea social network sites like Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. However, several private-owned Chinese Internet companies have developed their own social network platforms, such as Weibo, Renren, and Q-Zone, which have the similar functions to the social network sites in United States. Chui (2012) found out that Chinese “Netizens” (people who form online communities) tend to spend more than 40 percent of their time online on social media, and this figure is continuing to grow rapidly.

A report released by Information Office of the State Council of the People’s Republic of China (2011) indicated that “The newly emerging online services, including blog, micro-blog, video sharing and social networking websites are developing rapidly in

China and provide greater convenience for Chinese citizens to communicate online” (p.27). More than 80 percent of Chinese social media users have multiple accounts on different platforms. Additionally, the platforms are more active than those of any other countries (Chui, 2012).

Micro-blog

Micro-blog services are the emerging form of online communication. The most popular micro-blog system around the world is Twitter. There are numerous research studies about Twitter, but only few for Sina Weibo, though it is growing two times faster than Twitter (Guo, Li & Tu, 2011).

Similar to Twitter, a Sina Weibo account has a user profile that shows the basic information, profile picture, the number of followers and all posts the user has made. A Sina Weibo user can also follow any other users without seeking permission. On Weibo, if a user is following someone, he/she can receive all the messages from that user, and these messages are usually called tweets or posts (Cheng, Fu & Huang, 2013). Besides functioning like Twitter, Weibo combines the advantage of Twitter, Facebook and even Skype. It allows users to upload and share pictures, videos, music and books. It also provides services like instant message sharing, virtual meetings and open discussions (Wang & Zhou, 2013).

The Use of the Micro-blog in Government

As social media have gained huge influence in people's daily lives, a lot of government agencies or organizations have adopted it as a way to communicate with the general public. Wigand (2010) analyzed how United State's government organizations

have adopted Twitter as a way to build relationship with U.S. citizens. He stated five reasons for a government organization to use Twitter:

- (1) To extend the reach of existing online messages such as news, speeches, web updates, and YouTube videos,
- (2) To Build relationships with targeted audiences, stakeholders, and key influencers such as journalists and bloggers,
- (3) To provide an informal “human” voice to foster engagement and comprehension of messages,
- (4) To Enable audiences to interact easily with departments and officials, and
- (5) To Provide ways for audience to subscribe to updates via RSS, email and SMS. (p. 565).

As both of these guides for using Twitter in government demonstrate, the uses of this simple and relatively inexpensive platform are proliferating as institutions adopt it.

Because of these advantages, the Chinese government organizations have also adopted Micro-blogs (especially Sina Weibo) in recent years. In 2009, Adweek published a survey that indicated that 66 percent of communication specialists and government decision makers considered opinions expressed on social media were more influential than ones on other media and were the most influential communication channel in modern China (Adweek, 2009). Micro-blog accounts with the name of Chinese cities have gained enormous popularity among Chinese citizens (Wang & Zhou, 2013). These accounts are typically launched, managed and owned by various governmental departments and organizations. They have attracted millions of followers and “promoted the overall image of cities with advertising and the promotion of full-scale city

information, including city news, scenery, foods and other sources” (Wang & Zhou, 2013, p.29).

McKinsey released a report in early 2012 that indicated that the number of government micro-blog accounts in China has reached 20,000. In October of 2012, the number of governmental micro-blog accounts changed to 50,561, increasing nearly 776.58 percent since 2011 (McKinsey, 2012). In 2012, the Chinese Xinhuanet also reported that there were more and more official government micro-blog accounts showing up to release new policies and information, and build cities’ images under the concept of “Micro-blog for all people” (2012).

This article also shows an example of Guangzhou, the capital city of Guangdong Province, which opened a new stage of “Microblog-Governance” (Xinhuanet, 2012). In their account (3.1 million followers by April 9, 2014), there is information of weather conditions, traffic regulations, major events and discussions about hot topics. Similarly, Hangzhou, the capital city of Zhejiang Province, opened an official micro-blog account (1.1 million followers by April 9, 2014), which highlighted the interaction between city government and its citizens to promote the image of the city (Xinhuanet, 2012). In 2013, the Chinese Ifeng website stated that Nanjing, the capital city of Jiangsu Province, had integrated micro blogs, microfilms and online mobile App games for city branding (Ifeng, 2013).

Micro-blog and Crisis

Qu, Huang and Zhang (2011) performed a case study about how micro-blogging had been used in a crisis situation. They analyzed how Chinese citizens responded on Sina Weibo about the Yushu Earthquake in 2010. They found that during that natural

disaster, Sina Weibo was the most active place for Netizens to seek and share information, and to express their feelings and opinions. However, this crisis was a natural disaster that was caused by uncontrollable external factors. It was impossible to say who was responsible for it, so there were fewer comments that criticized the crisis itself.

Heverin and Zach (2010) also analyzed the roles that micro-blog sites played during a crisis. They chose a violent crisis that a suspect shot four police officers in the Seattle-Tacoma area of Washington in late November 2009. They found that citizens, news media, and other types of organizations were using Twitter as one of the major methods to share crisis-related information. The majority (79%) of the messages (tweets) they analyzed in the study were information-related. Moreover, when they looked through the unique authors of about 6,013 tweets, they found that a majority of the authors (91.5%) were citizens, followed by local and national media (p.2-3).

Besides being used by the affected public, micro-blogging has also been used by organizations involved in a crisis. Schultz, Utz, and Göritz (2011) concluded that crisis communication via Twitter would lead to less negative crisis reactions than blogs and newspaper articles. Moreover, when compared to blog users and non-social media users, Twitter users were more likely to share the messages.

However, there is always a question when using social media as a communication channel during a crisis – how to distinguish rumors from other reliable information? Social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter and Weibo do not automatically indicate the difference between reliable sources and rumors when they were posted.

The case of missing flight Malaysia Airline 370 is a good example. On March 8, 2014, Malaysia Airlines released a statement confirming that they had lost contact with

Flight 370. Since then, there were over 8.4 million posts on Sina Weibo that related to the topic “MH370.” As Malaysia Airlines released more statements about the condition of the flight, several conspiracy theories occurred. Some theories came from the relatives of the Flight 370 passengers and some were from Netizens on Sina Weibo. There were theories of cyber attacks, alien abductions and hijacking, and the hijacking theory was the dominant one.

Mendoza, Poblete and Castillo (2010) conducted research in which they identified two categories of tweets: confirmed news and false rumors. They analyzed how the two types of tweets were propagated on Twitter during the Chile earthquake in 2010. They found that Twitter community actually had the ability to detect rumors, because it could work like a collaborative filter of information. Twitter users tended to question tweets in the “false rumor” category more than ones in the “confirmed news” category.

Context of the Study

The air pollution has been a critical issue for developing countries, especially in China and India. The World Health Organization recently released a report that indicated that air pollution killed seven million people each year. It also indicated that outdoor air pollution might cause ischaemic heart disease, stroke, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, lung cancer and acute lower respiratory infections in children (2014). During the last few months, the Chinese government has faced the worst smog problem ever, which made the capital city Beijing an unpleasant place to visit. The same problem exists in New Delhi, India.

In the 2014 edition of the Environment Performance Index, China and India were both the last ranked countries with regard to air quality (CNN, 2014). According to an

article in Scientific American, “nearly the entire population of both countries is exposed to harmful particulate matter less than 2.5 micrometers in diameter, known as PM2.5, which can penetrate human lung and blood tissue and contribute to lung disease and premature death” (2014). Although this problem has attracted tons of media attention, the national air quality measurement capabilities remain weak in most countries. It is impossible to compare two countries or even two cities’ air pollution. It’s necessary for countries to work together and build an international standard index to monitor the air pollution level.

On February 20, the Beijing Government issued its emergency smog alert system, the first time since it was introduced last October. For more than five days, it showed repeatedly the second-highest warning level. ABC News reported that from February 20 to 25, the air pollution levels were measured above 450 on an air quality index, which was nine times the safe level for human beings (2014). On February 26, Beijing's official reading for PM 2.5 had reached 501 micrograms per cubic metre on, while the WHO's recommended safe limit is 25. WHO's representative in China started to describe this issue as an “environmental crisis” (SBS, 2014).

This smog crisis has caused a huge discussion on Sina Weibo. There were more than 7.8 million Weibo posts that were related to the key word “smog” (雾霾) from February 20 to February 27. Although there were several factors that may cause smog, such as automobile exhausts, Chinese citizens were more likely to blame the government for heavy-industry such as power plants, chemical solvents, and even plastic popcorn packaging -around the city. This situation is more common on social media than on

traditional media, though some government controlled traditional media are trying hard to explain that there might be alternative reasons for the smog.

Theoretical Framework

Crisis Management

The theoretical foundation of my research is contingency theory in crisis management. Crisis is inevitable to all organizations. Crisis is a sense of threat, urgency, and destruction that provides high uncertainty to an organization (Seeger, Sellnow & Ulmer, 2003).

The contingency theory of accommodation, also known as “It depends” theory, is an alternative to the theory of excellence in public relations. It was proposed by Amanda Cancel, Glen Cameron, Lynne Sallot and Michel Mitrook in 1997. Unlike James Grunig’s theory of excellence, which is based on two-way symmetrical communication model in public relations, contingency theory is more about indicating “what is going to be the most effective method at a given time”(Cameron, Cancel, Sallot & Mitrook, 1997, p. 35). It represents a more accurate model of how public relations is practiced in the real world (Cameron, Cancel & Mitrook, 1999)

The contingency theory was followed by the dynamic nature of crisis. Crisis management has four stages in its life cycle – the proactive phase, the strategic phase, the reactive phase, and the recovery phase. The proactive phase is the one that identifies issues and key publics. The strategic phase stands for the time to make plans that could respond to future issues. The reactive phase is the time that crisis is happening. Finally, the recovery phase stands for the time after a crisis happened (Cameron, Wilcox, Reber & Shin, 2008).

The boundaries of the four phases are not strictly clear. However, it is still important to identify the crisis life cycle in order to get effective crisis management. In

each stage of a crisis, an organization might need to choose a different stance based on the given situation. Also, contingency theory recognizes that it is possible that there are multiple publics that an organization should address in a given time, since sometimes publics can be dynamic and difficult to reach. The stance taken to respond to each of them must be equally dynamic (Cameron et al., 1997).

The contingency theory is based on a continuum from pure accommodation to pure advocacy. When there is a crisis, an organization must choose its stance, which determines its strategies. An organization's stance is shaped by many complex factors. "It depends" as a system of managing crisis has been proven useful to monitor and control the course of crisis (Cameron et al., 1997).

Advocacy is one of the major functions for a public relations practitioner (Smith, 1972). J. Grunig (J. Grunig & L. Grunig, 1990) also made a similar observation. He wrote: "Many, if not most, practitioners consider themselves to be advocates for or defenders of their organizations and cite the advocacy system in law as an analogy" (p. 32). The advocate stance can be seen as denial, excuses, and so on.

On the other hand, being an accommodator is another core function of public relation practitioners. They serve the role of building and maintaining mutually dependent relationships between an organization and its public (Cutlip, Center & Broom, 1985). An accommodation stance could be referred as the words like dialogue, compromise, collaboration or cooperation. Cameron et al. (1997) then proposed, "Public relations practitioners must typically choose, either consciously or by default, a stance somewhere between pure advocacy and pure accommodation" (p.37).

In 1999, Cameron, Cancel and Mitrook conducted a qualitative study to test the

contingency theory. They interviewed 18 public relations practitioners to see if the continuum made sense to them. They also tested the validity of variables that would possibly affect how public relations practitioners and their respective organizations deal with a crisis. These 18 public relations practitioners were all middle- or upper-level managers in different organizations.

There are 86 variables that affect an organization's stance. The combination of factors determines how an organization responds to its publics. There are two types of variables: a predisposing variable, which indicates an organization original stance on the continuum; and a situational variable, which moves its stance along the continuum during a crisis (Cameron et al., 1997).

The most supported predisposing variables include corporation size, corporation culture, business exposure, individual characteristics, dominant coalition enlightenment and public relations access to dominant coalition. On the other hand, the urgency of situation, characteristics of the external public's claims or requests, characteristics of external public, potential or obvious threats, and potential costs or benefits for a corporation are the most supported situational variables (Cameron et al., 1999).

Crisis Communication in the Social Media Context

Social media platforms, such as blogs, Facebook and Twitter are free for the expression of ideas and information. Using online platforms to convey crisis responses has become a new way for public relations specialists to reach their publics.

Social media allows individuals to become sources of information online “sharing opinions, insights, experiences and perspectives with others” (Marken, 2007, p. 10). Twitter especially has been used for many crisis cases such as the 2010 Haiti earthquake

to share initial information. People who are directly affected by the crisis now have the firsthand information and willing to post it online immediately. Not only private individuals, but also news media and government agencies have adapted to social media environments and have started to share information online.

Contingency Theory as Applied to a Crisis Management Case in China

There are cases shows that contingency theory has been used to analyze crises in China in recent years. For example, in 2007, Yan Jin, Augustine Pang and Glen Cameron performed a content analysis on how Singapore and Chinese resolved the SARS crisis. This is the one of few studies that examined crisis communication at a national level. In this study, they used the contingency theory of conflict management to analyze how the governments managed their public and the stances they took during the crisis.

This research compared two governments at three levels: 1) the strategies they used to manage the emotions of the public; 2) the ways they identified the key publics; and 3) how the two governments' stances moved along the continuum through out the crisis life cycle (Jin et al., 2007). During the research, they used articles from major newspapers of Singapore and China from March 18, 2003 to June 7, 2003.

The research results showed that the pattern of crisis strategies the Chinese government used fit within the contingency theory. The stance of the government varied based on different types of publics and the lifecycle of the crisis. This study guides my project. I also would like to see any changes in the social media context.

Research Question

What crisis response strategies used by the Chinese government were in evidence in the micro-blog posts of four government official accounts regarding the smog crisis from February 20 to 28, 2014, in Beijing? In what ways did they differ, comparing the government owned media accounts and government agency accounts?

Methodology

In order to investigate how the Chinese government responded to the Beijing's smog crisis that occurred in February 20 to 28, 2014 by participating in China's micro-blogging site (Weibo in Chinese), a quantitative content analysis will be conducted to examine the related posts from four Weibo accounts – People's Daily, CCTV News, Beijing Announcement (Information Office of Beijing Municipality Government) and The Central People's Government.

Traditional Content Analysis

It is important to study communication content because it is believed to be effective on changing human behavior (Krippendorff, 1980). Content analysis is a scientific tool, which could be both quantitative and qualitative (Krippendorff, 2012). It is, by definition, “a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication” (Berelson, 1952, p.18). The purposes of content analysis, as Wimmer and Dominick (2006) have concluded, are: describing communication content, testing hypotheses of message characteristics, comparing media content to the real world, assessing the image of societal groups, and establishing a starting point for studies of media effects (p.157-159).

This research fulfills mainly the second, fourth and fifth purposes. I coded the Weibo post content into different crisis response strategies, which show the message characteristics. Also, by analyzing the crisis response strategies, this study looked at the stances that Chinese government took during the crisis, which indicated the government's social image. Finally, social media and government crisis management are relatively new in China. Only in recent years has the Chinese government started to open Weibo

accounts to interact with its citizens. There is handful research in these areas. This study combines these two topics (social media and government crisis government), and sets the stage for future investigation.

This research follows Riffe et al.'s (2006) five-step procedure in quantitative content analysis. The first step is to formulate a research question or hypothesis and review previous related research; second, to perform the content sampling, which follows the procedure of survey sampling; third, to write a code book and identify analysis categories and units; fourth, to train coders and calculate inter-coder reliability; and fifth, analyze the coded data.

Although content analysis has been considered as an objective and systematic research method (Berelson, 1952), there are still several limitations (Guthrie, Petty, Yongvanich & Ricceri, 2004). The major limitation is the subjectivity involved in the coding process (Frost and Wilmshurst, 2000). Since I was the only one coder in this study, I needed to take great care in coding for issues of validation and reliability.

Internet Content Analysis

The Web-based content shows some unique characteristics when compared to traditional communication content. It changes constantly and represents real-time situation, which provided both challenges and opportunities in sampling and coding, at each step of the traditional content analysis (McMillan, 2000).

McMillan (2000) analyzed 19 studies that used content analyses on Web sites. She concluded that the dynamics of changing web content made the sampling procedure much harder than with a traditional content analysis. She also found that a common technique in Web content analysis is to use the search engine. This is exactly what I did

in my sampling process. The Weibo has its own search functions in each account. If I put several key words related to the smog crisis into the search bar, then it gave me all the posts since the account that contain one of the key words opened.

Although challenges exist for Web-based content analysis, it helps reduce the cost of data collection because of its availability. Presently researchers can access the data through electronic databases almost anywhere they want (Lin & Weare, 2000).

Content Analysis in Crisis Management Studies

A lot of studies also use content analysis to examine Web-based content, such as social media posts, online press releases and consumer comments. Choi and Lin (2009) conducted a content analysis of consumer online responses (comments) about a product recall crisis. In their study, they retrieved the comments from an online bulletin board and coded the comments into ten different emotional categories. Similarly, Cho and Hong (2009) used a quantitative content analysis to examine 239 corporate social responsibility stories and to categorize them into six different types. Unlike other studies, Cho and Hong's study got the stories from both traditional newspapers and websites.

Quantitative content analysis has been widely used in crisis management studies. Jin, Pang and Cameron (2007) performed a content analysis that compared stances and strategies taken by the Chinese and Singapore governments during the SARS crisis. They analyzed the articles from newspapers in two countries. The articles were collected in about four month's time, from the SARS hit to the eradication SARS free. Then, the researchers used the search engines in both newspapers' website and extracted the articles from online archives. My present investigation replicates the sampling procedure that used in this study, because online search engines are needed to find the relevant posts.

Sampling and Procedures

This study retrieved original posts from four major government-controlled Sina Weibo accounts (approximately 400 posts). Since I analyzed the strategies and stances the Chinese government took, the responses of the posts were included, because the search engine on Sina Weibo is not programmed to retrieve relevant comments made by other members.

Data Collection

The data was collect from Sina Weibo, a Twitter-like Chinese micro-blog website (Qu, Huang & Zhang, 2011). Sina Corporation launched it in August 2009 (China Daily, 2011). By December 2012, the number of registered users on Sina Weibo reached more than 400 million (Gao, 2013).

There are several other micro-blog services in China, which include Tencent Weibo (the owner of qq.com) and Sohu Weibo. The reason I choose Sina Weibo from all other services are: first, Sina Weibo is the most known micro-blog service with biggest user group; second, there are five more developed provinces (Beijing, Shanghai, Guangdong, Zhejiang, Jiangsu) that comprise about 52 percent of all Sina Weibo users, whereas Tencent Weibo is more likely used in second-tier or third-tier cities (Guo, Tu, Z. Li & L. Li, 2012); third, Sina Weibo provides a user identification system that requires users to provide real information to be a VIP.

This study collected the posts related to “smog” during February 20 to 28, 2014 on four government official Sina Weibo accounts. February 20, 2014 was the day when Beijing had severe smog that hit the recorded levels of [over 400](#) on the air pollution index, referring to the number of PM2.5 -- harmful particulates measuring 2.5 microns or

larger -- per cubic meter of air (CNN, 2014). Eight days later on February 28, the smog eased after a heavy rain.

The posts were retrieved from December 1, 2013 to May 24, 2014. Since a crisis is a continuous process that needs a great amount of time to develop, but also would affect citizen during the time after the crisis, the time frame of the posts has been divided to three parts: pre-crisis (December 1, 2013 to February 19, 2014, which are 12 weeks in total), during crisis (February 20 to 28, 2014) and post-crisis (March 1st to May 24, which are 12 weeks in total).

Coding

This study coded the stance and response strategies used by the Chinese government during the smog crisis. Certain variables used by Jin et al. (2007) were chosen to analyze in this study.

Variables

The variables will be coded in this study were:

1. The overall impression on the stance of the Chinese government (measured on a seven point Likert scale with 1 as “Strong Advocacy” to 7 as “Strong Accommodation”)
2. Crisis management strategies employed by Chinese government:
 - a. Attack
 - b. Denial
 - c. Excuse
 - d. Justification
 - e. Corrective action

- f. Ingratiation
- g. Cooperation
- h. Full Apology

The study conducted by Jin et al. (2007) combined Coomb's (1998) crisis communication strategies into the contingency theory proposed by Cancel, Cameron, Sallot and Mitrook (1997). Then, they proposed a list of specific definition of each strategy:

- a. Attack – confronting the party and actively advocating that it follows a certain course of action to help fight the crisis.
- b. Denial – state that the culpability does not rest with the party in question, or denying that the crisis is of any consequence
- c. Excuse – minimizing the party's responsibility for the crisis and/or shifting responsibility for the crisis to an external factor.
- d. Justification – the party explaining why it has to take a certain course of action.
- e. Corrective action – the party actively taking a course of action that is meant to address the problem in sight.
- f. Ingratiation – the party actively taking a course of action that is meant to make the other party approve of its actions, leading to a favorable impression.
- g. Cooperation – the party making overtures to reach out the other party with the goal of resolving the problem.

h. Full Apology – the party taking full responsibility for the crisis and asking for forgiveness, with the promise of some form of compensation that comes with the apology (Jin, et al., p.35).

Other information to be coded:

1. The source of posts
2. The date of posts

If there was a post reflected more than one strategy, I only chose the one that seemed more relevant.

Results

Data Interpretation

A total of 391 Weibo posts were chosen to analyze in this study. After filtering out the duplicate posts, 303 posts were valid and coded into the SPSS for further statistical analysis.

Among all 303 posts, five were coded as reflecting the “Excuse” strategy (1.7 percent), 121 reflecting the “Justification” strategy (39.9 percent), 122 reflecting the “Corrective Action” strategy (40.3 percent), 47 reflecting the “Ingratiation” strategy (15.5 percent), and eight reflecting the “Cooperation” strategy (2.6 percent). “Attack,” “Denial” and “Full Apology” strategies were not reflected in the posts.

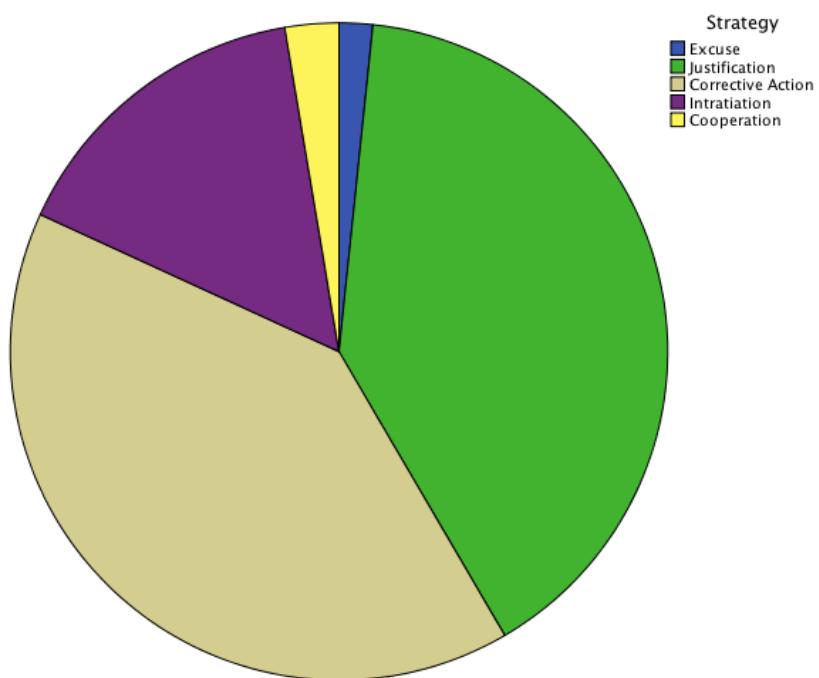


Figure 12 Percentage of different strategies reflected in the Weibo posts

Posts during Three Different Phrases

During the pre-crisis phrase, there were 142 posts related to “smog.” After being divided by 12 (12 weeks), the average number of posts per week was 11.8. During the crisis phrase, there were 49 posts coded. For the post-crisis phrase, 112 posts were related to “smog.” After being divided by 12, the average number of posts per week was 9.3.

The means of stance (level of accommodation) during three different time phrases were compared using a one-way ANOVA. No significant difference was found ($F(2, 300) = 0.521, p > .05$). The level of accommodation the posts reflected during three difference phrases did not differ significantly from each other. The level of accommodation during pre-crisis phrase had a mean score of 5.27 ($sd = 1.11$). The level of accommodation during crisis phrase had a mean score of 5.22 ($sd = 1.23$). Finally, the level of accommodation during post-crisis phrase had a mean score of 5.39 ($sd = 1.17$).

A chi-square test of independence was calculated comparing the frequency of different strategies at three different phrases. No significant relationship was found ($\chi^2(8) = 13.124, p > 0.05$). The strategies reflected in the posts were not depended on the different time phrases.

Stance Reflected in Two Types of Government Weibo Accounts

The mean score of the stance (level of accommodation) among four accounts was 5.3 ($sd = 1.15$), which falls between “Little Accommodation” and “Accommodation”.

An independent-sample t test comparing the mean score of level of accommodation between government agency Weibo account and government controlled media Weibo account found a significant different between the means of the two groups ($t(301) = -6.522, p < .05$). The mean of level of recommendation reflected in the posts

from government controlled media group ($m = 5.059$, $sd = 1.17$) was significantly lower than reflected from government agency group.

sourcetype	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Stance Media	220	5.0591	1.17086	.07894
Government	83	5.9639	.77216	.08476

Table 3 Mean score of stance between two types of accounts

Stance Reflected in Four Government Weibo Accounts

I computed a one-way ANOVA comparing the stance (level of accommodation) from four different Weibo accounts. A significant difference was found among the four accounts ($F (3, 299) = 25.595$, $p < .05$). Tukey's HSD was used to determine the nature of the difference among the four accounts. This analysis revealed that posts from CCTV News reflected lower level of recommendation ($m = 4.75$, $sd = 1.05$) than the People's Daily ($m = 5.51$, $sd = 1.19$), Beijing Announcement ($m = 5.91$, $sd = 0.78$) and The Central People's Government ($m = 5.31$, $sd = 1.15$). Moreover, the level of accommodation reflected in the People's Daily was not significantly different from the Beijing Announcement and The Central People's Government. Also, the level of accommodation reflected in the Beijing Announcement was not significantly different from The Central People's Government.

Stance

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
People's Daily	90	5.5111	1.19215	.12566	5.2614	5.7608	4.00	7.00
CCTV News	130	4.7462	1.05148	.09222	4.5637	4.9286	3.00	7.00
Beijing Announcement	66	5.9091	.77910	.09590	5.7176	6.1006	4.00	7.00
The Central People's Government	17	6.1765	.72761	.17647	5.8024	6.5506	4.00	7.00
Total	303	5.3069	1.14865	.06599	5.1771	5.4368	3.00	7.00

Table 4 Mean scores of stance among four different accounts
S

Strategies Reflecting in Two Types of Government Weibo Accounts

A chi-square test of independence was calculated comparing the frequency of different strategies between two types of government Weibo accounts. A significant interaction was found ($\chi^2 (4) = 31.866$, $p < 0.05$). The government-controlled media Weibo accounts were more likely to reflect the “Excuse” strategy (2.3 percent) than the government agency Weibo accounts (0 percent), more likely to reflect the “Justification” strategy (48.2 percent compared to 18.1 percent), less likely to reflect the “Corrective Action” strategy (36.4 percent compared to 50.6 percent), less likely to reflect “Ingratiation” the strategy (10.5 percent compared to 28.9 percent), and more likely to reflect the “Cooperation” strategy (2.7 percent compared to 2.4 percent).

		Type of Account
Strategy	Government-controlled media Account	Government Agency Account
Excuse	2.3%	0.0%
Justification	48.2%	18.1%
Corrective Action	36.4%	50.6%
Ingratiation	10.5%	28.9%

Cooperation	2.7%	2.4%
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Table 5 Percentage of strategies reflected in the two types of accounts

Strategies Reflecting in Two Types of Government Weibo Accounts

A chi-square test of independence was calculated comparing the frequency of different strategies among four different Weibo accounts. A significant interaction was found ($\chi^2 (12) = 58.285, p < 0.05$). The percentages of strategies reflected in the four different accounts are listed below.

Strategy	Source			
	People's Daily	CCTV News	Beijing Announcement	The Central People's Government
Excuse	0%	3.8%	0%	0%
Justification	35.6%	56.9%	21.2%	5.9%
Corrective Action	42.2%	32.3%	51.5%	47.1%
Ingratiation	16.7%	6.2%	24.2%	47.1%
Cooperation	5.6%	0.8%	3.0%	0%

Table 6 Percentage of strategies reflected in the four different accounts

Only posts from CCTV news reflected the “Excuse” strategy, and more “Justification” strategy than in the other three accounts. Posts from the Beijing Announcement reflected more “Corrective Action” than the other three accounts. Posts from The Central People’s Government reflected more “Ingratiation” strategy than other three accounts. Finally, the People’s Daily reflected more “Cooperation” strategy than other three accounts.

Conclusion and Discussion

By analyzing the Weibo posts from four government accounts, it could be concluded that social media have became an very important tools for governments to not only communicate with their citizens, but also promote reputations and good images regarding social crisis. The Chinese government is willing to accommodate its citizens and make promises for future actions on social media, instead of remaining silence like some tradition media forms would normally do.

This study revealed several significant findings. The first one is that the Chinese government tended to adopt an accommodative stance towards the social crisis of smog on social media (Weibo). Moreover, instead of showing attack or denial strategies, as suggested in some traditional media, it's more likely to reflect several accommodative strategies like justification or corrective action.

Why does the Chinese government seem like to try to be more accommodative on social media? There are several explanations for this situation. First, social media is an open platform for Chinese citizens. Anyone could register an account online without showing identification. Although it is not fully “open” since there is still government censorship such as deleting seditious comments or forcing to close personal accounts, it is still a quite effective place to spread ideas and promote interactions compared to traditional media.

Additionally, social media are less controllable than traditional media. Traditional media like newspapers have an editorial process that could be censored before a new article is released. Although some social media have automatic censorship systems that could detect sensitive words, and prevent users from sending the posts out, there are

always ways to get around it. For example, if the word “sex” were detected as a sensitive word, most of people would type it as “se2x” in order to get through the system; the deleting process is not automatic. The Chinese government actually hired a large amount of people delete posts, which is time consuming.

Moreover, China has a very special media environment that its citizens sometimes believe in information on social media more than that in traditional media, because of a long-time media censorship. Although the situation has gotten better in recent years, the scrutiny on traditional media still cannot be ignored, which has made social media even more “credible.” Based on this situation, the Chinese government actually made a smart move to choose a more accommodative stance and strategies on social media. Around five years ago, when there was no social media platform, the traditional media would stay silent on some sensitive topics, especially on crises.

However, on social media, it is not easy to stay in silence anymore. Even the government could control official media accounts, it is too hard to monitor millions of people’s social media activities in every seconds. Therefore, the Chinese government has used a “stealing thunder” strategy to show their stance and to promise some corrective actions before critiques from Chinese citizens.

The second significant finding is that when comparing two types of government accounts (government-controlled media accounts vs. government agency accounts), the posts from media accounts showed a less accommodative stance. Also, among four accounts, posts from CCTV News showed the lowest level of accommodation, which almost falls between “Neutral” and “Little Accommodation”.

There were several reasons that might explain this finding. First, we can consider

the nature of media. The media are supposed to be objective on news, by only providing facts with minimal opinions. Some posts from CTV News and the People's Daily mainly described the situation like "the emergency level of smog," temperature and how harmful the smog might be to human body.

The second reason might be the function of the government social media account in China. As I mentioned earlier, the Chinese government tends to use the social media to interact with its citizens and get comments on current policies. However, due to the Internet censorship, it might just be an appease strategy that gives Chinese citizens a way to express their disappointments and negative emotions (without seditious languages). By doing so, it might prevent physical actions intended to attack the government. If we take this point into consideration, it might explain why the government agency account would show a more accommodative stance: the existence of these accounts is to appease the citizens.

The third significant finding is that the posts from the government-controlled media accounts are more likely to provide explanations (justification strategy) for the smog crisis (of course the explanations are not directed to the government), while the posts from government-agency accounts make promises for the future, such as establishing policies to secure a better environment and clean the air. This finding could be also explained by my previous point that the government agency account would endeavor to accommodate its citizens to avoid physical or even cyber attacks on the government by citizens.

The second factor to explain this finding is the function of media. Although the media should be neutral on the content, I still believe one of its functions is to be an

advocate. The only question is an advocate for “whom.” Since the Chinese government controls CCTV News and the Peoples’ Daily, it is not hard to know their main function is to advocate for itself, not its citizens. Also, there is a very interesting phenomenon in China that the government is trying so hard to create the illusion that it doesn’t control some media, and wishes its citizen to believe it. Therefore, the government might think its citizens would believe more in the media accounts (controlled ones), which made non-government related excuses for the smog crisis. On the other hand, to interact with the controlled media accounts, the government agency accounts would make several promises in an attempt to appease the citizens, to tell them that the government is making great effort to solve the problem.

Although the Chinese government shows a very positive attitude towards dealing with social crises on social media, due to the continuous Internet censorship, the effectiveness of the interactive function of the government accounts is reduced. Moreover, it is highly possible that the Chinese government uses these accounts to mainly prevent the physical gathering and attack of government agencies.

This study has several limitations. First, it didn’t consider the specific type of crisis. The smog crisis this study chose had complex causes. Some people blamed the government for heavy industry, but others considered it a natural disaster. In future studies, the research could choose a human-error crisis that was caused directly by the government to see how it uses social media to show stances.

Second, this study didn’t look at the interaction between the government and citizens on social media, because I did not take comments from citizens into consideration. Interaction is actually a very important aspect when analyzing social

media use. However, due to the media censorship in China, it is difficult to get comments from both positive and negative sides. Most of the negative comments were deleted within a couple of minutes. For the future studies, it might be good to analyze the citizens' side to see how they interact with their government on social media, or to see if the government's stance might change based on the negative comments.

Third, this study only chose four accounts on a single social media platform, because of the time limitations. For future studies, the researchers might look into more accounts (both local and national) to see how different levels of government respond to the same social crisis. They can also analyze the media accounts that are not directly related to the Chinese government.

Finally, though Weibo is the most popular social media platform in China right now, there are other platforms that are worth studying, such as Tencent Blog and Renren. Future researchers should look into several social media platforms to find whether the government might show different stances within different platforms.

Project Proposal

Appendix

Introduction

I came to study at the Missouri School of Journalism in 2009. I have completed my undergraduate studies in Strategic Communication in 2012, and right now in the graduate program with the same emphasize area.

During my undergrad years, I took basic journalistic classes like reporting, which I learned how to write and edit in AP style. I also took several strategic communications classes like account management, visual design and strategic communication research. I was lucky to meet a lot of helpful professors that guided me through the whole process. Finally, I discovered my passion in public relations.

I didn't have chance to take any public relations classes until I was in graduate program. At the first semester I took principles of public relations and found myself really into it. I also took crisis management class, which would guide me through the research component of my project. At second semester, I took public relations writing and public relations technique (event planning). The skills I learned from these classes enhanced my professional performance in work settings.

Since I have an international background, I really want to know how PR works in a different cultural context. PR is actually a new industry in China, but in United States and other western countries, it is pretty mature. I want to compare how the PR industry differs in United States and China and how I can bring back the newest knowledge of it.

I had an internship at MSL Group in Shanghai, China last summer. It is one of the top 10 public relations agencies in United States. I assisted with media relations, such as keeping in touch with the major media outlets around China to dispatch press releases,

especially before and after our brand's major events. I also edited various English written materials, such as fact sheets, feature stories, and blog posts. As I was doing this internship, my professional goal got clearer and clearer that I wanted to be a public relations specialist.

Besides working in PR agencies, I also had experience working for non-profit organizations. I had an internship in my junior year that was related to public affairs and government relations. I went to Brussels and worked for Ertico-ITS Europe, which was a non-profit organization and leading members of the European Commission, Ministries of Transport and the European Industry. During my internship, I needed to get in touch with global manufactures and several government agencies including agencies from other European Union countries. I really enjoyed working in the governmental settings. This experience directed to pursuit my professional project at Washington D.C, since it is much like Brussels that both cities are political capitals. Also, there are lots of non-profits organizations in Washington D.C. that handle international issues, from which I can gain great experience to better prepare for job market.

This project would help me achieve both of my academic and career goals. After my graduation, I want to work for a public relations agency or a non-profit organization that analyze public affairs issues, such as manage government's crisis responses, promote a particular policy or advise for relationship management between government and its stakeholders. This goal also goes along with my research part of project that I want to analyze Chinese government's crisis response through social media. I have learned content analysis and the use of SPSS software to interpret data from quantitative research class. These skills would help me through my research component.

Professional Skills

I have been accepted in School of Journalism's Washington Program this summer and will finish my project there. I will work at Bridging Nations Foundation as Marketing/ Social Media intern. My internship will start at June 2, 2014 to September 4, 2014. I will work 30 hours a week from Monday to Thursday and attend seminars offered by the program on Friday.

Since my title includes both marketing and social media, my duties are also contain two parts. For the marketing part, I will help maintain marketing database and social media platforms while creating and distributing content that promotes the mission of the organization; coordination with event planning and other teams to integrate social media and marketing strategies into overall operations; research to stay current with relevant social media and marketing trends; assist program coordinator with programming strategy; occasionally create ads and promotional materials to promote events, initiatives, and programs.

For the social media part, I will help pitch and/or write featured content for blogs and social media for the organization, coming up with marketing strategies, reaching out to niche bloggers, and researching current events.

This internship fits well with my project since my research component is about social media and China's environmental crisis. One of the missions of Bridging Nations Foundation is about environment and sustainability of developing countries. I can get a better idea about environment issues while working there. Also, I can work in a social media environment throughout the internship, which would help me keep catching the trending in social media area.

My cultural (Chinese) background is really helpful in pursuing this internship.

The Bridging Nations Foundation I will work for has an Indian-China-US center that I can use my bilingual skills.

Also, my education background is going to help me do my job. After five years of study in strategic communication, I am equipped with the skills to complete this internship. Because of my journalism background, I can write fast with appropriate AP style. My previous experience in public relations provides me with the knowledge of event planning, brand promotion and social media management. The visual design classes I took can help me with crafting promotional materials. Moreover, I earned a Business minor in my undergrad years that I am familiar with various marketing skills such as marketing research and strategic planning.

Throughout this internship, I will include the following materials into my final project report – blog articles, pitch letters, fact sheets, social media promotional materials, and client correspondence. My direct supervisor will be Rosemarie Johnson, the head of communication/social media department. Professor Wesley G. Pippert from Washington Program will also visit me at workplace and provide onsite assistance in Washington D.C.

The Analysis Component

Research Question

I want to investigate how the Chinese government response to social crisis by participating in China's micro-blogging (Weibo in Chinese).

RQ: What crisis responses strategies used by Chinese government, were in evidence in the posts from micro-blog posts of four government official accounts, regarding to the

smog crisis from February 20 to 28, 2014, in Beijing? How did they differ compare between the government owned media accounts and government agency accounts?

I will use content analysis to answer what crisis responses strategies the Chinese government used in smog crisis as obtained from micro-blog posts. The major components of my research questions are: crisis management and social media.

This research will be written as an academic article.

Theoretical Framework

Crisis Management

The theoretical foundation of my research is contingency theory in crisis management. Crisis is inevitable to all organizations. Crisis is a sense of threat, urgency, and destruction that provides high uncertainty to an organization (Seeger, Sellnow & Ulmer, 2003).

Contingency theory of accommodation, also known as “It depends” theory is an alternative to theory of excellence in public relation. It was proposed by Amanda Cancel, Glen Cameron, Lynne Sallot and Michel Mitrook in 1997. Unlike James Grunig’s theory of excellence, which is based on two-way symmetrical communication model in public relations, contingency theory is more about indicating “what is going to be the most effective method at a given time”(Cameron, Cancel, Sallot & Mitrook, 1997, p. 35). It represents a more accurate model of how public relations is practiced in real world (Cameron, Cancel & Mitrook, 1999)

The contingency theory was required by the dynamic nature of crisis. Crisis management has four stages in its life cycle – proactive phase, strategic phase, reactive phase, and recovery phase. Proactive phase is the one that identify issues and key publics.

Strategic phase stands for the time to make plans that could respond to future issues.

Reactive phase is the time that crisis is happening. Lastly, recovery phase stands for the time after a crisis happened (Cameron, Wilcox, Reber & Shin, 2008).

The boundaries of the four phases are not strictly clear. However, it's still important to identify the crisis life cycle, in order to get effective crisis management. In each stage of a crisis, an organization might need to choose a different stance based on the given situation.

Also, contingency theory recognized that it's possible that there were multiple publics an organization should address to in a given time. Since sometimes publics can be dynamic and difficult to reach. The stance taken to respond to them must be equally dynamic (Cameron et al., 1997).

The contingency theory is based on a continuum from pure accommodation to pure advocate. When there is a crisis, an organization must choose its stance, which determines its strategies. An organization's stance is shaped by many complex factors. "It depends" as a system of managing crisis has been proved use for to monitor and control the course of crisis (Cameron et al., 1997).

Advocate is one of the major functions for a public relations practitioner (Smith, 1972). J. Grunig (J. Grunig & L. Grunig, 1990) also made similar comment. He wrote "Many, if not most, practitioners consider themselves to be advocates for or defenders of their organizations and cite the advocacy system in law as an analogy" (p. 32). Advocate stance can be seen as denial, excuse, etc.

On the other hand, being an accommodator is another core function of public relation practitioners. It serves the role of building and maintaining a mutually dependent

relationship between an organization and its public (Cutlip, Center & Broom, 1985).

Accommodation stance could be referred as the words like dialogue, compromise, collaboration or cooperation.

Cameron et al. (1997) then proposed, “Public relations practitioners must typically choose, either consciously or by default, a stance somewhere between pure advocacy and pure accommodation. (p.37)”

In 1999, Cameron, Cancel and Mitrook conducted some qualitative research to test the contingency theory. They interviewed 18 public relations practitioners to see if the continuum would make sense to them. They also tested the validity of variables that would possibly affect how public relations practitioners and their respective organizations deal with a crisis. These 18 public relations practitioner were all middle- or upper-level managers in different organizations.

There are 86 variables of factors that affect an organization’s stance. The combination of factors determines how an organization response to its publics. There are two types of variables: predisposing variable, which indicates an organization original stance on continuum; and situational variables, which moves its stance alone the continuum during a crisis (Cameron et al., 1997).

The most supported predisposing variable include corporation size, corporation culture, business exposure, individual characteristics, dominant coalition enlightenment and public relations access to dominant coalition.

On the other hand, the urgency of situation, characteristics of external public’s claims or requests, characteristics of external public, potential or obvious threats, and potential cost or benefit for a corporation are the most supported situational variables

(Cameron et al., 1999).

Crisis Communication in Social Media Context

Social media platforms, such as blogs, Facebook and Twitter are free for expression of ideas and information. Using online platform to convey crisis responses has become a new way for public relations specialist to reach their publics.

Social media allows individuals to become sources of information online “sharing opinions, insights, experiences and perspectives with others” (Marken, 2007, p. 10). Especially, Twitter has been used for many crisis cases, such as the 2010 Haiti earthquake, to share initial information. People, who are directly affected by the crisis, now have the firsthand information and willing to post it online immediately.

Not only private individuals, but also news media and government agencies have adapted to social media environment and started to share information online.

Contingency Theory as Applied to a Crisis Management Case in China

There are cases that show contingency theory has been used to analyze crisis in China in recent years.

In 2007, Yan Jin, Augustine Pang and Glen Cameron did content analysis about how Singapore and Chinese resolved SARS crisis. This is the one of few studies that examined crisis communication in a national level. In this study, they used the contingency theory of conflict management to analyze how the governments managed their publics and the stance they took during the crisis.

This research compared two governments at three levels: 1) the strategies they use to manage the emotions of their public; 2) the ways they identified their key publics; 3)

how did the two governments' stances moved along the continuum through out the crisis life cycle (Jin et al., 2007).

During the research, they derived articles from major newspapers of Singapore and China from March 18th, 2003 to June 7th, 2003.

The research results showed that the pattern of crisis strategies Chinese government used fitted in the contingency theory. The stance of the government varied based on different types of publics and lifecycle of crisis.

This study could guide my project. I also would like to see if there is anything changes or not in social media context.

Literature Review

Crisis Response Strategies and Crisis Responsibility

Coombs (1998) defined that “Crisis responsibility represents the degree to which stakeholders blame the organization for the crisis event” (p.180). There are three factors that would potentially affect the perception of crisis responsibility: crisis attribution, organizational performance and severity of the crisis (p.181).

Weiner introduced the theory of Attribution in 1980s. In his model, he pointed out the three causal dimensions of attribution, which are the locus of the behavior, the stability of the behavior and the controllability of the behavior. If we combine his mode to crisis situation, we can see that the locus of behavior indicates if a crisis is caused by internal or external factor, stability means if the crisis is temporary or constantly happen and controllability shows if a crisis if within or without an organization's control (Weiner, 1985).

The Theory of Attribution has been used in crisis communication field for a long

time, especially for post-crisis guidance. As people are curious about the cause of an event that's related to them (Weiner, 1985), it's natural for stakeholders to attribute responsibility after crisis. Then, the attributions people made after a crisis would in turn affect organization's reputation (Coombs & Holladay, 2005)

Coombs (1998) mentioned in his research that crisis communication strategies could be used to protect an organization's image. Then he identified seven different strategies from full apology (accommodative) to attack (defensive). Crisis responsibility and strategy are linked together. Benoit (1995) also concluded that if an organization was seen as more responsible for a crisis, it was more effective to choose an accommodative strategy than defensive one.

Internet Censorship in China

During the past decade, the Internet was a booming industry in China. According to a survey conducted by the China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC), the number of Internet users in China has reached 253 million by July 2008, which surpassed the U.S. and became the world's largest Internet market (CNNIC, 2010). In 2010, the number continued to grow to 420 million (Yu, Asur & Huberman, 2011).

Although China has the most Internet users around the world, the Internet penetration is still as low as 5.1% in rural areas. By contrast, in the metropolitan cities such as Shanghai, the Internet penetration rate is over 45% (CNNIC, 2010). Along with the growth of Internet, social networks have become a major platform for millennials in China to get information and make connections to each other (Yu, Asur & Huberman, 2011).

“Censorship of this sort is by definition designed to be complete, in that it aims to prevent *all* access to such resources.” (Bamman, O’Connor, & Smith, 2012, p. 2). One major part of China’s Internet censorship is filtering. Internet filtering is the process by which users accessing the Internet from a particular network are blocked from visiting certain Web sites (MacKinnon 2009).

There are various levels that filtering can be done: the household; local business or residential networks; Internet service providers (ISPs); regional network or national gateway level (Villeneuve, 2006).

In China, filtering is achieved at the gateway points through which information travels between the domestic Chinese Internet and the global Internet. By plugging “blacklisted” Web site addresses and keywords into the routers and software systems, the Chinese government is able to control the Internet traffic across Chinese domestic networks (Clayton, Murdoch & Watson, 2006).

MacKinnon (2009) identified several methods that Chinese government has used to censor Internet content. The major methods are: user is prevented to post at all; post is “held for moderation”; post is published in “private view,” but is never visible to the public; post is successfully published at first, but deleted or “unpublished” some time later; sensitive keywords or phrases are replaced with “***” but the post is otherwise published; the content is successfully published, but blocked to viewers attempting to read it from inside mainland China (p.6).

Social Media in China

Right now Chinese government has blocked some oversea popular social network sites like Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. However, several privately owned Chinese

Internet companies have developed their own social network platforms, such as Weibo, Renren, and Q-Zone, which have the similar functions as the social network sites in United States. Chui (2012) found out that Chinese Netizens tend to spend more than 40 percent of their time online on social media, and this figure is continuing to grow rapidly.

A report called released by Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China (2011) indicated that "The newly emerging online services, including blog, micro-blog, video sharing and social networking websites are developing rapidly in China and provide greater convenience for Chinese citizens to communicate online." (p.27) More than 80 percent of Chinese social media users have multiple accounts on different platforms. Besides that, they are more active than those of any other countries (Chui, 2012).

Micro-blog

Micro-blog services are the emerging form of informational online communication. The most popular micro-blog system around the world is Twitter. There are numerous research studies about Twitter, but only few for Sina Weibo, though it grows two times faster than Twitter (Guo, Li & Tu, 2011).

Similar to Twitter, Sina Weibo account has a user profile that shows the basic information, profile picture, the number of followers and all posts the user has made. Also, a Sina Weibo user can follow any other users without seeking permissions. On Weibo, if a user is following someone, he/she can receive all the messages from that user, and these messages are usually called tweets or posts (Cheng, Fu & Huang, 2013).

Besides functioning like Twitter, Weibo combines the advantage of Twitter, Facebook and even Skype. It allows users to upload and share pictures, videos, music and

books. It also provides services like instant message sharing, virtual meetings and open discussions (Wang & Zhou, 2013).

The Use of Micro-blog in Government

As social media gained huge influence in people's daily life, a lot of government agencies or organizations have adopted it as a way to communicate with general public. Wigand (2010) analyzed how United States government organizations have adopted Twitter as a way to build relationship with U.S. citizens. He stated five reasons for a government organization to use Twitter (p. 565):

- (1) Extending the reach of existing online messages such as news, speeches, web updates, and YouTube videos,
- (2) Building relationships with targeted audiences, stakeholders, and key influencers such as journalists and bloggers,
- (3) Providing an informal "human" voice to foster engagement and comprehension of messages,
- (4) Enabling audiences to interact easily with departments and officials, and
- (5) Providing ways for audience to subscribe to updates via RSS, email and SMS.

As both of these guides for using Twitter in government demonstrate, the uses of this simple and relatively inexpensive platform are proliferating as institutions adopt it.

Because of these advantages, Chinese government organizations have also adopted Micro-blog (especially Sina Weibo) in recent years. In 2009, Adweek published a survey indicated that 66 percent of communication specialists and government decision makers considered opinions expressed on social media were more influential than ones on other media and was the most influential communication channel in modern China

(Adweek, 2009). Micro-blog accounts with the name of a Chinese city have gained enormous popularity among Chinese citizens (Wang & Zhou, 2013). These accounts are typically launched, managed and owned by various governmental departments and organizations. They have attracted millions of followers and “promoted the overall image of cities with advertising and the promotion of full-scale city information, including city news, scenery, foods and other sources” (Wang & Zhou, 2013, p.29).

McKinsey released a report in early 2012 that indicated the number of government micro-blog accounts have reached 20,000. In October of 2012, the number of governmental micro-blog accounts changed to 50,561, increasing nearly 776.58% since 2011 (McKinsey, 2012). In 2012, Chinese Xinhuanet also reported that, there were more and more official government micro-blog accounts showing up to release new policies and information, and build cities’ image, under the concept of “Micro-blog for all people” (2012).

This article also showed an example of Guangzhou, the capital city of Guangdong Province, opened a new stage of “Microblog-Governance” (Xinhuanet, 2012). In their account (3.1 million followers by April 9, 2014), there is information of weather conditions, traffic regulation, major events and discussions about hot topics. Similarly, Hangzhou, the capital city of Zhejiang Province, opened an official micro-blog account (1.1 million followers by April 9, 2014), which highlighted the interaction between city government and its citizens, to promote the image of the city (Xinhuanet, 2012). In 2013, the Chinese Ifeng website stated that Nanjing, the capital city of Jiangsu Province, had integrated microblog, microfilms and online mobile App games for city branding (Ifeng, 2013).

Micro-blog and Crisis

Qu, Huang and Zhang (2011) did a case study about how micro-blogging had been used in crisis situation. They analyzed how Chinese citizens responded on Sina Weibo about Yushu Earthquake in 2010. They found that during that natural disaster, Sina Weibo was the most active place for Netizens to seek and share information, express their feelings and opinions. However, this crisis was a natural disaster that caused by uncontrollable external factors. It was hard to say who was responsible for it, so there were fewer comments that criticized the crisis itself.

Heverin and Zach (2010) also analyzed the roles that micro-blog sites were playing during a crisis. They chose a violent crisis that a suspect shot four police officers in the Seattle-Tacoma area of Washington in late November 2009.

They found that citizens, news media, and other types of organizations were using Twitter as one of the major methods to share crisis related information. The majority (79%) of the messages (tweets) they analyzed in the study were turn out to be information-related. Moreover, when they looked through the unique authors of about 6013 tweets, they found majority of the authors (91.5%) were citizens, followed by local and national media (p.2-3).

Besides being used by the affected public, micro-blogging has also been used by the organization involved in a crisis. Schultz, Utz, and Göritz (2011) concluded that crisis communication via Twitter would lead to less negative crisis reactions than blogs and newspaper articles. Moreover, when compared to blog users and non-social media users, Twitter users were more likely to share the messages.

However there is always a question when using social media as a communication channel during a crisis – how to distinguish rumors from other reliable information?

Social media sites like Facebook, Twitter and Weibo could not automatically tell the difference between reliable sources and rumors when they were posted.

The case of missing flight Malaysia Airline 370 is a good example. On March 8, 2014, Malaysia Airline released a statement confirming that they had lost contact with Flight 370. Since then, there were over 8.4 million posts on Sina Weibo that related to the topic “MH370”.

As Malaysia Airline released more statements about the condition of the flight, several conspiracy theories have come out. Some theories came from the relatives of some of the Flight 370 passengers and some were from Netizens on Sina Weibo. There were theories of cyber attack, alien abduction and hijacking, and the hijacking theory was the dominant one.

Mendoza, Poblete and Castillo (2010) conducted a research that they identified two categories of tweets: confirmed news and false rumors, and see how they were propagated on Twitter during Chile earthquake in 2010. They found that Twitter community actually had the ability to detect rumors, because it could work like a collaborative filter of information. Twitter users tended to question tweets in “false rumor” category more than ones in “confirmed news” category.

Context of the Study

The air pollution has been a critical issue for developing countries, especially in China and India. WHO recently released a report indicated that air pollution killed 7 million people each year. It also indicated that outdoor air pollution might cause

ischaemic heart disease, stroke, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, lung cancer and acute lower respiratory infections in children (2014). During last few months, Chinese government has faced the worst smog problem ever, which made the capital city Beijing an unpleasant place to visit. The same problem goes to New Delhi, India.

In the 2014 edition of Environment Performance Index, China and India were both the last ranked countries in regarding to air quality (CNN, 2014). According to an article on Scientific American, “nearly the entire population of both countries is exposed to harmful particulate matter less than 2.5 micrometers in diameter, known as PM2.5, which can penetrate human lung and blood tissue and contribute to lung disease and premature death.” (2014)

Although, this problem has attracted tons of media attentions, the national air quality measurement capabilities remain weak in most countries. It was impossible to compare two compare countries or even two cities’ air pollution. It’s necessary for countries to work together and build an international standard index to monitor the air pollution level.

On February 20, the Beijing Government issued its emergency smog alert system, first time since it was introduced last October. For more than five days, it showed repeatedly at second-highest warning level. ABC News reported that from February 20 to 25, the air pollution levels were measured above 450 on an air quality index, which was nine times the safe level for human beings (2014). On February 26, Beijing's official reading for PM 2.5 had reached 501 micrograms per cubic metre on, while the WHO's recommended safe limit is 25. WHO's representative in China started to describe this issue as an “environmental crisis” (SBS, 2014).

This smog crisis has raised a huge discussion on Sina Weibo. There were more than 7.8 million Weibo Post that were relate to the key word “smog” (雾霾) from February 20 to February 27. Although there were several reasons that may cause smog, such as automobile exhaust, Chinese citizens were tend to blame the government for heavy industry - power plants, chemical solvents, and even plastic popcorn packaging - around the city.

Methodology

In order to investigate how the Chinese government responded to the Beijing's smog crisis that happened in February 20 to 28, 2014 by participating in China's microblogging site (Weibo in Chinese), a quantitative content analysis will be conducted to examine the related posts from four Weibo accounts – People's Daily, CCTV News, Beijing Announcement (Information Office of Beijing Municipality Government) and The Central People's Government.

Traditional Content Analysis

It is important to study communication content because it was believed to be effective to change human behavior (Krippendorff, 1980). Content analysis is a scientific tool, which could be both quantitative and qualitative (Krippendorff, 2012). It is, by definition, “a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication” (Berelson, 1952, p.18)

The purposes of content analysis, as Wimmer and Dominick (2006) have concluded, are: describing communication content, testing hypotheses of message characteristics, comparing media content to the real world, assessing the image of societal groups, and establishing a starting point for studies of media effect (p.157-159).

This research is going to fulfill mainly the second, forth and fifth purposes. I will code the Weibo post content into different crisis response strategies, which would show the message characteristics. Also, by analyzing the crisis response strategies, this study is going to figure out the stances that Chinese government took during the crisis, which indicated the government's social image. Finally, social media and government crisis management are relatively new in China. Only in recent years, Chinese government has started to open Weibo account to interact with citizens. There is only a handful research in these areas. This study would combine these two topics and set the stage for future studies.

This research will follow Riffe et al.'s (2006) five-step procedure in quantitative content analysis. The first step is to formulate a research question or hypothesis and review previous related research; second, doing the content sampling, which follows the procedure of survey sampling; third, writing a code book and identify analysis categories and units; fourth, train coders and calculate inter-coder reliability; and fifth, analyze the coded data.

Although content analysis has been considered as an objective and systematic research method (Berelson, 1952), there are still several limitations (Guthrie, Petty, Yongvanich & Ricceri, 2004). The major limitation is the subjectivity involved in the coding process (Frost and Wilmshurst, 2000). Since I am the only one coder in this study, I need to pay more attention on this issue.

Internet Content Analysis

The Web-based content shows some unique characteristics when comparing to traditional communication content. It could change constantly and represent real-time

situation, which provided both challenges and opportunities at each step of traditional content analysis, such as sampling and coding (McMillan, 2000).

McMillan (2000) analyzed nineteen studies that used content analysis on Web site. She concluded that, the dynamic of changing web content made the sampling procedure much harder than traditional content analysis. She also found that a common technique in Web content analysis was to use the search engine. This is exactly what I want to do in my sampling process. The Weibo has its own search functions in each account. If I put several key words related to the smog crisis into the search bar, then it will give me all the posts since the account was opened that contain one of the key words.

Although challenges are out there for Web-based content analysis, it helps reduce the cost of data collection because of the availability. Right now researchers can access the data through electronic database in almost anywhere they want (Lin & Weare, 2000).

Content Analysis in Crisis Management Studies

Quantitative content analysis has been widely used in crisis management studies. Jin, Pang and Cameron (2007) did a content analysis to compare stances and strategies taken by Chinese and Singapore governments during the SARS crisis. They analyze the articles from newspapers in two countries. The articles were collected in about four months range, from SARS hit to SARS free. Then, the researchers used the search engines in both newspapers website and extracted the articles from online archive. This study is going to replicate the sampling procedure that used in this study, because online search engine is needed to find the relevant posts.

A lot of studies also use content analysis to examine Web-based content, such as social media post, online press release and consumer comments. Choi and Lin (2009)

conducted a content analysis of consumer online responses (comment) about a product recall crisis. In their study, they pull off the comments from an online bulletin board and coded the comments into ten different emotional categories. Similarly, Cho and Hong (2009) used quantitative content analysis to examine 239 corporate social responsibility stories, and categorize them into six different types. The different thing was, Cho and Hong's study got the stories from both traditional newspapers and website.

Sampling and Procedure

This study is going to take original posts from four major government management Sina Weibo accounts. Since I only want to analyze the strategies and stance the Chinese government has taken, the responses of the posts will not be included. Also, the search engine on Sina Weibo is not supported to pull out the relevant comments made by other members.

Data Collection

The data is collect from Sina Weibo, a Twitter like Chinese micro-blog website (Qu, Huang & Zhang, 2011). It was launched by Sina Corporation in August 2009 (China Daily, 2011). By December 2012, the number of registered users on Sina Weibo had reached more than 400 million (Gao, 2013).

There are several micro-blog services in China, which include Tencent Weibo (the owner of qq.com) and Sohu Weibo. The reason Sina Weibo is chosen from all other services are: first, Sina Weibo is the most known micro-blog service with biggest user group; second there are five more developed provinces (Beijing, Shanghai, Guangdong, Zhejiang, Jiangsu) that take about 52 percent of all Sina Weibo users, whereas Tencent Weibo is more likely used in second-tier or third-tier cities (Guo, Tu, Z. Li & L. Li,

2012); third Sina Weibo provides a user identification system that requires users to give real information to be a VIP.

This study will collect the posts related to “smog” during February 20 to 28, 2014 on four government official Sina Weibo accounts. February 20, 2014 was the day when Beijing had severe smog that hit the recorded levels of [over 400](#) on the air pollution index, referring to the number of PM2.5 -- harmful particulates measuring 2.5 microns or larger -- per cubic meter of air (CNN, 2014). Eight days later on February 28, the smog eased after a heavy rain.

The posts were retrieved from December 1st, 2013 to May 24th, 2014. Since crisis is a continuous process that not only needs a quite amount of time to develop, but also would affect the time after the crisis, the time frame of the posts has been divided to three parts: pre-crisis (December 1st, 2013 to February 19th, 2014, which are 12 weeks in total), during crisis (February 20th to 28th, 2014) and post-crisis (March 1st to May 24, which are 12 weeks in total).

Coding

This study is going to code the stance and response strategies used by Chinese government during smog crisis. The certain variables used by Jin el al. (2007) are chosen to analyze in this study.

Variables

The variables will be coded in this study would be:

3. The overall impression on the stance of the Chinese government (measured on a seven point Likert scale with 1 as “ Very Advocate” to 7 as “ Very Accommodate”)

4. Crisis management strategies employed by Chinese government

- a. Attack
- b. Denial
- c. Excuse
- d. Justification
- e. Corrective action
- f. Ingratiation
- g. Cooperation
- h. Full Apology

The study conducted by Jin et al. (2007) combined Coomb's (1998) crisis communication strategies into the contingency theory proposed by Cancel, Cameron, Sallot and Mitrook (1997). Then, they proposed a list of specific definition of each strategy (Jin, el al., p.35).

- i. Attack – confronting the party and actively advocating that it follows a certain course of action to help fight the crisis.
- j. Denial – state that the culpability does not rest with the party in question, or denying that the crisis is of any consequence
- k. Excuse – minimizing the party's responsibility for the crisis and/or shifting responsibility for the crisis to an external factor.
- l. Justification – the party explaining why it has to take a certain course of action.
- m. Corrective action – the party actively taking a course of action that is meant to address the problem in sight.

- n. Ingratiation – the party actively taking a course of action that is meant to make the other party approve of its actions, leading to a favorable impression.
- o. Cooperation – the party making overtures to reach out the other party with the goal of resolving the problem.
- p. Full Apology – the party taking full responsibility for the crisis and asking for forgiveness, with the promise of some form of compensation that comes with the apology.

Other information to be coded:

- 3. Source of posts
- 4. Date of posts

If there are posts reflect more than one strategy, only choose the one that fit best.

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