

BOOK REVIEW

SMART RISK GOVERNANCE AS THE FUTURE RISK COMMUNICATION

Mathilde Bourrier and Corinne Bieder (eds). (2018). Risk Communication for the Future: Towards Smart Risk Governance and Safety Management. (Geneva: Springer)

Every organization must have faced a crisis and it has its own ways in facing the varieties of crisis. The effort in facing this crisis needs a risk preparation which potentially becomes crisis or is commonly known as risk communication. Risk communication plays an important role in safety and risk knowledge which potentially faces crisis, yet in its practice risk communication is often emerged merely as a means of practice and guideline. This matter should be emphasized that risk communication also faces challenges in the near future as a part of safety management. This is proven by the extensive numbers of studies in facing risks, for instance disasters, disease breakouts, work accidents, and many more.

Before this book was published, experts had wanted to offer an abundant valuable perspective on risk communication and safety management. Through reflection in an effort to “communicate” safety risks and issues, a three-day workshop was held in April 2016 at Abbaye of Sorèze, near Toulouse, France. Contributors, international researchers from various scientific disciplines had been brought together in the domain of the NeTWork think tank. It has been the NeTwork’s tradition to cultivate the forging relationships between academics and practitioners. This very book has a clear example of that dialogue for the public. Furthermore, the publishing of this book was meant to be

a form of support and funding from FonCSI (Foundation for an Industrial Safety Culture).

This book consists of three major parts and is a collection of a number of scientific studies on crisis communication and safety management which is conducted by interested parties. The contents of this book are opened with an introduction to Risk Communication material entitled “Risk Communication 101: A Few Benchmark”, by Mathilde Bourrier. This opening chapter describes the practical position of crisis communication which contradicts expectations and does not take advantage of a variety of theories and approaches. The purpose of this chapter is to guide the reader to a typical person who is engaged in hustling activities. The aim is not to deliver a comprehensive overview, but rather to provide orientation in a field of high popularity; such as industry, public health institutions and public services.

Furthermore, this book has an explanation of Part I: Persuading in Peace Time: A Long Lasting Story. This section consists of four scientific articles. The title of the first scientific article is “Public Participation in the Debate on Industrial Risk in France: A Success Story?” by Caroline Kamaté. This article discusses public participation in debates related to industrial risks in France. The discussion includes studies on citizen participation, especially in envi-

ronmental issues based on literacy regarding perceptions related to industrial risk. However, many systems of participation and expression require further analysis of the benefits of dialogue between companies and existing local communities. The findings are based on case studies in the Industrial Zone in the Rhone Valley, Dunkirk, Le Havre and Marseille. This study focuses on the topic of 'coexisting in a hazardous industry'. This study was conducted on the Technological Risk Prevention Plan (PPRT) which serves as a local communication/consultation and initiation institution which encourages participation in industrial risk. The results show that industrial risks are not merely informed, but also foster participation from many parties to generate dialogue that was previously underutilized. This study will help readers what constraints create obstacles in the communication and participation process related to the topic of industrial risk.

The next section discusses Amandine Berger-Sabbatel and Benoit Journé's research entitled: *Organizing Risk Communication for Effective Preparedness: Using Plans as a Catalyst for Risk Communication*. This study emphasizes crisis preparedness as a problem for local governments. Even though crisis preparedness is a high-stakes responsibility, in fact it is still not a priority. IN France, local governments are involved only to some extent with preparedness by designing crisis response plans, but not at the operational level. This paper discusses the contribution of risk communication to effective crisis response preparedness. It needs to be acknowledged that the problems of tennis and organization are a drawback of preparedness, but researchers argue that the political and cognitive dimensions are equally important, though often overlooked. The use of risk communication plays an important role in developing organizational responses to the unexpected. Therefore, the researchers tried to analyze the activities of French risk managers to support local governments in increasing crisis preparedness in each existing organization. The researchers found that assisting local governments in breaking the rigidity of organizational response and increasing partici-

pation in response to a crisis, a manager using formal and technical means of cross-sectoral communication can improve the condition of organizational resilience in the face of a crisis.

Furthermore, the discussion refers to a study of the exact nature of the nuclear crisis written by the title: *Nuclear Crisis Preparedness Lessons Learned from Fukushima Daiichi*. Prior to the Fukushima Daiichi accident in 2011, it was known that the French Institute of Radiological Protection and Nuclear Safety or IRSN was little known to the French public. In general, safety procedures for dealing with crises related to nuclear accidents are complex and the public doesn't realize it. Moreover, it was difficult for the IRSN to gain public trust after the nuclear accident which occurred in Chernobyl in 1986. This communication approach caused the public to lose trust in an official institution. During the Fukushima Daiichi Crisis, it was recognized that the importance of communicating to the public, even though France is not a risky country. The operation of the IRSN was adapted for information to the French media, companies and public. A total of 200 IRSN staff members answered questions non-stop for six weeks as a form of interactive communication through social networks. Several years later, researchers from the IRSN conducted a situation study of Japanese citizens and expats in order to buy a Geiger counter. Next, they are trying to develop new censorship regarding the size and the way for the public to become addicted to accessing the internet, for people who duplicate/manipulate their opinions towards the awareness of the importance of nuclear risk. This is the reason for the IRSN in developing a strategy which not only provides useful basic information about the risk of nullification but also helps experts find out and share the data the public needs. In addition, the aim of informing the public about radioactive nuclear and other risks is to broaden public awareness. This strategy requires a means of communication and partners. IRSN partners with IFFO RME, the French Institute of Trainers on Major Risks and the Environment, an agency that has a special connection with the Ministry of National Education.

The next article is entitled “Risk Communication Between Companies and Local Stakeholders for Improving Accident Prevention and Emergency Response” written by Michael Baram and Preben Hempel Lindø. Both of the writers explain that a dangerous industrial area could pose a big risk of accidents. In recent years, two innovative approaches have been used to improve emergency response and improve accident prevention outside of conventional regulations, namely the Seveso and RMP models on a local company involvement in state regulations. Both may share information and increase participation between companies and stakeholders, hence to create intensive risk communication. These researchers examined both approaches in detail employing case studies of hazardous industrial locations in Norway and the United States. Moreover, they have identified barriers in the application. The researchers finally concluded that this approach could gain a corporate responsibility and formulate a more democratic, respectful, and responsive management of risk crisis for the population sector, where this very sector is the most vulnerable to large-scale industrial accidents.

The next discussion is the Part Two which consists of two studies. The second part is entitled: *When Reality Strikes Back: Tough Lessons to Be Learned from Crises*. The first article in the second part is entitled “How Risk Communication Can Contribute to Sharing Accurate Health Information for Individual Decision-Making An Empirical Study from Fukushima During a Post-emergency Period” written by Mariko Nishizawa. The researcher explains that risk communication is an established concept within the framework of a risk analysis. This concept is an infrastructure for conveying the results of research on a risk and its management, for sharing knowledge in safety matters, and exchanging views and values among stakeholders. However, the reality is that the nature of risk communication may in fact not be understood yet by experts and non-experts, hence there is a perception gap about this concept. Therefore, this study will show an empirical study conducted in Japan

between 2011 and 2012 after the Fukushima accident. The study describes the nuclear safety and health effects of radiation on local communities evaluated from radiation-exposed areas in Fukushima. It concludes that a carefully designed risk communication program can serve as an effective means to narrow the gap between experts and non-experts regarding risk concepts, and serve as a reliable source of safety information for decision making.

The second article in this second part is entitled, “Crisis Communication During the Ebola Outbreak in West Africa: The Paradoxes of Decontextualized Contextualization” written by Loïs Bastide. This article explains that as an organization involved in the response to the outbreak of the Ebola virus from 2014 to 2016 in West Africa, it can illustrate the lessons learned from the crisis, namely “manufacture of consent” as the most prominent problem. Health recommendations and interventions that have been developed during the response have been welcome with suspicion and are often rejected by the affected community, encouraging organizations and a number of parties involved to reflect on the validity of the means and concepts of risk communication which they apply. The barriers encountered indicate a lack of risk communication practices and being inefficient in the context of an unfamiliar social and cultural environment. Many reasons can be pointed out to convey this risk communication failure and there is no public health existence, namely: unrealistic communication goals; lack of social integration between the implementation of science in communication guidelines and human resources; overbroad segmentation and unclear communication concepts applied (risk communication, crisis, social mobilization, and health promotion). Among all the reasons mentioned, the researcher discusses the weakness of the application of crisis communication during the EVD response episode in West Africa, namely the inability to take into account and analyze the context of the crisis communication intervention effectively.

The next chapter entitled, “Part III The Collapse of Absolute Trust in Absolute Truth”, which consists of four scientific studies that

will be discussed. The results of the first study discussed are entitled “Transparency in Health Care: Disclosing Adverse Events to the Public” written by Siri Wiig, Karina Aase, Mathilde Bourrier, and Olav Røise. This topic explains that transparency has become increasingly popular in recent years. Transparency is understood as doing business in an open place where the public can monitor and acknowledge the problems at hand. This chapter analyzes transparency in disclosing negative events to the public in Norway. The researchers applied Daniel’s widely published case, which shows the existence of communication between regulators and the public which is then linked to a discussion of six key elements of transparency in health governance, including the role of the media. Daniel’s case describes a tonsillectomy that was involuntary and performed in a closed manner. The failure of the initial arrangement and follow-up of the hospital is the presence of the media in highlighting this case. The coverage of the media led to a social reinforcement of risk communication resulting in follow-up regulations requiring new forms of transparency strategies to re-establish public trust. By applying Daniel’s case as a symbol of the risk communication strategy practice in the health sector, it is realized that there must be improvements in the path of information exchange which is the right of patients and encourages regulations and an open and transparent organizational culture to ensure public accountability.

The second research result in part III entitled “How Safety Communication Can Support Safety Management: The Case of Commercial Aviation” written by Michel Guérard. The researcher explains that increased aviation traffic in the last few decades has caused many people to identify themselves as passengers or relatives of passengers. With the evolution of information technology, it is known that every accident can cause extraordinary reactions and communications that have never occurred outside the field of aviation. This is a renewed form of health communication which may challenge history and the parties involved in

the world of safety management specifically in the field of professional aviation.

The third scientific paper in chapter III is entitled Risk Communication from an Audit Team to Its Client compiled by Petra Haferkorn. This article discusses the paradoxical formation of a risk decision and the challenges that paradoxical poses to risk communication management. Exploration is conducted from the perspective of social systems theory, a theory which provides a comprehensive theoretical framework for social systems and their complexity, risk and conflict of interest in the communication process. From the theoretical rule, it can be concluded that statements regarding organizational risk cannot be proved to be “true” and that the audit reporting (client) will always have the right to question the audit team’s risk communication. This article provides guidance on how the audit team should address client needs by incorporating their requirements in the audit process employing concepts and principles from family therapy, brief therapy, or even systemic consultation.

The final scientific study discussed is entitled, “Societal Risk Communication — Towards Smart Risk Governance and Safety Management”, by Corinne Bieder. This article explains that risk communication has long been formulated and conceptualized based on a centralized model in which experts retain knowledge and explain a risk to ordinary people. The reality of risk communication today is much more complex. This complexity sees the position of various actors and their respective interests. Safety, one of a number of interests, may be understood in many ways. However, it must be acknowledged that this complexity can build a risk overview based on input from each of the communicators who may potentially contribute to safety. Ultimately this overview can point out the direction and suggestion of a smart and open approach to management and governance of risk and safety.

According to the mentioned review, one may conclude that this book has a strong content in analyzing risk communication case

studies in several countries. The results of that analysis show that the governments, companies and the people need to acknowledge as a whole regarding risk communication theoretically. This matter brings a significant impact in facing the current and happening crisis. Moreover, this book strengthens the public perception which only practically understands risk communication.

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