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"@ Whoever is Listening": How Organizations and Its Members Perceive and Use Social Media During Critical Events in the Workplace

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"@ Whoever is Listening": How Organizations and Its Members Perceive and Use Social Media During Critical Events in the Workplace

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Acknowledgement (n.) – the act of expressing gratitude.

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ABSTRACT

More and more, social media is becoming an integrated component of individuals' lives. With this, social media is impacting various landscapes that we interact in such as the workplace. Though social media is continuously being integrated into the workplace, scholarship pertaining to the relationship between social media and the workplace is still in its infancy. Yet, even with this lack of empirically supported knowledge, organizations and its members are still utilizing social media for various purposes. For instance, organizations use social media for recruitment purposes, to manage its image and to communicate to its internal and external members. One space that organizations use social media to communicate about includes critical events. My dissertation homes in on organizational use of social media during critical events to explore how this impacts the workplace. Specifically, my dissertation investigates if members find organizational use of social media (typically of an informal nature) as an appropriate platform to convey messages about critical events (typically more serious and formal in nature). Next, I explore if organizations can communicate too much or too little about critical events via social media. Moreover, I hypothesize that there will be a difference between perceptions of message amount and quality based on a member's rank within the organization. Lastly, I wanted to dive into the individual level to see if and how members used social media to, in turn, cope or regain power during these critical events. Additionally, I extend Standpoint Theory into the organizational context which is, to my knowledge, one of the first studies to do so. To examine these questions and proposed statements, I use mixed methods in which I integrate findings from interviews and surveys to determine unique findings. In Chapter 5, I provide the outcome of my study and conclude the dissertation with recommendations for future studies and some closing remarks.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Introduction

Social media has served as the catalyst that has drastically transformed a multitude of practices such as how individuals interact with one another and the environment (Ngai, Tao & Moon, 2014; Macnamara & Zerfass, 2012). Furthermore, the organizational landscape has been dramatically altered, driving organizations to follow the trend in efforts to keep up with the evolving organizational environment (Huy & Shipilov, 2012; Leonardi, Huysman & Steinfield, 2013; Distaso, McCorkindale & Wright, 2011; Treem & Leonardi, 2016). An emerging and growing incorporation of digital communication on social media platforms undoubtedly urges organizational scholars to survey how organizational life is impacted, the causes of the impacts as well as the products. The goal of this dissertation is to further explore how social media impacts workplace dynamics and communication patterns. To be specific, I aim to uncover perceptions of how organizations make use of social media to address critical events their organization may be facing. In addition, this dissertation intends to examine how organizational members are using social media to manage or respond to critical events in the workplace. Through this, my purpose is to provide a more foundational understanding of social media use patterns regarding the workplace and develop theory to predict when such patterns will emerge.

The online sphere has arguably revolutionized workplace communication media more than anything else (Kupritz & Cowell, 2011; Axley, 2000). Institutions are now digitally visible and have handles (social media profiles) on multiple social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. It's almost a requirement; organizations must craft and maintain a strong presence on social media to be perceived as relevant, effectively navigate the terrain and keep open communication with both internal and external stakeholders. This includes the know-how

and strategic capacity to use digital interfaces such as social media. With the integration of social media in the workplace, communication has shifted from traditional methods typically used such as face-to-face, to an increased incorporation of digital communication. The addition of electronic messages begs scholars to rethink workplace communication and the implications social media has on workplace dynamics.

Comprehending organizations in the digital space is vital for both scholars and practitioners. As organizations become more inclined to incorporate social elements, understanding these dynamics will become increasingly central for a number of reasons. For instance, organizations may typically communicate in one manner in the physical realm, however, when on social media, communication is likely to be different. This is because there are multiple audiences to communicate to, the space is more informal (Leonardi et al, 2013) and people have multiple identities including online identities (Kollock & Smith, 2002). These reasons, among several others, serve as imposing components which fosters variations in online and in-person organizational behavior.

One critical aspect of managing social media is learning how to craft and handle an effective account that will reap organizational benefits. In this, organizations are forced to learn how to communicate in the social media space to accumulate followers, garnish online support, and send signals to internal and external stakeholders. This can sometimes be a challenge to organizations as the simple queries of how much information and what essential content should be shared on their social media profiles can be problematic. Another question that has yet to be addressed is what are individuals' expectations from organizations regarding social media? Are they expecting communication from an organization regarding the critical event via social media? This is a legitimate question as social media platforms tend to be characterized as less

formal and more "playful" which does not align with the serious nature of a critical event. Last, how do organizational members respond to critical events? More specifically, the extant literature informs us that individuals can and will experience negative affect during critical events such as a key member of the leadership exiting the organization (Friedman & Singh, 1989; Ballinger, Lehman & Schoorman, 2010). Current literature also tells us that individuals use social media in a variety of situations, both work and non-work related, as a means to dissent and communicate frustrations in search of social support (Eichhorn, 2008; Treem et al, 2016). Critical events within the workplace are ambiguous, leading members to feel varying levels of uncertainty, stress or frustrations. Further, where an individual is socially located within the organization can impact his or her distance from power and access to information. Thus, with this knowledge, the question begging to be asked is: how do organizational members use social media as a coping tool or tool of empowerment during critical events that may cause stress? Understanding perspectives from a receiver vantage point can clue scholars and practitioners alike on how to strategically communicate on social media.

Rationale

Why Study This?

One may ask, "why social media? Why does it matter?" Social media is a growing context that requires attention as it has changed the media and business terrains (Macnamara & Zerfass, 2012; DiStaso et al, 2011). Progressively, people are using social media to engage with others and organizations are no exception. With nearly three in every four U.S. adults between the ages of 18 to 24 on social media and nearly 70% of all adults subscribed to Facebook alone (Smith & Anderson, 2018), social media demonstrates itself to be a powerful outreach instrument to connect with many current and potential organizational members. Most recently,

Facebook reported nearly 2.2. billion registered users on their platform (Balakrishnan, 2017; "Facebook hits 2.2 billion users", 2018). Even more, a 2015 Forbes article stated 50 million business pages on Facebook along with an estimated 2.5 billion comments made on these business profiles per day (Chaykowski, 2015); this number has risen to 80 billion as of this year (Smith & Anderson, 2018). Organizations can see the many benefits of social networking sites (SNS) such as its use as a reputation tool and overall, a more operative means for communicating with current stakeholders as well as reaching potential stakeholders in a more personal manner.

When considering critical[1] events explicitly, organizations strive to disseminate messages that address any concerns, provide clarity to any miscommunication or correct their wrongs. With people perceiving media and messages viewed online as truth and turning to social media for news and other official correspondence (Kwak, Lee, & Moon, 2010; Lee & Ma, 2012; Allcott & Gentzkow, 2017), social media can potentially serve as a dynamic location for the dissemination of official organizational matters. This assumption is supported with key political figures such as President Donald Trump's use of Twitter to discuss critical issues, address people and express thoughts; even companies such as Dick's Sporting Goods, Wal-Mart and Starbucks have taken to social media to communicate to the masses about their critical events. Being precise isn't enough to ensure safety from harm on social media; if people do not like what the company publishes or feel a lack of transparency, he or she can easily share the company's specific social media post with their personal evaluation attached. This is one reason why organizations must be extremely cautious with not just what they post, but how much information they release and when they decide to post it. Clearly stated my objectives for the current dissertation is to observe social media use at the organizational and individual level by 1)

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[1] A critical event is conceptualized here as any event that causes a transformation of any kind and can change the path of the organization; used interchangeably with disruptive event.

exploring how members perceive organizational use of social media during critical events and 2) understanding how members are utilizing social media to cope and regain power during such events which are typically ambiguous and possess high levels of uncertainty.

Organization and Contributions

Organization of the Dissertation

I approach my dissertation with the aims of both problematizing and gap-spotting the current literature and organizational landscape (Alvesson & Sandberg, 2011). As I problematize the relationship between organizations and social media use, the gap within extant literature reflects a lack of research in the observation of organizational members' social media use in relation to organizational life as this, too, is critical and a function of organizations, social media use and potential outcomes. The organization of my dissertation reflects my approach to tackling this problem. The next two chapters of this dissertation examines current literature with the chapter two being concerned with theoretical literature and chapter three building on empirical work. Chapter four provides my methodological approach and the studies employed to observe the proposed research questions. In chapter five, I provide my analysis results from the conducted studies. In chapter six, I round out the dissertation with the discussion section, which provides my elaboration of what the results from the studies imply, along with acknowledgement of the limitations posed my study and possible future studies. I conclude the dissertation in chapter seven with closing remarks regarding my dissertation.

Contributions

Theoretically, scholars should be concerned with organizations in the full social media sphere. The previous literature has focused on other organizational areas such as social media and marketing. However, how organizational members make use of social media as part of the

workplace to hence, grasp the exchange of organizational life remains understudied. Growing numbers of people subscribing to social media suggest worth and merits further exploration. As these environments evolve, understanding how organizations interact with social media and in turn, how social media impacts organizations will be provisional for prevailing literature. My dissertation contributes to this stream by identifying patterns regarding how organizations use social media.

Furthermore, understanding how organizational members are engaging in responsive dialogues about these critical organizational events via social media and how they may or may not use social media to learn, cope or empower themselves within these situations are of implicating and noteworthy substance as well. My dissertation will contribute to this area. Additionally, Standpoint Theory (Hegel, 1807) has yet to be used in organizational behavior literature. Application of this theory in my dissertation will contribute theoretically by examining the workplace and suggesting the development of Organizational Standpoint Theory (OST). With OST, scholars and practitioners alike will have guiding principles to predict behaviors and better theorize about members using social media. Practical implications of the proposed study will be of vital concern and highly informative for organizations as many are now dedicating multiple resources towards a social media officer or department in efforts to establish an online presence, as well as reap the return of the investment. Further, knowing what members perceive and the ability to predict behavior permits more organizational control and a more sound strategy for organizational use. As trends continue to point toward growing use of social media in the workplace, organizational communication scholars would be well served to explore these emerging communication practices and explore and understand how online exposure (or lack of) can be problematic for organizations.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW - THEORY

Introduction

Organizational communication has changed considerably with the introduction of technology. Technology allows for digital communication and electronic messages which allows for organizational members to engage in non-customary forms of dialogue such as asynchronous communication or communicate from two completely different places. Along with these factors, technology has created digital spaces known as social media that is vastly different from how organizations and its members have traditionally communicated. Conventionally, organizations and its members engaged in more face-to-face communication which is considered rich due to its availability to quick feedback and communicative cues (Daft & Lengel, 1987). However, with digital platforms gaining use for internal and external functionalities, organizational communication is evolving and therefore, create novel, understudied areas of queries.

One understudied area pertains to the use of social media during critical events. From emerging literature and antidotal observations of major organizations such as Starbucks Coffee and Dick's Sporting Goods, we witness and observe companies employing social media as a major means for communicating messages regarding critical events. This dissertation aims to understand perceptions regarding an organization's social media use. Specifically, I ask about the quantity and quality of electronic messages shared about a critical event with functional objectives of informing and managing the message. I take this observation a step further to the individual level to query members about their personal use or observations of others' use of social media during critical events. More precisely, I intend to uncover how members are using social media to manage (cope) and respond to the situation. From studying these questions, I seek to begin extending Standpoint Theory into the organizational context as well as extend

current, emerging literature that theorizes and expand understanding about organizations and the incorporation of social media.

This chapter is organized with the purpose to explain past and current literature to explicate the background theory that leads to the current study. I start by discussing what organizational communication is, its history and relation to organizational behavior. With the ICA Communication Audit being used conceptually in my dissertation, I explain how it came about and its importance. The major purpose for the ICA Communication Audit is to assess an organizations' health, which is explicated within this chapter as well. Towards the end of this chapter, I provide an overview of critical events as that is the context for the current study and close with sensemaking literature. With Standpoint Theory being the overarching theory driving this dissertation, reviewing the sensemaking literature is pertinent to the current study and propelling explanations found in the current dissertation.

Organizational Communication & Behavior

Communication is everywhere in organizations (Porter & Roberts, 1972) and is the "backdrop" for organizational behavior (Roberts, O'Reilly, Bretton & Porter, 1974). Barnard (1938) wrote that communication occupies a central place within organizations as all substances from the structure to the scope of the organization is highly dependent on communication techniques. Some scholars even argue that organizations would not exist if the use of communication is not used to establish or assume roles, relations and to delegate efforts and resources to achieve joint goals (Brooks, Callicoat & Siegerdt, 1979; Goldhaber, Wiio, Dennis & Richetto, 1978; Greenbaum, 1974). Organizational communication connects the many moving systemic parts with one another and the environment (Katz & Kahn, 1966; Brooks et al, 1970; Goldhaber, 1976) and is the "social glue" that keeps everything together (Alvesson, 2002).

Communication within an organization also serves as a sensemaking device for organizational members. Communication is a "crucial source of coordination in complex systems," especially within organizations that are more susceptible and vulnerable to disruptive events (Weick 1993: p. 644). Members use communication to reduce equivocality from the information environment (Weick, 1979) and use conveyed information to make decisions (March & Simon, 1958). Also, organizational communication is utilized by leadership for managing conflicts, job satisfaction and rumors within particular events (Goldhaber, 1976), motivating employees to effectively accomplish goals (Fussell & Kreuz, 2014) and to learn and share organizational culture (Kupritz, 2017). Organizational communication has been defined in multiple manners, often times dependent upon the goal or methods of the research (Deetz, 2001). Seen as a subfield, the present study defines organizational communication as the "essence of organized activity and is the basic process out of which all other functions derive" (Bavelas & Barrett, 1951: 253; Davis, 1953).

History of Communication within Organizations

Undoubtedly, communication has a key place within organizations (Conrath, 1974; Goldhaber, 1974; Roberts & O'Reilly, 1974; Haney, 1973). However, in the 1970's, many debates existed regarding the actual link and level of importance between effective communications within organizations and organizational outcomes. Roberts & O'Reilly (1973) suggested that good communication within an organization will equate to positive organizational outcomes and bad communication will lead to problems (Goldhaber, 1976). Researchers found backing for this argument by finding supporting correlations between effective communication and performance (Likert & Bowers, 1968), job satisfaction, supervisory leadership (Hain & Widgery, 1973), perceived organizational effectiveness and communication climate and

satisfaction (Dennis, Richetto & Wiemann, 1974), absenteeism & grievances (Hain & Tubbs, 1974) and overall performance (Likert, 1961; 1967; 1973).

These findings did not come without criticisms. Other researchers explored the link between organizational communication and organizational outcomes as well and reported failure to support the previously mentioned studies' results. Likert (1967) suggested that organizational communication is an intervening variable, however, some researchers refuted this model altogether (Cummins, 1970 as cited in Brooks et al., 1979; Lawrence & Lorsch, 1970) or amended it by classifying Likert's intervening variable into external causal variables and internal causal variables (Hain & Widgery, 1973). Dennis (1975) went a step further to criticize not just Likert's model, but Likert's understanding of communication by calling him "confused" and exhibiting lack of comprehension due to his labeling of communication as an intervening variable and consideration of communication flow as a causal variable. Other scholars such as Hain & Widgery (1972) has attributed these discrepancies to methodological or organizational differences (Goldhaber, 1976). These contentions led to the creation of the ICA Communication Audit.

Communication Audit

Formation of the Communication Audit. Around the 1960's, scholars expressed acknowledgement of there being no clear method to analyze communication within organizations (Brooks et al, 1979). Assessing an organization's current communication state has been a goal of several scholars. The first mentions of a communication audit was developed by researcher Odiorne in 1954 and since then, available literature pertaining to communication audits have been reviewed by organizational scholars such as Redding (1972), Goldhaber (1974), and Guetzkow (1965). Debates arose raising questions of validity and ultimately censuring

specifics of existing audits. Perilous opprobrium generated concerns of sample sizes used alluding to audits lacking general representation. Additionally, issues pertaining to the limited number of data collection methods raised concerns for questionable validity and generalizability. Furthermore, the audits took place over a short period of time which only provides a snapshot of what is happening versus a movie with richer details (Goldhaber & Krivonos, 1977; Goldhaber, 1974).

Communication Audit: The Instrument. The Communication Audit consist of five different assessments which include different data collection methods. Scholars can opt to use all of the assessments or just one. The tools available are a questionnaire with demographic questions included, a standard interview, a network analysis, collection of critical incidents and a communication diary. The tools are purposed to engage in nine topics (Hogard & Ellis, 2006; Goldhaber, 1990):

1. Amount of information received and needed from others on selected topics.

2. Amount of information sent and needed to be sent to others on selected topics.

3. Amount of follow-up or action taken and needed on information sent to others.

4. Amount of information received and needed from selected sources.

5. Timeliness of information received from key sources.

6. Amount of information received and needed from selected channels.

7. Quality of communication relationships.

8. Satisfaction with the major organizational outcomes.

9. Demographic information.

The communication audit has been applied to the diagnosis of organizations in several industries including governmental, educational, healthcare and banking to name a few

(Goldhaber & Krivonos, 1977). Use of the ICA communication audit presents a means for checking the health of an organization which can offer foresight and proactive information in efforts to prevent major breakdowns or address current ones (Goldhaber & Krivonos, 1977; Haas, Sypher & Zimmermann, 1996). My purpose for the ICA Audit tool is to conceptually apply the topics to the development of my survey and interview instruments.

Organizational Health

Metaphorically speaking, organizations are living, breathing organisms with personalities and people-like qualities (Allaire & Firsirotu, 1984). Just as people get sick and must check their health to understand what is going on, why matters are functioning as they are and to ensure continuous progress, organizations, too, must assess their health for the same reasons (Bruhn & Chesney, 1994). First proposed by Miles in his 1969 work, he defined a healthy organization as one that focuses its attention on "living its life" and overcoming obstacles. It has further been outlined as the organizations capability to acclimatize to the environment, create unity among its members and effectively obtain organizational goals (Hoy & Tarter, 1997; Hoy & Miskel, 1991). The health of the organization can be determined through several factors, many of which pertains to communication. For example, organizations that are labeled as "healthy" organizations tend to encourage open, multi-directional communication (Bruhn & Chesney, 1996). Healthy organizations also encourage participation in decision-making, openness to autonomous and creative suggestions and ideas and encourage organizational members to engage in feedback, regardless if it supportive or critical.

Within organizations, individuals, too, have to be "healthy" if processes that make an organization deemed as healthy is to be carried out. Healthy individuals are those who are balanced, feel important to the organization, work with integrity and are interdependent with

other members of the organization (Quick, Macik-Grey & Cooper, 2007). One key characteristic of healthy individuals is communication competence. Extant literature focused on strategic management argues of the importance that members of leadership be healthy individuals as they are key decision-makers and set the tone for the organization, its members and the overall culture (Finkelstein, Hambrick & Cannella, 1996; Hambrick & Mason, 1984; Schein, 1985). When insufficient (not enough, vague, misleading or contradicting) information is being shared with other members, this communication incompetence and lack of interdependence can lead to an organization falling sick and compromising its health (Quick et al, 2007). Events within an organization's life cycle will present occurrences when quantity and quality of information matters more, such as disruptive events (Schein, 1990). These disruptive events can occur due to poor health of the organization or can be sudden and unexpected.

Critical Events and Sensemaking

Critical Events in Organizations

Critical events are inevitable and happen within all organizations, with some events being unrulier than others. For example, a company undergoing major leadership change due to promotions or demotions or exit such as termination or resignation would be considered a critical or disruptive event. Other examples of critical events outside of leadership change include unanticipated occurrences, policy or procedural changes, or workplace restructuring and mergers and acquisitions. In my dissertation, I conceptualize critical events as occurrences that can directly or indirectly impact the path or trajectory of the organization, either short term or long term. "Uncertainty can arise because of individuals' inability to foresee the future and explain the past and through the experience of ambiguous or unpredictable events" (Berger & Bradac, 1982 as cited in Miller, 2014 p:234). As one can imagine, or may have even personally

experienced, critical events presents a sense of uncertainty, especially depending upon how the changes were communicated and the process used to address the event.

Organizations are encouraged to disclose information and be more transparent (Summers, Munyon, Perryman & Ferris, 2010). One dilemma of a disruptive event is that it can shake the trust in the organization. Yet, trust is essential for social media engagement (Smith & Gallicano, 2015). As stated earlier, social media can be a method of managing perceptions of disruptive events and calibrating trust but must be approached judiciously to not further disrupt trust as the introduction of this medium presents its own set of challenges (Kupritz & Cowell, 2011).

Critical events stereotypically can lead organizational members to feel high levels of uncertainty prompting members to scramble towards any available information to upsurge their understanding and make sense of the situation.

Sensemaking

Members within organizations are continuously making sense of their environment as sensemaking tends to be an ongoing process (Weick, 1995). Sensemaking is the notion that "reality is an ongoing accomplishment that emerges from efforts to create order and make retrospective sense of what occurs" (Weick, 1993: p 635). Sensemaking will be particularly high during times of critical events where uncertainty is high, and information provided to organizational members is low. People enact sensemaking to understand what is happening and to reduce equivocality (Weick, 1995). The outcomes of members making sense of their environment is typically comprised of both individual and collective stories, experiences and knowledge that makes up a collective perspective to make sense of what is happening and reduce uncertainty. These stories are not always accurate, but by piecing together information, and in particular, during a time of little information, members may rely on this information so long as it

is probable and seemingly credible. Much of the sensemaking occurs from behavior as, in some cases, this is the only means for gathering information (Weick, 1995; Heider, 1958). Our identities also plays into what we perceive (Weick, 1995; Weick, Sutcliffe, & Obstfeld, 2005; Hegel, 1807). An individual's social location, however, also largely dictates what issues will be salient, as well as, determines of how he or she will understand such information and respond.

CHAPTER THREE: LITERATURE REVIEW

The Current Study

From the last chapter, we understand that communication is imperative to organizations and its health. Further, the emphasis on the shifting dynamics from organizations and its members' use of traditional means of communicating via non-conventional digital methods was explicated. In scenarios such as the occurrence of a critical event, organizations have to be mindful of how this communication is perceived along with how its members are making sense of and using social media in exchange to critical events and organizational messages. In this chapter, I begin with an overview of Standpoint Theory. From this, I theorize the application of Standpoint Theory to the organizational context. I lay out the assumptions of Organizational Standpoint Theory and make initial predictions of when members may use social media regarding organizational events. Organizations can be guilty of enacting inadequate communication, by strategic design or by failure to recognize, which can be detrimental in the social media sphere. Thus, I summarize literature on inadequate communication as well as individuals and organizations on social media with respect to the current study. Lastly, I provide some possible implications if organizations and its member fail to use social media effectively.

Standpoint Theory

Standpoint Theory advocates that people understand and socially construct knowledge and perspectives, which will be different, based on their social positioning or social location (Hegel, 1807; Woods; 2008). This theory, paired with a communicative lens, explains why people communicate in the ways they do. This theory argues from the vantage point of individuals is lower positions of power. This can be witnessed through the primary context in which Standpoint Theory was studied. Initially presented by Georg Hegel in 1807, this was first studied in the context of how the social placements of either master or slave impacted

perspectives about the same-lived realities of slavery. Hegel further argued that the slave's perspective, being in a position that holds less power, is equally important to understand the entire phenomenon and how different experiences are constructed. This theory is applicable to the current study, in light of organizations and the power dynamics within it. By applying this theory to the current study, I aim to explain why organizational members respond to critical events in the manner they do, as well as, develop some predictive components to suggest when members may use social media regarding organizational events.

A standpoint is a mental position, also known as *situational knowledge* and can be based on one person or on a collective positionality of a group. For example, this theory has been hugely applied to feminist studies to advocate the collective standpoint of women that can only be understood through the lived experiences as a woman (Harding, 1991; Woods, 2008). Through the collection and insertion of these subjective experiences, objectivity can be obtained therefore concreting more *truth*. Standpoint Theory largely promotes the notion that, to understand the whole, you must understand the parts of the whole.

Standpoint Theory evolved as Marx and Engels (1902) suggested a Proletarian Standpoint and applied it to understanding capitalism and inequalities of workers and capitalists. In this, they argued that individuals of a lower socio-economic class understood the struggle of their class and faced discrimination as well as the life of that of the "well-to-do" and therefore, are the "ideal knowers". Evolving even more to expand its applicability, Standpoint Theory was then assigned from poor people to women to create Feminist Standpoint Theory (Harding, 1991). This theory argues that women are in a position of lower power and that an individual must be a woman in order to truly understand the standpoint and struggles of women.

Standpoint Theory operates under three major assumptions. The first major assumption is that a person's standpoint, which is broadly associated with a social group (i.e. women, poor people, etc.), will dictate how they perceive issues and what issues they even find salient. This means the selection of what issues are important and how people come to see and understand them will depend on their identity and the groups they identify with. The second major assumption is that to develop a standpoint, a person must recognize their identity, acknowledge that social position and understand the struggles, experiences and thoughts of that particular identity and/or social group. A person cannot have a standpoint and therefore frame of mind of a *woman* if she fails to recognize, acknowledge or comprehend the position and experiences of a woman. A person is not automatically granted or operates under a particular standpoint, but rather has to actively concoct and grasp the standpoint. The third and final overarching assumption of Standpoint Theory is that the difference in the standpoints are birthed from the distance from power. For example, poor people have the lived realities of being of lower power and understands the norms, rules and expectations of both his or her class and the higher class as he or she has to abide by those in higher power but not the reverse. This more well-rounded means of life is why the theory argues that those in lower positions of power offer a more holistic and objective perspective than those in higher order of powers.

Standpoints can highlight the contradictions of the position of power (Cockburn, 2015). Due to the social backing and structures in place to support those with power, their narratives often "stick" as they have the means to do so. However, I argue that with the integration of social media, power has been restructured and shifted back towards individuals who have often lived with muted or quieter voices. Social media may be the turning point to equalizing the "stickiness" of standpoints.

While Standpoint Theory is largely a critical perspective and is primarily applied to race or gender, I argue that the application of this theory to organizations will be insightful in understanding organizational life. My dissertation aims to shed an interpretative light on it and conceptually borrow the theory for application to the organizational setting. Unlike critical theories that aim to advocate, my goal is to generate new knowledge that will help organizational scholars to better understand the workplace and to help practitioners have a stronger approach to their organization. Often times, knowledge from the position of power (such as the top leadership team) is what is communicated, understood and what sticks. However, situated knowledge lies within the perspective of the individual, even within the lower tiers of the organization. Theory generated from this study, which is applied to members within organizations, aligns with the original arguments of Hegel in that, to understand the whole, we must understand the parts. Therefore, the situated knowledge of organizational members from all roles hold some levels of insight and objectivity that the organization must understand as lower members will have particular perspectives about matters pertaining to the organization (events, members of the organization, culture, processes, etc.) that members of the leadership team will not and cannot gather or comprehend alone. The use of this theory will serve to bring into focus how vantage points within an organization drives our understanding of same-lived organizational events.

Standpoint Theory in Organizations

I argue the need for extending Standpoint Theory into the organizational context. By extending Standpoint Theory into organization, the theory posits that lower ranking members offer the more objective and holistic perspective, so long as they understand the power deficiencies within their position as well as that of the position of power. The goal of this theory is to understand why people communicate within organizations or to external sources and how

they communicate about various issues, based on their position. This extension to theory also suggest that organizational knowledge lacks greatly without the use of knowledge resources from lower tiered employees. Essentially, Standpoint Theory in this regard suggest that the voice of those in lower ranking positions are less likely to be heard therefore making the information that leadership operate under less objective and effective. Theory also argues that social location within the organization matters and will impact what is likely to be seen and therefore, will impact perceptions of sensemaking. It is based on a person's position or rank within an organization as these positions/ranks tend to have an assigned amount of power. Anomalies could seldomly occur. An example of an anomaly is when outlying members who are not in official positions of high power have clout within an organization deems them as worth and ushers them into the social circles of the TMT. My extension of Standpoint Theory into organizational context operates under the following assumptions:

1. Employees want to be heard.

2. The organization will follow traditional hierarchical ordering in which leaders are at the top and possess a majority of the power and that power decreases as one treads toward the bottom of the hierarchy.

3. In order to understand the standpoint of a position or rank, he or she will need to make a conscious effort to acknowledge what is entailed within that rank, the power vested to that position and the differences among the ranks.

4. The difference in the perspectives will be based largely on the power inequalities or more explicitly, the power vested in their specific ranks within the organization.

   With the increased use of social media, not only are businesses using social media for work related matters, but so are their organizational members. However, businesses and

individuals are using social media for different reasons. This theory predicts the following regarding social media use, in which, is mainly based on positions and the power invested within each position. As previously stated, those of a lower power are less likely to be heard or have ideas that stick. Within organizations, this could be due to not speaking up and expressing dissent about critical events experienced in the workplace as employees are sometimes afraid and hesitate to do so in efforts to protect their personal reputation, workplace relationships or avoid other possible ramifications. Additionally, organizational members are less likely to have the power to be heard and make strategic decisions as top management is typically responsible for making and enforcing ultimate decisions (Kaiser, Hogan & Craig, 2008; Finkelstein, Hambrick & Cannella, 2009). Organizational members are even less likely to be heard if their perspective is different than that of strategic management's decision. Therefore, these members may use social media for work related purposes, but in differing ways than the organization does. Therefore, my extension of Standpoint Theory predicts the following pertaining to members along with their social media use:

Predictions:

1. A member's rank within a company will greatly impact which issues are salient, how they understand it and their means for communicating. Further, since people can be members of multiple groups or hold multiple roles within an organization, it is possible that people can have multiple standpoints or social positionings that can podge into a unique outlook.

2. Organizational members of a lower rank will be more likely to use social media more frequently regarding the organizational matters than will those of a higher rank.

3. Organizational members of a lower rank will be more likely to use social media for personal gain or interest (on an individual level) regarding the organizational matters than will those of a higher rank.

4. Higher ranking members will use social media for more strategic or organizational benefit versus personal gain.

The predictions stated above are principally based on the role of the individuals. While most organizational members are concerned about their personal achievement and advancement, lower ranking employees are in more of a position to both, have the need to as well as the freedom to navigate social media in means that will be more centered on the self, versus the need of the organization. The need to use social media manifests through promoting one's self online to build personal reputation, through efforts to move up the hierarchical scale, as well as tools of coping. Using social media as a coping or empowerment tool derives from the lack of voice and power a member may have within their organization. The further from power an individual is or the more unaligned a message is with an individual, the more likely he or she will use social media to cope, respond or empower him or herself in response to a critical organizational event. The use of social media during critical events for purposes of having dismays heard and garnishing backing or venting about personal thoughts or to receive acknowledgement, validation and support outline the overarching reasons for such use.

Generally, when top management uses social media, the expectation is that they will operate under great levels professionalism with the organization as the focal point. Again, organizational members are expected to have the best interest of the organization in mind as well, but characteristically, not to the extent of the top management team (TMT) or strategic leadership as the TMT and strategic leaders have more vested in the organization and are under

lofty expectations to guide and build the organization. Additionally, members can also empower themselves through the use of social media to gather information. People closer to power will, classically, be closer to information or have more access to information, therefore, not needing to use social media to gain insight on critical events and decreasing their potential use. With this, members of lower-ranking positions who lack access to insightful information and that are not included in key meetings and discussions can perceive the critical event as ambiguous and the communication shared as inadequate increasing the plausibility of uncertainty.

Communication Inadequacies

When an organization's health is poor or is experiencing a critical event, communication can sometimes be reflective of such troubles and lack quality or hence, become inadequate. Organizational breakdown can occur and should be taken seriously. Specifically, outcomes could lead to employee frustration and employee alienation (Gibson & Hodgetts, 1986; Walther, 1988). These findings are critical as employee frustration and alienation have further been associated with organizational commitment, lack of motivation and higher turnover (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990, Chaiburu, Diaz & De Vos, 2013; Du Plooy & Roodt, 2010). Additionally, links of communication received and job satisfaction, workplace relational satisfaction along with job productivity have been found (Daly et al., 1979; Muchinsky, 1977; Pincus, 1986; Walther, 1988).

Communication inadequacies are based on various factors. It is grounded on downward communication meaning that it stems from upper levels of leadership to lower-tiered organizational members and are primarily based on the perceptions of the lower ranked organizational members (Walther, 1988). Employee feedback, communication among peers, and management follow-up are also some other determining factors in sufficient information (Walther, 1988). In a 1986 study, it was found that "employees prefer to get their information

from their supervisors and from group meetings with management" (Gibson & Hodgetts, 1986:

202). Therefore, leadership must actively participate in efficacious disclosure, especially

pertaining to situations with high levels of ambivalence to warrant the perception of openness

and to minimize uncertainty or ambiguity (Daft & Lengel, 1986). Taken together, understanding

if organizational members perceive social media and the communication that organizations

provide on it to be provisional of the essential elements to adequate communication, as well as, if

members feel agreeable with social media as a legitimate platform for critical organizational

communication can be a key finding.

Organizational Ambiguity, Disclosure & Openness

Absolute disclosure is risky. However, this is context dependent. While no to little

disclosure, which is understood as the act of sharing private information, is seen as

disadvantageous, organizations can sometimes leverage the ambiguity that is often associated

with non-disclosure behaviors such as strategy and therefore, an asset (Ring & Perry, 1985;

Eisenberg & Witten, 1987). For example, when evaluating an employee's performance, leaving

some level of abstractness during the review process is viewed as desirable. This is not

applicable under all circumstances though; critical events naturally create its own level of

organic, negatively-laden vagueness depriving members of security and raising concerns and

uncertainty. Extant literature has suggested that disclosive, informal and openly characterized

communication from organizations to organizational members can lead to less "political

maneuvering" bearing a balance of power, trust and equal treatment of members as peers (Peters

& Waterman, 1982; Eisenberg & Witten, 1987). But, even with the information shared through

organizational disclosure, organizational members who hold a higher position will obtain more

of the power from shared information. Therefore, within the proposed study, I argue that

organizational members will have different evaluations of the information shared on social media platforms based on their formal position within the organization (high ranking versus low ranking).

When organizations are overly disclosive in their communicative behaviors during a crisis or critical event, harm can be self-inflicted (Eisenberg & Witten, 1987). Too much disclosure can damage potential organizational plans as well as sharing information too soon can be troublesome if later actions do not align with previous communication based on a pivot in the organizational plan (Eisenberg & Witten, 1987). Some scholars have argued that some level of organizational ambiguity is essential to maintain common understanding (Myerhoff, 1975). By the same token, for organizations that are "highly regulated or those in the public eye, communicative choices must be considered in light of how they will be interpreted by various publics" (Eisenberg & Witten, 1987: 424).

Infobesity & Data Starvation

Beyond the act of disclosing information is the concern of the *amount* of information that is being shared. When too much information is shared it can result in information overload which has also been termed as infobesity and data glut (Bawden & Robinson, 2009). Infobesity can be damaging to an organization's health and can signal to others that the organization lacks control over the current circumstances and is overwhelmed. Further, it has been linked to cognitive states such as continuous partial attention which is when the focal point is on being connected or "in touch" and technostress. With large amounts of information being shared, organizational members can get "lost" in the information and miss the message leading to ineffective communication.

Counter to being overloaded with information is not getting enough information, also known as communication underload or data starvation. When considering communication overload and underload, scholars tend to observe 1) the volume of information and 2) the rate at which the information is sent (O'Reilly, 1980). Preferences of organizational members matter as when determining if a particular communication volume is appropriate or not, lending this to be somewhat subjective. Haas, Sypher & Zimmermann (2011) reported found that individuals propelled the notion that more communication is better. With the literature boasting both the benefits and ramifications of disclosure and ambiguity, this can leave organizations asking what the optimal amount of communication is to maximize positive outcomes and in particular, when communicating with the various audiences via social media. Further, failure to understand such information leads to inadequate information being shared, which fails to address ambiguity and still permits a level of uncertainty to remain. This ambiguity then drives members to gather any information possible to make sense of the event and environment. With sensemaking being a social process, social media presents itself to be a plausible and attractive platform seeing as it has the social elements when stories can be shared for sensemaking as well as it serving as an information-seeking tool.

Social Media

Social media in cyberspace is a rather novel phenomenon to organizational researchers (Leonardi et al, 2013). Scholars have yet to even settle on one, unanimous definition for social media. One definition suggests that social media "employs mobile and web-based technology to create highly interactive platforms via which individuals and communities share, co-create, discuss and modify user-generated content (Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy & Silvestre, 2011). While informative, this definition is rather broad. Another definition describes social

media as web-based communication tools that facilitate online interaction (Bercovici, 2010). Extant literature has confirmed three attributes of social media: 1) social media is web-based, 2) it provides a means for individuals to connect and interact with content and other users and 3) it provides a means to generate and distribute content (Treem et al, 2016). More specifically, social media is home to SNSs. Social networking sites, also classified as platforms, has been understood in current literature as "communication platforms that offer users unique profiles, public connections, and the ability to create and consume user-generated content" (boyd & Ellison, 2013). Platforms that are classified as SNS include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Reddit, YouTube and Myspace among others (boyd & Ellison, 2013). These platforms have changed the process of communication. Instead of "functioning as a channel through which communication travels," (i.e. email) platforms are operating as spaces for social interaction to occur (Leonardi et al, 2013).

Understanding the relationship between social media and organizations is still developing as even the tools for conducting such research is still under development. Although social media is a young area of research, general misunderstandings have formed and been answered. For example, the idea that social media is new is a misunderstanding. Digital social media is fairly new, but media tools such as letters, books and newspapers have allowed humans to exercise their innately social behaviors in non-digital means (Treem et al, 2013). Social media or communicative components that allows social functioning such as gathering and consuming information, sharing materials and connecting with others have long existed. Another confusion is the notion that social media is "overtly social". More users on SNSs consume more information than they share (Treem et al, 2016; Hampton, Goulet, Marlow & Rainie, 2012). In fact, some users, the silent majority, appear to not be present on social media when indeed they

are passive users, observing from "afar", appearing "invisible" also labeled as "lurking" (Preece, Nonnecke & Andrews, 2004). Therefore, more people may be paying attention and gathering information from SNSs than what appears to be so and should not be misinterpreted as non-use or inactive users (Baumer, Burrell, Ames, Brubaker, Dourish, 2015; Treem et al, 2016). Most information shared comes from a small group of people who consistently deliver high volumes of content, also known as "power users".

Some researchers and practitioners assume that social media is not serious and should not be marked as important. This is a myth that has proven to be false overtime. With current disputes of laws regarding censorship of speech online and other policies such as in the fields of science and government, legal consequences have resulted and spotlighted the seriousness of social media. Moreover, organizations have reaped adverse outcomes from online behaviors on behalf of their actions, the actions of their organizational members or through the social evaluations shared about them online. The recent Starbucks incident serves as a key example. Undesirable sentiments about the actions of a Starbucks manager was shared on social media after a video surfaced on Facebook Live recording two black men being escorted out of a Starbucks Coffee shop with handcuffs on. Dialogue in the video suggested that there was no viable reason for the men to be arrested and resulted in negative press and profits for the organization (Stevens, 2018). The company then had to take time out of their daily operation to train staff on racial biases which closed down over 130,000 stores.

Social movements have spawned from the beginnings of social media. The establishment and legitimization of these movements, such as #BlackLivesMatter and social support for Afro-oriented women (i.e. Afro-Latina) to embrace their features such as their hair, were largely credited to social media. Along with the provision of social support, communities of shared

identities have aided many with different issues such as eating disorders (Eichhorn, 2008). Additionally, the government has used social media to monitor health outbreaks and communicate health-related information to general audiences (Treem et al, 2016). Outside of these uses, individuals have reported using social media for parenting advice, seeking employment opportunities and gathering news. All of the provided uses not only exemplify the salience and increasingly significant worth of social media, but also, the active role it holds in the daily activities of many, the level of trust they must have in it based on their motives and goals to engage with it and the way it is transforming overall behaviors.

Individuals on Social Media

Individuals interact on SNSs for a multitude of reasons. Extant literature details gathering information, entertainment purposes, expression of personal identities, protesting, public opinion management, community building, expanding social capital through constructing a larger network, seeking job opportunities, seeking social support and connectivity as a non-exhaustive list of individual's intentions for joining and expending time on social media.

Individuals have turned to social media as outlets of expressing their thoughts and identities. People possess a multitude of identities based on social factors, also known as social identities (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). In the digital space, identity is based primarily on information instead of physical matter. With the introduction of the internet and more interactions taking place on SNSs, people have now also crafted online identities. Identity is a basic "building block" of social interaction (Kollock & Smith, 2002). Identity in the virtual world can be confusing for the individual as he or she must make sense of who they are interacting with as well gauge their own identity in a space that allows ambiguity and a sense of anonymity (Kollock & Smith, 2002). This online identity can be yet another impacting factor on how people

will perceive information shared by organizations online.

Organizations on Social Media

Organizations are racing to social media with caution. This is because little is known about the best strategic practices and outcomes of particular decisions in this space. The risk is high and quick to result as issues can go viral or disseminate widely and rapidly (i.e., Campisi, Smith, Levenson, Hutcherson, 2016). Two approaches to organizational use of social media has been determined as either 1) public platforms such as Facebook to reach out to external members and promote products and services and 2) intranet social networking sites that are used for internal organizational members only (Leonardi et al, 2013). However, this has expanded. One value organizations see with social media is that it allows them share information which can act as learning tool. Users can use the surveillance information seeking technique to gather information and learn about the organization overall, its history and past behaviors that were either successful or failed as SNSs do not require an individual to witness the real-time interaction due to the information being persistent. *Persistence* is when "communication remains accessible in the same form as the original display, even after the actor has finished his or her presentation" (Bregman & Haythornthwaite, 2003; Leonardi et al, 2013). Thus, using resources such as time and manpower are saved and used elsewhere serving as a benefit for the organization. Another reported benefit is the higher visibility of organizational members, both current and potential, in which their expertise and interest is clearly displayed fostering organizational connections and collaborations and potentially leading to organizational innovation, and knowledge sharing (Brown & Duguid, 2001).

With benefits of social media use comes negative outcomes as well. Sometimes social media can become echo-chambers, manifesting like-minded cliques. This leads to the reduction

of exposure to new ideas and exaggeration of differences which may create artificial conflict (Leonardi et al, 2013). Additionally, there is also the concern that proprietary information can be leaked to unwanted targets. Further, there appears to be some inconsistencies about the outcomes of modality switching (MS); some studies have presented findings suggesting that MS enhances relationships (Ramirez & Zhang, 2007; Ramirez & Wang, 2008). Modality switching refers to "shifting between communication channels that vary in their ability to transmit nonverbal and social information" (Ramirez & Sumner, 2015). Past research has alluded to the fact that in person experiences are not the same when switched to online context (Ramirez & Wang, 2008; Jacobson, 1999). Reports from previous research further suggest that people admitted discrepancies in their expectations of virtual communication behavior versus their in-person or face-to-face (f2f) interactions (Ramirez & Wang, 2008).

Organizations have opted into SNSs for its community building abilities. This is applicable and useful among both internal organizational members (employees) and external organizational members (anyone outside of the organization) (Leonardi et al, 2013). Additionally, organizations are able to boost their reputation, market products and manage customer relations and potentially reach new markets (Leonardi et al, 2013). Largely understudied, one potential use organizations can use SNSs for is damage control during disruptive events. While critical or disruptive events may not necessarily be negative, they can cause ambiguity about what is happening, why the event is happening and the future trajectory of the organization. In this case, organizational members seek out information to make sense of situations and manage levels of insight and trust within the organization. With social media being a progressively utilized medium to gather insight, members may look to social media for clarity. Thus, social media should be categorized as a strategic and necessary tool for addressing

disruptive events.

Past literature explains that when posting on social media, audience may seem invisible (Treem et al, 2016) or unknown and therefore may convey messages in a more abstract format that can be widely understood (Leonardi et al, 2013; Marwick & boyd, 2011). Leonardi et al (2013) expands on this to suggest that, paired with proprietary information that cannot be shared with everyone, the level abstraction may appear high causing receivers of the communication, especially those from outer-boundaries, to experience high amounts of difficulty as they try to make sense of the situation and extract information. This can reduce the amount of communicative substance received and furthermore, be perceived as an overall disadvantage for all parties as receivers may see this as failure to enact effective communication or as the organization simply deciding to not be transparent with members. Furthermore, when members perceive an imbalance of reciprocity, previous literature has noted that this can be classified as predictors for conflict (Pondy, 1967), lower organizational commitment (Mayer & Schoorman, 1998) and turnover resulting from members seeking equality (Ferris, Liden, Munyon, Summers, Basik, & Buckley, 2009). Among adult internet users who maintain an online profile, 82% say that their profile is currently visible compared with 77% of online teens who report this (Maddox, Fox, Smith & Vitak, 2007). Thus, this may further emphasize the possible expectation and necessity for organizations to appear transparent and share sufficient information on social media. Otherwise, uncertainty can arise based on individuals' inability to foresee the future, explain the past and understand the present ambiguous or unpredictable event (Berger & Bradac, 1982; Miller, 2014).

Potential Implications of Organizations' and Members' Social Media Use

Individual Level

Critical events can be tough for both organizations and its members. As the current literature has stated, critical events tend to lead to ambiguity and uncertainty. At the individual level, such uncertainty has been documented to be stressful conditions to work under (Pollard, 2001). Uncertainty can lead to physiological and mental outcomes such as increase blood pressure, cholesterol levels and mental well-being (Pollard, 2001), depression (Schmidt, Roesler, Kusserow, & Rau, 2014), and job satisfaction (Bockerman et al, 2008) and alienation (Zeffane, 1993). Past literature has supported the link between the feelings of uncertainty impacting organizational members' perceptions of workplace figures and overall outcomes of the organization (Zeffane, 1993). Moreover, uncertainty and the outcomes of it can largely impact how people respond and the behavior seen within organizations (Zeffane, 1993). I argue that the level of uncertainty stemming from critical events will be greatest for those in lower positions of power as they have less access to information regarding the event and potential outcomes. Therefore, critical events are more likely to negatively impact the behaviors for those individuals. Depending on the quantity and quality of information shared with individuals via social media, this could potentially alleviate some of the negative consequences of such uncertainty, thus, could be positive for members and organizations alike.

Organizational Level and Social Evaluations

Organizations seek to increase social approval and decrease social disapproval (Bundy & Pfarrer, 2015; Zavyalova, Pfarrer & Reger, 2012). Social evaluations are socio-cognitive processes that are fundamentally collective perceptions (Zavyalova et al, 2012) of which is either positive (social approval) or negative (social disapproval) and can induce various organizational

outcomes. Organizations strive to earn social approval as this can lead to intangible products such as organizational survival, reputational gain and loyalty (Pollock & Rindova, 2003; Zavyalova et al, 2012). Intuitive and predictive to previously stated literature, social disapproval contrives a reduced chance of organizational survival, damaged reputation and loss of legitimacy, thus, proving to be detrimental to organizations (Zavyalova et al, 2012). Social disapproval occurs when organizations behave in ways that is seen as negative or violates the expected behaviors and social norms causing individuals to have a general dislike regarding the organization. When perceptions of an organization's behavior are disapproved, and members perceive that organizational actions are not aligning with their expectations, this could potentially cause members to disengage and withdraw from the organization (Elsbach, 2003; Zavyalova et al, 2012). Hence, disruptive events could lead to social disapproval if not perceptions of the event fail to align with expectations.

Human Resource Level

Literature that examines Human Resource Management) observes how various factors impact individual's work place performance to strategically manage human capital to achieve organizational goals (Huselid, 1995; Legge, 1995). At this level, the dialogue, no matter how direct or indirect it may be, between the organization on a social media platform and its members are likely to have an impact on Human Resources (HR). For one, the dialogue presented on social media can impact workplace relationships as multimodality is involved (Ramirez & Wang, 2008; Jacobson, 1999), asynchronous communication takes place, which can strip dialogue of some richness qualities (Järvelä & Häkkinen, 2002), and the impact of members being exposed to other, and sometimes conflicting, commentary online. Secondly, if organizational members are mirroring the organization and therefore, using social media to respond to the critical event,

this could be both positive and negative within its outcome. From a negative standpoint, outside members that view social media posts from internal members could misconstrue or misunderstand what is being said. The employee's uncertainty could be the most pervasive message from the social media post, therefore acting a signal to others that a particular place may not be a great place to work or that the company is experiencing problems. Even when undergoing a critical event, an organization could very well still be a great company with happy employees who are just temporarily uncertain about current states. Members who use social media to respond to such critical events could also be positive. For example, as previously stated, standpoints from members of lower positions of power tend to be heard, accepted and stick far less than that of those who are in positions of power. When members exercise social media to respond back, this could potentially force or encourage management to see and heed to what lower members concerns are.

To reiterate, understanding how members perceive organizational use of social media during disruptive events, as well as, how member then use social media to respond, cope or empower themselves during such events is the driving theme for the current dissertation. Given the pursued arguments and the extant literature, I pose the following research questions and hypotheses for my dissertation:

Due to the limited literature we have regarding social media and organizations, understanding expectations and perceptions are critical to the extension of current literature. Hence, questions geared towards understanding and regarding such is reflected in research questions 1-3.

RQ₁. Are stakeholders expecting organizations to inform them about a disruptive event via social media?

RQ₂. Can organizations communicate too much on social media following a disruptive event?

RQ3. Can organizations communicate too little on social media following a disruptive event?

Reflecting back on literature that suggest differences in perceptions (Weick, 1995; Hegel, 1807), hypothesis 1 and 2 are grounded in such literature and aims to strengthen current understanding regarding the application of Standpoint Theory to disruptive events within organizational settings.

H1. There will be significant differences in members' perceptions of amounts of information shared about a disruptive event from the organization on social media.

H2. There will be significant differences in members' perceptions of the quality of information shared about a disruptive event from the organization on social media.

Lastly, grasping how organizational members are reducing equivocality, dealing with disruptive events and even more specifically, using social media, serves as the focal point for research questions 4 and 5. Additionally, these research questions seek to seek support for predictions pertaining to the extensions posed regarding Standpoint Theory in the organizational context.

RQ4. How are individuals using social media to cope with critical organizational events?

RQ5. How are individuals using social media to regain power within critical organizational events?

CHAPTER FOUR: MATERIALS AND METHODS

Overview for the Current Study

Context & Variance

The context of this study is framed around social media use and critical events within organizations, and more specifically, the general workplace setting. To create variance, a specific critical event was not identified in effort to allow participants to self-identify what a critical organizational event was for them within their organization, which aims to allow natural variance.

Qualitative, Quantitative & Mixed Methods

Qualitative Methods

Qualitative methodology is an inductive technique for accumulating and observing data, to extend knowledge (Babbie, 2013) and have generally been known to be used by Humanists or researchers who fall within the Interpretative paradigm. Whereby quantitative methods include experiments and surveys, qualitative methods embrace more people-centered orientations to research conduction. Methods that lends itself to such research approaches include interviews, focus groups, ethnographies and qualitative content analysis (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002; Babbie, 2013). While generalizability is a bit more difficult to achieve through the collection of qualitative data, it is possible. Moreover, qualitative data methods do possess strengths such as more in-depth clarity and the ability to follow up with questions for more insight as well as "preserving" the content (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002). The data contains a level of richness and transparent denseness; the amount of information stored within one case has the ability to contain an immense bit of complexity that hypocritically offers such clarity and perception. In recent years, however, a growing body of literature are emerging to debunk such myths and support

both methodological approaches as a means for research, no matter the paradigmatic identity of the researcher.

Quantitative Methods

Quantitative method, a numerical technique for collecting and observing data, is typically associated with researchers who identify with the post-positivist paradigm. Within this method, information tends to be more close-ended (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007). Methods within this approach includes methods such as experiments, surveys and quantitative content analysis. Strengths of the quantitative approach includes standardization and consistency, easier replication and more widespread generalizability (Babbie, 2013).

Mixed Methods

Some scholars suggest the importance of "milking" both methods for its strengths by conducting mixed methods within a single study. Mixed methods, which combine qualitative and quantitative data methods, is a set of designs and procedures that "collect, analyze and mix" both methods in a single study (Plano-Clark, Huddleston-Casas, Churchill, Green & Garrett, 2008; Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007). The main facet of mixed methods that readers must understand is integration. In some point of the study, the researcher must syndicate or overlap both methods to gain a better understanding. Mixed methodology is sometimes confused with multi-methods. While both incorporate multiple data collections, multi-methods stop there. Another key component of mixed methods is that both the qualitative and quantitative studies must be able to stand alone. This means that both methods must be sufficient individually, even though both methods will be integrated. Mixed methods distinguish itself through the quantitative and qualitative methods being *integrated* at some phase within the study. Table 4.1 includes the six possible designs according to Creswell (2003; 2009).

Table 4.1. Mixed Method Designs

Design:	Characteristics of the Design:
Sequential Explanatory	Design: Quantitative data collected and analyzed → Qualitative data collected and analyzed. Goal: To use the qual results to inform or explain the quant results.
Sequential Exploratory	Design: Qualitative data collected and analyzed → Quantitative data collected and analyzed. Goal: To explore a phenomenon.
Sequential Transformative	Design: No particular order of what is collected first; the integration takes place in the analysis phase. Goal: Geared more towards a theoretical perspective.
Concurrent Triangulation	Design: Data collection happens simultaneously to cross-validation or confirm findings; can use 2 or more methods. Goal: To address the weakness of using just one method.
Concurrent Nested	Design: Data collected simultaneously but priority is given more so to one method over the other. Goal: To seek information from different levels.
Concurrent Transformative	Design: Guided by theoretical perspective and methodological selections. Integration through the embedding of one method into the other; has tendency to lend itself more to critical theory. Goal: To evaluate theory at different levels of analysis.

Timing is important to consider when conducting a mixed methods study. (Morse, 1991; Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007). Timing designs include sequential designs and concurrent designs. Sequential designs are represented by one method (quantitative or qualitative) being employed before the other creating two distinct phases (Morse, 1991). The choice to engage in quantitative or qualitative methods first depends heavily on what purpose or focus the research agenda has. A research agenda can either be exploratory, in which case the researcher is focusing on a new topic, exploring concepts that are novel or not yet studied. In this aim, the best option is to first use qualitative methods such as interviews to inform the quantitative instrument, which will be created and dispersed in the second phase of the study. If the research is not aiming to explore, then it is likely aiming to explain. Explanatory designs incorporate quantitative methods first to gather basic, generalizable information.

Next, the focus is to give explanatory power to why the results found in the quantitative method. The difficult, but often eye-opening dilemma in this design is when the quantitative and qualitative outcomes suggest different revelations which propels interpretivists practices to determine what the gap or disconnect is insinuating. Concurrent designs are when the researchers are employing both qualitative and quantitative methods at the same time. This means that data collection and analysis are happening simultaneously (for the most part). It is best to use this design when time is of a concern. An additional factor that must be understood regarding mixed methods is that all methods used should be able to hold its own weight. This means that both the quantitative and qualitative study should be able to be its own solid study, independent of the other.

Research Design

To remind the reader, the goal of the proposed dissertation was to understand how organizations communicate with organizational members on social media during a disruptive

event and in turn, how members respond and use social media. Specifically, I aimed to reveal if members even expected organizations to address topics such as critical events in an online capacity and if so, can organizations communicate too much or too little on social media regarding these critical events. Moreover, how does vantage point impact these expectations and how members respond? To answer these questions, I have selected multiple research tools which include interviews and surveys. Below is an explicated overview of the qualitative and quantitative tools used to explore the proposed questions for the dissertation.

Interviews

Data Collection

Interviews are "guided question–answer conversations, or an "inter-change of views between two persons conversing about a theme of mutual interest" (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 2; Tracy, 2012: p131). The central idea is to gain insight from systemically conversing with participants (Miles, Huberman & Saldaña, 2014). Interviews can be largely insightful as they aim to gather participant's perspectives and permit the chance to probe statements with follow-up questions (Kolb, 2012). For this particular study, I used semi-structured interviews meaning that I followed a set of pre-determined questions but had flexibility to follow up with probing questions if deemed as appropriate. This is a strength of the semi-structured interview as I had the opportunity to ask additional questions to gain a more thorough and deeper insight. This method was selected as I was able to gain valuable responses that the survey alone could not capture.

Instrument

In qualitative research, the researcher is viewed as the instrument. With this, I did have a set of pre-determined questions that guided the overall interview. The interview instrument were questions designed by myself and approved by my committee (See Appendix, A-2). It included a

total of 17 questions that followed a funnel structure meaning that initial questions were of broad

conceptual topics and then narrowed to more specific questions as the survey continued (Haas,

2018). Questions primarily evolved around organizational members' use of social media.

Sample

        The sample was theoretically selected for the purpose of capturing a holistic set of

vantage points within the organization. The sample consisted of 18 participants who represented

various roles of the organizational chart. Participants ranked within the overall organization

ranked from front-line custodial works to students to faculty to administrators. The sample was

recruited through either face-to-face communication or email asking for their participation in the

study. All participants were interviewed within a 15-day time frame.

Procedure

        Once participants granted their willingness to participate in the interview, I then set up a

time and place for the interview. To combat possible issues of comfort to openly answer

questions, I encouraged and allowed participants to pick the location and time of their choice for

the interview. Not only did this ensure their comfort, but also aids to their privacy and

confidentiality. At the time of meeting, I began the interview by having the participant read the

consent form on a digital device (electronic tablet). To increase anonymity, I requested and was

approved to have a waiver of consent documentation meaning that their participation was

sufficient and represented their consent. Once the participant finished reading the consent form, I

thanked them for their participation and informed them that I would begin recording. Once

recording began, I officially commenced the question and answer portion of the interview by

informing them of the flow and structure of the interview. The interview lasted anywhere from

25 minutes to an hour and forty-six minutes.

It consisted of a conversational nature in which I asked the questions from my guiding interview instrument. The recorder was placed to the side as to avoid it as a focal point that could potentially distract or prohibit the participant to speak freely. I also wrote keywords and thoughts on a notebook page in front of me. At the end of the interview, I informed the participant of my contact information and thanked him/her again along with informed them to follow up with me in the event they wanted to add or retract any statements. To assure privacy and confidentiality, the responses were stored on a personal device that is password protected and stored in an unidentified place that is not easily accessible to others beyond myself. An additional step that I embedded for protection is to have a direct transfer of digital files from device to device as opposed to sending it via email or any other similar methods.

Surveys

Data Collection

Surveys are questionnaires with the intentions of gathering information that will help extend knowledge and answer questions (Gideon, 2012; Dillman, 2014). Surveys served as an operative means for collecting perceptions from organizational members regarding their expectations of their organizations regarding behaviors in a social media context as well as a method to better grapple with members' use of social media pertaining to their experiences within the workplace. The sampling method used was random sampling to increase generalizability. The ICA audit was used conceptually to guide the framing of the survey. With this, the components of the ICA audit conceptually used included 1) demographic information, 2) amount of information received on disruptive event, 3) the amount of information needed or expected on disruptive event, 4) the timeliness of the information received from key sources and 5) the quality of the communication relationships. This framing guided the construction of the questions which I developed and received approval from the dissertation committee.

Instruments

As stated in previous section, the ICA Communication Audit was employed conceptually. Specifically, it was manipulated for the purpose of a) guiding elements to the interview guide and b) guiding factors and objectives for implementation into the survey instrument. The survey actually used for data collection was crafted by me with questions designed to tackle the core research questions motivating the dissertation in mind. The survey instrument consisted of 37 questions that took on different formats such as the 5-point Likert scale for rating purposes, open response to allow participants to answer questions freely and directly, and single answer choices (See attached file).

Sample

The sample consisted of members of a large educational institute in the south. These members represented various rankings from administration to student level. The survey required that all participants be at least 18 years of age. Beyond this boundary, anyone who identified as a member of this organization was eligible and encouraged to participate in the study. The goal was to obtain 200 responses. An IRB application was completed and finally approved in February. Within the IRB, I applied for a waiver of documentation of consent, meaning that I could use participation as a device for capturing consent instead of having participants sign a consent form. With this, consent forms were not signed, but rather, by participation, participants understood and consented to the survey through their compliance and completion of the study. The purpose of this was to add an additional layer of confidentiality for participants.

The sample was gathered through face-to-face conversations and email. I recruited participants through these conversation which led to personal participation along with sharing with others. Thus, I initially captured a sample that then spun into a snowball sample. I shared an

email with my initial contacts, which was then forwarded to their members within their network. The email included information about the study, the link to the survey, and my contact information.

Notations to Acknowledge about Survey Instrument

One component that is important to address and note is that a specific indication of how much "too little" or "too much" represents when asking about quantity of information shared (refer to the survey for specific questions) was not provided based on these being subjective, perceptual questions. Too little to one person may very well be a balanced amount for another individual. For these questions, my target was directed towards people's *perception* of the amount of information shared. I also provided a real snapshot of information shared by the university's social media accounts regarding a critical event and/or person of interest with questions directly pertaining to the shared communication.

Responses & Pilot Study

The goal initially was to collect as many responses as possible. To provide a concrete number, I aimed to gather 200 responses. Challenges associated with survey methods is the actual collection of them. To combat this potential issue, I enacted a few strategies. For one, research suggest that some responses are never completed due to the time requirement or length of the instrument which causes responder's fatigue (Dillman, 2014). To acknowledge this, I crafted an instrument that consist of 37 questions that required minimal time to answer. With this, the total duration of the survey lasted an average of 12 minutes with no one taking longer than 25 minutes to complete. To ensure this, I conducted pilot testing with a small sample of 20 individuals. Through the pilot study I checked for things such as time took to complete as well as received feedback for question comprehension, grammatical errors and any other suggestions

pilot participants may have noticed (see additional details about the pilot study in succeeding section). For this, the time frame of data collection lasted for a total of three weeks and was sent out in a couple of different ways including me crafting individual messages and personally emailing through my own crafted list of collected emails to leaders of departments being willing to share and encourage participants to complete.

Procedure

A pilot study is an initial, low-scale deployment of an instrument to assure a solid product and allow any necessary calibrations to the instrument prior to office use for data collection (Dillman, 2014). Current literature on survey methodology urges the implementation of a pilot study prior to a full-scale dispersion. This is because some critical errors with the instrument could go unnoticed causing foundational issues to the data collected. Some potential issues that could be uncovered with a pilot study includes (but not limited to) misinterpretations of what is being asked, therefore rousing responses that do not address research question, ease of answering questions and its ability to be user-friendly, as well as, typos, grammatical issues and overall perceptions of the instrument. By conducting the pilot study, I solicited this feedback through the brief data collected, in addition to, asking for direct feedback from my pilot sample.

My pilot sample consisted of 20 undergraduate students at a large southern university. Participants were students in a communication-based course and were granted course credit for their participation in the study. Following the pilot study, calibrations were made to the survey to enhance quality. The survey was designed and approved by the dissertation committee before executing the official data collection. Internal approval was also secured from the university's IRB review board prior to moving forward with the full-scale dissemination to ensure compliance and integrity.

Full-scale Dissemination

The web-based survey was designed on Qualtrics based on conceptual framing from the ICA communication audit and the guiding research questions. Data collection took place for a duration of three weeks spanning from the months of February to March. An email which included a link to the survey, an overview of the study and my contact information was sent to participants. This email was either sent directly from me to participants or to departmental or committee leaders and then shared with those groups. Participants were then able to participate by clicking on link which took them to the web-based Qualtrics survey. Participants granted their consent through participating in the study. Participants then answered questions within the survey and was presented with a thank you note at the end of the survey. After responses were received, data analysis began to furnish results and aid in the data interpretation phase. Responses were stored on the Qualtrics platform which is password protected and secured with high-end firewall security and is compliant with various entities such as FedRamp to prevent any vulnerabilities.

Mixed Methods Strategy

For this study, I aimed to incorporate the "bricolage" concept, meaning that I, as the researcher, took the various pieces of data collected to explicate a complex story (Tracy, 2013). Mixed methods aided in accomplishing this. The concurrent triangulation mixed methods design was used for this study. This was the selected design as it is structured to have synchronized data collection producing a more time efficient strategy to complete the study. Additionally, the goal of this method is to collect data from various levels in which I collected data from various levels or rankings within the organization. Data collection of surveys and interviews overlapped, although the survey phase began slightly sooner than the collection of surveys due to IRB approval dates. Integration took place in the interpretation phase. The findings from the surveys

and interviews were used to inform the overall picture gathered from the data. In mixed methods

diagramming, squares represent exclusive actions while circles represent integration. Figure 4.1

is a visual version of the mixed methods design used following mixed methods diagramming

rules.

Figure 4.1 Mixed Methods Design Setup
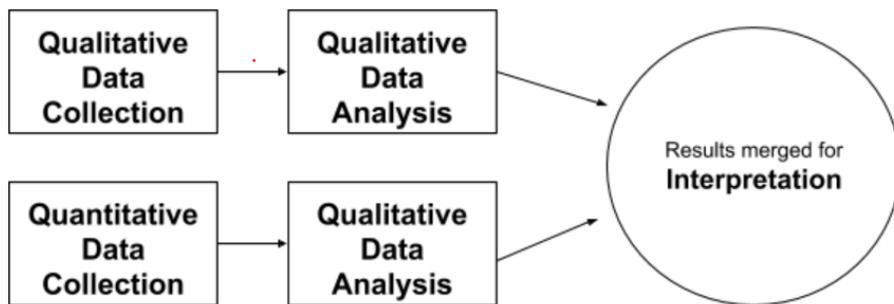
CHAPTER FIVE: DATA ANALYSIS

Overview

In this chapter, I provide details and results regarding the analysis phase of the interview and survey data collected. I begin with a brief overview of the interview data collected. I then proceed to provide the technique used to examine the interview data. To deliver a quick-to-digest snapshot of the interview data, I supply various tables with the findings linked to supporting quotes. Next, I discuss an overview of the survey data collected, followed by the statistical test selected to analyze the data. I conclude information regarding the survey data with findings. Finally, I provide a table that host the mixed methods interpretations of the study.

Interview Data

Descriptive Statistics

My final sample consisted of 18 long semi-structured long interviews. Demographically, the sample consisted of 10 females and 8 males with 6 participants being non-white and the remaining 12 categorized as Caucasian. While I can provide and confirm that the positions that participants held within the educational institution ranged from front-line employees to administrators, I will not provide any additional descriptive information to assure their anonymity and confidentiality, especially with the sample size. The interviews followed a specific structure, however varied from person to person due to statements made which resulted in differing probing questions.

Sampling & Saturation

As stated in the previous chapter, the sample was theoretically selected, meaning they were picked purposefully and systemically, for the purpose of capturing a holistic set of vantage points within the organization. I interviewed participants past the point of saturation meaning

that I continued conducting interviews to the point of reoccurring responses and little to no new

information. More specifically, saturation is defined as the point during data collection that no

new concepts or themes are being presented and previously discovered ones are repeated

multiple times (Charmaz, 2006; Trotter, 2012). I reached the point of redundancy in my ninth

interview. However, I went forward with collecting additional interviews for two reasons. The

first reason was to ensure that I had a strong number of cases to confidently suggest my findings.

Moreover, my second reasons for proceeding well past the point of redundancy was to ensure

that I captured a holistic collection of vantage points and possible nuisances due to the

theoretical sampling which encouraged perspectives from various ranks or social locations

within the organization. With this, the sample included between two and three representatives

from the varying position levels. By gathering two or three interviews from individuals who

signified the differing ranks.

Trustworthiness, Reliability, Validity & Reflexivity

To establish trustworthiness, I enabled the choice of time and location of the interview to

be selected via the participant. I also stated my vow to ensure their protection and that I would

not use any identifiable information at any point in my study. Furthermore, I spoke from the

standpoint of a fellow organizational member and remained cognizant of every detail down to

what tone or facial expressions I made. Verbal and non-verbal cues of many respondents

eventually alluded to their relaxation and comfort with me (such as smiling, laying back or

stating "I can say what I want, because you're anonymizing this, so…") as the researcher,

therefore suggesting some level of trustworthiness. Reliability is the consistency or the ability to

replicate the study (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002). This is of low concern for qualitative research, so

hence, the current study, due to 1) questions changing based on the participant, 2) meanings shift

as the participant changes and 3) even with time, meaning and understanding changes for the researcher, thus, altering the interpretation of the study and outcomes.

Validity is another construct that is difficult to apply to qualitative research. While reliability gets at the concept of consistency, validity aims to show the accuracy of what the study is measuring. However, with the possibility of an indefinite number of responses being possible, it is difficult to accurately understand validity as applied to a qualitative study. There are ways to address this in which I attempted to achieve validity through my dissertation committee evaluating the instrument and approving which increases conceptual validity. Another way of addressing validity is through my application of mixed methods; to use varying tools that could address weaknesses in each tool used and employ triangulation. By applying triangulation, I was able to use two sets of data with respects and cognitive effort devoted to my research interest. Lastly, while I admit only applied to a limited degree, I did also utilize member validation which is when the researcher takes some of their findings or evidence and double-check with other participants to verify its legitimacy. I did so by stating to participants "some other participants have stated 'x', do you believe this? Or what are your thoughts on this?"

Reflexivity refers to the "analytic attention to the researcher's role in qualitative research" (Gouldner, 1971, p. 16, as cited in Palaganas, Sanchez, Molintas, Visitacion & Caricativo, 2017). To enact reflexivity, I wrote personal notes of thoughts, reflected on how the interview went, listened back through interviews and therefore, resulted in slightly changing my questions and how I framed them. Additionally, this process safeguarded my research as I reflected on any biases or presumptions after each interview. To mark the conclusion of my era of qualitative data collection, I had all interviewed transcribed via a transcription service. I could then begin a more in-depth analysis of my data with transcripts although, as per the construction of constant

comparative method, my analysis began and took place simultaneously with my data collection after each interview.

Data Analysis Method

To analyze the data, I used the Constant Comparative Method (CCM). Though this method is associated with grounded theory, simply employing the method does not automatically sanction grounded theory. For the purpose of this study, I solely used CCM to analyze the qualitative content. Thus, I used an inductive approach in which my analysis was largely data-driven. Additionally, the researcher is seen as the primary tool in data collection and analysis, hence, codes were based on what I saw. By using CCM, I also ensured rigor to my study and analysis as CCM required that I review the data several times. Further, I read over my personal notes taken during the interview as an additional level of thought-driven data. I executed the following four steps of analysis based on work produced by Glaser & Strauss (1967, p105):

1. Comparing incidents applicable to each category

2. Integrating categories and their properties

3. Delimiting the theory

4. Writing the theory

With the use of this method, I continuously went back and compared my current coding with my previously coded content. One major benefit of using this method is that scholars can truly decipher new theory with the use of raw data that has been accumulated through interviews (Kolb, 2012; Bogdan & Biklen, 2006; Glesne & Peshkin, 1992).

I coded all interviews within the time span of four days. There were three levels of coding that I followed and employed:

1. Open Coding

2. Axial Coding

3. Selective Coding

Coding began during the collection phase, in which I initially began assigning codes through-out interviews. With transcripts in hand, during my first line of coding, I continuously looked (and listened) through the data, identified multiple initial codes with my queries in mind. In this phase, I coded everything that stood out to me in response to the research questions that I proposed. In the next stage of coding, axial coding, I created connections between my initial codes by finding similarities and relationships that could then be located under like codes. By connecting the codes, I identified smaller relating subcategories to bigger, more comprehensive codes. In the final stage, I elevate axial codes to final, more core codes that systemically tie together the relationships and similarities, determine relationships and refine all data into these ultimate all-encompassing, principle codes. Essentially, I further collapsed all remaining codes into final themes. I coupled all of this information with my personal notes for a complete examination of the data with high scrutiny.

Qualitative Findings

Findings to RQ4

To first state, in both the findings to RQ4 and RQ5, members of the organization are engaging in these behaviors for various reasons, however, all stemming to one overarching reason: they are not getting whatever it is that they are seeking from their internal organization. The different reasons why people participate in the following findings via social media ranges from lack of information within the organization (i.e. organization is not being transparent or

holding back information) to lack of voices within their organization (not being heard, or if heard, nothing is being done) to feeling uncomfortable to speak up within the organization. I must clarify that these findings, though they represent the various levels within the organization, is definitely more applicable and more so in light of those within the lower power positions. I find this to be supported through the data in which more people of lower power spoke more on taking to social media than those in higher power. For those in higher power, the motives were different.

To remind the reader, research question four explored how members used social media to cope with the critical events within the workplace. Through analysis of the data, I can confidently suggest that members are using social media to cope; quotes such as the following explicitly back this position: "I'm posting sometimes… just as a coping mechanism or a stress reliever." The following three strategies detail how members are using social media to cope with organizational critical events:

1. *Venting*: This is when the organizational member releases or expresses personal opinions, feelings, thoughts and/or experiences about the critical event via a social media platform.

2. *Seeking Validation*: This takes place when a member feels a particular feeling or have an experience that they are either not receiving support on internal to the organization or are unsure if what they perceive or feel is valid, they go to social media to find those sources of validation.

3. *Seeking Community*: Members may either observe or engage in dialogue with others who share the same experience and sentiments, therefore finding solidarity, comradery and community or to find someone who they can co-experience the event with.

Some members actually post onto social media to cope, share a post, all while others may just observe to find peace in other people's shared experiences. Even when the member is simply observing, this can still be problematic for the organization for the following reasons: 1) the member is digitally medicating him or herself deal with internal issues as opposed to sharing with leadership. Thus, the issues cannot be addressed, nor can leadership know, hence, canopying a void or blind spot for the organization. Secondly, the member may be more influenced by external members versus internal members are more driven by a pro-organizational viewpoint in which this could impact their reactions and behavior within their organization. This is very possible considering that members reported following people that they trust and that social media in general was a place to fact-find and gather how others feel or think about an issue. To further demonstrate findings, please see Table 5.1 which supplies direct quotes from the data.

Findings to RQ5

In research question five, I was interested in how individuals used social media to regain power during a critical event in which they may feel a lack of control or power. Through support of the data, I present the following four ways that members use social media to regain power: by building awareness, enacting the self as an informal leader, through fact-finding and lastly, by organizing. Table 5.2 is provided to detail specific quotations extracted from the data to support the aforementioned strategies put forward. Additionally, I propose antecedents prior to a member posting on social media, evaluations of the social media post and the outcome. Therefore, based on the data, I present the model as seen in Figure 5.1. Further, I explicate predictions based on the model.

Table 5.1 RQ4 Quotes

Code	Quotes	Rationale/Thoughts
Venting	"I don't know who to talk to, or who to, *I just need to say what's on my mind…* Social Media becomes that. *It's an outlet* for me to say 'let me tell you this racist shit that this, that I just experienced…" "…on my personal account, which I keep anonymous… That is a place for *venting…*"	In these quotes, members are expressing their need to just get their personal thoughts off of their chest and social media appeals as the right place to say what is on their mind. Sometimes it is because they are not sure where to go, have an image to uphold but thoughts to share (typically higher power), or don't trust or are too uncomfortable to vent within the organization.
Seeking Validation	"Or am I just *tripping?*" "And then also, you know, *it's validation* when someone gets on there and *agrees* with you."	In these quotes, members know how they feel or what they experienced but are seeking support, authentication or endorsement- for someone to say, "what you feel is valid and you have a right to feel that way."
Seek Community	"kind of two different tracks of people commenting strictly about the event itself and then people jumping off of that into a way of sharing their experiences." "it's an outlet, an outlet to perhaps engage with others who maybe have similar opinions or thoughts "	Social media proves itself to be a place where members can find others who can relate to their experiences, identity or that can join their group and engage in conversation with. This gives some level of professional or personal companionship that is not received in the organization but is desired when coping.

Table 5.2 RQ5 Quotes

Code	Quotes	Rationale/Thoughts
By Building Awareness	"the presence of social media, actually in my mind, forces major organizations to actually make changes that they wouldn't have to without it; part of it is accountability, *holding their organization accountable…* spreading awareness for a topic." "So, if you need attention on something, this is a tool. *Sometimes, that's the only thing that will make the organization act…* We need to get this attention on this issue so that *change can be made."*	This can also be defined as "Online Whistleblowing." While not always as extreme as Online Whistleblowing, the quotes presented here do represent the online whistleblowing as opposed to milder cases of building awareness. These quotes embody the essence of what's meant by aiming to build awareness, why social media is the choice and the desire to ensure action behind those social media post.
By Enacting the Self as an Informal Leader	"I remember,… there was someone standing on the corner of [a street] with a huge sign that said something like, something just ridiculously homophobic. And like, it was horrible. And I remember seeing that, and I took a picture of it. And I sat down, and *I wrote this big long post on Facebook about how this person is not representing the [org] accurately."* "So me, if I'm associated with that organization, like I'm an "*expert*", on the topic, not exactly but like, that's how they feel about themselves. They're like, "I work for this firm, I can talk, *I'm credible to talk about this*"…in the case of when you work for the firm, because you feel like you know the firm pretty well, you have something meaningful to say that other people might not know."	This category can also be thought of as the self-professed expert. This category represents those who muster up their own power by becoming the authority, whether that be in the organization and trying to correct misinformation or the authority to advocate for others, these individuals are taking ownership of informal power in places that allow them to such as social media.
By Fact Finding	"And it's become one of the places it seems like that people go to first to find out what you think as an organization, where you stand, what you're going to say, how you're going to respond to a critical event." "seeing the responses of people… And that kind of helps me to form my opinion about what's happening because I'm seeing other people's perspectives on things."	In this code, the quotations shared express people's desire or acknowledgement of social media being a place for information or to see what others are thinking. In many cases, the first or primary location for info. In some cases, members aren't looking to official organizational sources, but rather looking to others for self-deemed factual info about how to act or feel.
By Organizing	"It's a tool for *organizing*. I have definitely got on a lot of bandwagons because of finding out about something on social media." "it's super easy to connect somebody when they say something and you're like "Wow, that resonates with me" … And you're like that is something that I feel is important. I don't know who posted this really… but you retweet it again".	By organizing, members are using social media in both the physical sense of organizing as well as the digital sense to protest, combat issues, respond or come together. Interestingly, members may support someone they do not know at all. These quotes reveal this.

Figure 5.1. Social Media Use Model

ANTECEDENTS

-Generally driven by strong emotions, mostly negative. Emotions include:

Negative
Angry
Sad
Frustrated
Unheard
Positive
Excited
Proud

Members tend to lack some element, such as voice or information, from within the organization and therefore, goes to social media to get it.

SOCIAL MEDIA POST

General platforms used include Twitter and Facebook.

What does this look like?
Self-written post:
When the member crafts an original social media post expressing personal rhetoric; form of verbal communication; most severe case.

Retweet/Repost:
Member does not write their own message, but rather, endorses, promotes and retweets someone else's post, therefore still helping the message to disseminate; form of nonverbal communication; mid-level severity.

Comment or Like/Love a post:
When a member comments (form of verbal communication) underneath someone's post or likes/loves (nonverbal communication) a person's post; engaging in conversation or signaling agreement, but not catapulting it further; least severe case of all three.

OUTCOMES
Emotions participants may feel:

Positive
Relieved
Satisfied
Empowered
Heard
Inspired
Negative
Nervous or Anxious
(used interchangeably)
Reminded of lack of power

Members tend to experience more positive affective outcomes than negative. When reflected upon, the member may hold a positive evaluation about posting via social media based on past experience (Bem, 1980).

1. *By Building Awareness*: This takes place when members bring awareness to critical events taking place with or within the organization in hopes of actions following. I would also call this "Online Whistleblowing (OW)." This differs from traditional whistleblowing in the sense of how one blows the whistle and to whom they blow the whistle to. In traditional whistleblowing, members would go to a specific source such as news media or governing bodies to make them aware of the issues being faced within the organization. In OW, members are not going to a specific source, but rather an online place or platform, typical social media, to discuss their conflicts with the organization. Additionally, members are blowing the whistle to the collective masses, which is anyone online who will listen and hopefully support. With the shift of power being more favorable of individuals, collective

voices online can more readily and quickly demand a prompt response and action from organizations.

2. *By Enacting the Self as an Informal Leader*: Members may stir up their own power by enacting actions that assume them as an informal leader. Thus, the member will stand up for others and advocate for or share information via social media, therefore rechanneling that disempowered energy. Another action the member may engage in includes educating others. Within organizations, members, particularly those of a lower power position, may not be deemed as the experts or knowers of organizational issues. But, on social media, they can be seen as experts or more knowing due to their internal status. With this, they can carry more weight or credibility by informing others or correcting misinformation resulting in a sense of power that he or she may not have within the organization. Further, this encourages scholars to speculate about internal versus external standpoints and how these vantage points may have an impact.

3. *By Fact Finding*: Knowledge is power, so members go online to seek and gather information from sources outside of the organization to feel informed and regain power of the perceived situation and determine what is happening.

4. *By Organizing*: When orchestrating a response to events within the organization, individuals use social media as a tool to organize protests, events, and other measures to respond.

Social Media Use Model

In the Social Media Use Model as seen in Figure 5.1, the antecedents that is likely to take place prior to a social media post regarding a member's experiences within a critical event are provided. Through a glance of this, the reader should take from it that emotions are the most

dynamic component to predicting if an individual is going to post online. The data implies that these emotions are primarily of a strong, passionate, negative orientation. These emotions can include (but may not be limited to) feelings of anger, sadness, frustration or perceptions of not having an internal voice. Positive emotions can also promote for online post as well, though, again suggested through the data, will occur less frequently than negative post. Further, members could turn to leadership or other avenues within their organization to do so, yet they choose not to for reasons such as feeling uncomfortable talking to someone within, feeling unheard and therefore wanting to advocate for action that will pressure the organization into making a change, or feeling undervalued due to not being aware of what is happening. If members are feeling these emotions and lack of support within the organization, they will be likely to engage in online communication.

This brings us to the second box: the social media post. In this box, I explicate what social media engagement could look like. Members can either draft up an original post, share someone else's post, or comment/like/love someone else's post. The most dangerous or severe case of members engaging in social media post is the original post. Such post can really capture what is being felt with a lack of a filter or approval to share and creates new content therefore adding to other existing critical content about the organization. I also classify these message as verbal communication as it is rhetoric written directly by the member, expressing the members' viewpoint. When members share someone else's message, this signifies mid-level severity, as it still shows endorsement for a negative message regarding the organization and is a catalyst for the message to continuously move forward and disseminate more widely, but it is not embodying new sentiments and content. I label this as nonverbal communication, because it is more so an action as opposed to the member drafting their own original written commentary. Lastly,

members can comment or like someone's social media post, but the message is not moving forward for others to view. It stays in its original location, but still does show endorsement for the message. When engaging in commenting, I label this as verbal, because again, the member is engaging in new communication that stems directly from him or her versus simply liking a post, is an action and not sharing new written information.

In the final box, I provided outcomes the member may experience post sharing via social media. The outcomes are greatly epitomized through affective means as well, therefore supporting the notion that the use of social media during critical organizational events tends to be deeply-rooted in perceptions of emotional states. Participants reported how they felt after taking to social media in which, they reported feeling relieved that they finally got it off of their chest, satisfied and justified with their choice to do so, empowered through getting their message out to many who may listen, heard, and inspired to keep going. Some negative feelings included being nervous or anxious and this was chalked to not knowing how others may respond to their post. However, even this feeling turned into a positive one in the event that others online supported what was said. Additionally, people reported that they sometimes posted to project a position or stance on a situation due to being fearful that people may judge them if they did not or may mistake their silence as compliance with the act.

The other negative outcome shared by participants included sad as they were reminded about the lack of power they had. More thoroughly stated, participants stated that they would share online, but still felt that nothing was being done and that they simply had no power to make changes happen.

Two things I found quite fascinating in which this data suggested is that 1) members went to social media initially feeling predominately negative affect and left feeling more positive

affect. Secondly, even though participants acknowledged their awareness of possible risks for posting on social media, their actions insinuated their evaluation that what they received from going to social media outweighed those possible ramifications.

Within the data, Standpoint Theory was visible in the responses. The simple desire to post and feeling lost that participants communicated varied among the lower to higher ranking people. Higher ranking members did recognize their access to information and further discussed their position to not post emotionally or personal experiences on social media due to their affiliation with the organization. Instead, they refrained from using social media as a source for such activity, because they were concerned of it being tied back to the organization, the organization's image and their personal well-being within the organization. With this, I highlight that both, low and high-ranking are conscious of their well-being within the organization, however, higher-ranking members typically decide to not use social media to cope with internal issues to uphold that well-being while lower ranking members sometimes feel that is vital to their internal well-being. Higher-ranking members state topics such as great things that the organization is doing and recognizing organizational members as the bulk of their post. If ever personal, social media posts may include pictures of family, motivational quotes or under an anonymous account that they feel would likely keep everyone's identity secure and free from conflict. Higher ranking members also rarely post for the sake of avoiding messages that could be misconstrued if ever linked back to the organization. Contrarily, lower ranking members rarely made mention of anonymizing their accounts, posted their personal opinions more frequently and suggested that their position within the organization left them "out of loop" or impacted their access to information and power.

Survey Data

Sample & Descriptive Statistics

The data was collected via a web-based survey on the Qualtrics platform. I used a snowball sampling method to recruit the participants with a theoretical sampling lens. This means that I recruited people to complete the survey, but also asked them along with other members within the organization that could share the link to pass along and encourage members that they had access to, to complete. I also personally sent emails to over 200 members of the organization through collecting their emails through open directories accessed online via the educational institution's website. With this I sent a personal crafted and addressed message to each individual member. The theoretical sampling lens played a role in who I decided to ask. I specifically made sure to recruit members from various subgroups and roles to participate and pass on. This was to ensure a wider representation of the holistic set of roles and subgroups within the organization. Through this, the sample was a bit more representative of the single educational institution. Upon asking members to share with their respective groups or departments and not knowing how many members were apart of those emails, I am unable to accurately report a response rate.

Data collection ended after a period of four weeks. Once I reached the amount of responses I needed, I downloaded the data from Qualtrics. I conducted my initial cleaning, by ridding the data of information unnecessary or unwanted in the file such as IP addresses. Afterwards, I deleted empty responses or cases that contained no information. I labeled my different categories/variables into labels that I would be able to identify. After the data was cleaned and coded accordingly, I was able to begin running statistical test. To run these tests, I used the SPSS 25 Statistical Package.

The data collection phase ended with a total for 218 cases (N=218). After cleaning the data, there were 16 surveys that were submitted with little to no information, bringing the total amount of usable data to 202 cases (N=202). A few more cases did get submitted (after I started my analysis), however I had to quit adding responses in efforts to complete data analysis in a timely manner. The demographic content that I gathered include gender, age, race, rank (position within the organization), tenure (time with the organization), marital status and education level. The demographic of the sample included 112 females, making up (n= 112) 55.2% of the sample, 89 males or (n=89) 43.8% male and 2 identified as other or 1%. Participants were predominantly between the ages of 18 and 25 (n= 99) making up 49% of the sample, followed by those over the age of 47 (n= 39) or 19.3% of the total sample. Next, 12.4% identified being between the ages of 26 and 32 (n= 25), 10.4% identified being between the ages of 33 and 40 (n=21) trailed by participants who were between the ages of 41 and 47 (n= 18) making up 9.8% of participants.

The sample was largely represented by participants who identified as white (n= 160, 79.1%), followed by Black or African American, (n= 30, 14.9%), Asian (n=5, 2.5%), and 4 who selected other (n=4, 2%). Remaining participants identified as American Indian or Alaska Native (n=1, 0.5%), Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (n=1, 0.5%) and Latino/Latina descent, (n=1, 0.5%). Participants identified mostly as students with (n= 127), 62.6% self-selecting into this option. The student population consisted of both undergraduate and graduate students. Next, 19.2% of faculty completed the survey (n= 39), followed by 11.3% staff (n= 23), 5.4% of administrators (n= 11) and 1.5% who identified as 'other' rank (n=3). Nearly half of the sample, 51.7% to be exact, indicated that their tenure with the organization was between 0 and 3 years, (n=105), 26.6% of the sample has been with the organization for 3 to 6 years (n=54), 3.4% has

been with the organization for 6 to 9 years (n=7), and 18.2% has been with the organization for 10 years or longer (n=37).

Marital status was split into two groups. In the first group which was labeled as Married or in a committed partnership, 47.3 participants self-selected into (n= 95) and 52.7% identified as single, divorced or separated, (n= 106). Lastly in demographic questions, participants chose their education level as either high school diploma or equivalent (n=14, 6.9%), some college but no degree (n=41, 20.2%), Associates degree (n=13, 6.4%), Bachelor's degree (n=45, 22.2.%), or graduate degree (n=90, 44.3%).

Analysis Strategy & Findings: RQ1, RQ2, RQ3, H1 & H2

RQ1

In my first proposed research question (RQ1), I simply wanted to explore if members of the organization perceived it to be okay for organizations to use social media as a platform for discussing critical events. This question spurred up based on the informal and public nature of the social media in conjunction with the nature of critical events (sensitive and generally preferred to be kept private). To answer this question, I sought after a dichotomous response; simply put, either a yes or a no. For this, I chose the most simple and straight forward test, which was a frequency test. Based on the answer choice that had the highest quantity, I determined which direction most members leaned in. However, the less difference that existed between those who responded yes and no would also indicate lack of a clear consensus that may warrant further investigation. In addition to the selection choices of yes or no on the Qualtrics survey, I also left a response box open for participants to further communicate their position. These responses also facilitated in answering these questions as is exhibited in the subsequent findings section.

The findings from the basic frequency test suggest that more individuals feel that it *is* indeed appropriate for organizations to use social media as means to communicate about critical

events. This is quite surprising as the nature of the event does not quite align with the nature of the platform. Below is a table that further dives into the specifics of the findings from this question. In the table, I supply the n=x of who supported each option along with qualitative responses that were provided in support of each. The total number of participants who answered this question includes 202. The tables (Table 5.3 and 5.4) below shows the exact distribution of each group who selected social media as appropriate contrasted with not appropriate.

RQ2 & RQ3

To operationalize my dependent variable, *message impression*, participants responded to six items. As this is a new construct, there is no precedent for how to measure it. High message impression implies positive evaluations of the message. The six items related to the importance respondents attributed to the organization's communication. Examples of items asked if the provided message made them feel more "connected," "satisfied," or "confused." Since this is a new construct with multiple items, I conducted an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) due to the exploratory nature of the current study. I employed the EFA to evaluate the Likert Scales using a Promax rotation, as I did not believe that the variables were orthogonal and moreover, Promax rotation allows for a faster output as well as its advantage to be more "conceptually simple" (Abdi, 2006: p 6). I first analyzed the Likert Scale regarding outcomes of the message. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was .79, which is above the recommended value of .60. A Bartlett's test of sphericity was used to ensure suitability of sample by checking for equal variance among sample. The results of the Bartlett's test reported with significance ($\chi 2$ $(15) = 442.67$, $p < .000$). Taken together, the factor analysis was estimated to be apposite with all 6 items and loaded onto one factor. Selected items were reverse coded and demonstrate appropriate levels of reliability (Chronbach's $\alpha = .84$).

Table 5.3 Social Media: Appropriateness

YES **(Social media is appropriate.)**	**NO** **(Social media is not appropriate.)**
n= 131, 64.9%	n= 71, 35.1%
"it can be the easiest way to reach everyone." "multiple people use social media and mostly get their updates of organizations from social media" "a wide number of their constituents utilize social media, and it is a fast way to communicate widely." "it allows everyone to be in the loop" "it can be the most effective way to distribute information" "I don't always check my email."	"Depending on the event, I would think the organizations would try to privately address the members via email or phone first" "not everyone has or uses social media accounts as their primary source of information/communication" "it gets more people involved that are not a part of the organization." "Facebook example...if I lose trust in FB, I will not use it and then I will miss important information." "It is unprofessional and allows people to comment/retweet."

Table 5.4 Social Media: Appropriateness Distribution Among Groups

	Administrator	Faculty Member	Staff	Student	Other	Total
Social Media Use: Appropriate	9	22	13	86	1	131
Social Media Use: Inappropriate	2	17	10	40	2	71
Total	11	39	23	126	3	202

My independent variable was *amount of information*. To measure my independent variable, amount of information, I used a 1-item scale. The one item asked people their perception of how informative the message was about the critical event. Participants responded to the question using a 5-point Likert Scale that ranged from one to five, with one representing strongly disagree and five representing strongly agree. As this is a new construct, there is no precedence on how to measure it, however, I propose that the single item appropriately captures participants beliefs about the organization's amount of information. While a single item scale is not ideal, metanalytic studies demonstrate that a single item construct may be considered acceptable (Wanous, Reichers & Hudy, 1997).

To account for potential alternative explanations, I included several control variable within the model. First, I can safely assume that an individual' s position of power may influence how they may view the organization's communication. To account for this, I include the variable *rank* to control for this power dynamic. I also include *age*, as generational differences could bias the results. Additionally, I controlled for other individual characteristics that could be influential in the results such as *education, gender* and *tenure*. Lastly, I controlled for *social media use* as many people reported that they become aware of and use social media during critical events.

Model, Analysis and Findings. I used an Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) to test the model. My study met the assumptions of OLS, thus suggesting it to be a viable test to run for my data.

The coefficient for the message impression is positive is significant (β=.45, t(132) =11.01, p< .001), thus finding support for my research question. The results of the regression explained 56.95% of the variance in the dependent variable (R^2 =.56, F(8,132) =21.51, p<.001)

and indicates that more amounts of information is positively related to participant's message impression.

To explicitly spell it out, the answer is no, from a receivers' standpoint, organizations cannot communicate too much during a critical event. As communication increases, outcomes that illicit or foster a better work environment increased such as people experiencing lower levels of stress, feel more comfortable, more satisfied and more connected. Taken together, to some extent, to advise in the direction of one is to not advise in the other direction. With the results from RQ2, it can be strongly counseled that organizations should communicate as much as possible during critical events. With this, I cannot fully nor empirically dispel the notion of the organizations' ability to communicate too little. This is something that should be explored additionally in the future, as it was a limitation of this particular study. These findings will be addressed in a bit more detail below in the mixed methods section.

H1 & H2

To operationalize my dependent variable, *message quality*, I conducted an EFA examining 12 items used to represent my construct. The results of my factor analysis suggest that six out of the 12 items load onto one factor. Some of the items included elements such as message clarity and insight. Similar to earlier analysis of RQ_2 and RQ_3, I employed the EFA to evaluate the Likert Scales using a Promax rotation, as I did not believe that the variables were orthogonal. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was .75, which is above the recommended value of .60. A Bartlett's test of sphericity also reported with significance ($\chi2$ (66) $= 386.8$, $p < .001$). Taken together, the factor analysis was estimated to be apposite with 7 of the 12 items. Selected items were reverse coded and demonstrate appropriate levels of reliability (Chronbach's $\alpha = .91$).

My independent variable was *rank*. For the independent variable, *rank*, each participant was assigned to a category. I coded "Others" as zero, "Students" as one, "Staff" as two, "Faculty" as three and "Administrators" were categorized as four.

A one-way between subjects ANOVA was conducted to compare the differences of perceptions regarding amount of information among the five different groups. There was not a significant difference between perceptions of the overall amount of information at the $p<.05$ level for the five different groups: other (M= 2, SD=0), students (M=2.55, SD=1.38), staff (M=2.13, SD= 1.36), faculty (M=2.07, SD=1.28) and administrators (M=3.22, SD=1.48) [$F(1, 37) = 1.73$, $p = 0.14$].

A one-way between subjects ANOVA was conducted to compare the differences of perceptions regarding message quality among the five different groups. There was a significant difference between perceptions of the overall message quality at the $p<.05$ level for the five different groups including: other (M= -0.41, SD=0.24), students (M=0.35, SD=1.02), staff (M=-0.97, SD= 0.39), faculty (M=-0.82, SD=0.45) and administrators (M=.17, SD=1.12) [$F(4, 40) = 3.52$, $p < 0.05$]. Taken together, these results suggest that there is not a significant difference amount perceptions of amount of information based on rank, but there is a significant difference pertaining to perceptions of quality based on rank.

Mixed Methods Interpretation

Table A-1 (see appendix) applies both the quantitative and qualitative data to compare data from both methods. Additionally, the third column is the core of the integrated component of the mixed methods study as this captures the amalgamation of the interpretation of the two methods. Standpoint Theory's suggestion that social location and distance to power would impact perception of issues and behaviors is apparent in the findings, however, organizations may be unique as *rank* may not be the only factor when considering organizational standpoint.

For instance, the level of responsibility could potentially influence the level of commitment that one has to the organization, which may predominantly correlate with rank, although not always.

CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Discussion

The goal of this dissertation was to better understand members' perceptions and use of social media, primarily during ambiguous occurrences such as critical events. From previous work (Miller, 2014) and the current work, we know that information can serve as a means for managing uncertainty during ambiguous times. This was particularly intriguing as extant literature is still widely deprived of knowledge pertaining to the relationship between social media, organizations, organizational life and its members. Messages shared on social media, from both organizations and its members, can have both negative and positive impacts on organizations, but scholars need to get a better grasp of what messages exist on social media and their impact, what prompted someone to engage in crafting such messages and start to make predictions of what to expect. To explore this, the research conducted used a mixed methods approach to gather a holistic overview of the phenomenon and to use the strengths of one method to address the weakness of the other. Specifically, in this dissertation, I employed web-based surveys via Qualtrics and semi-structured interviews to explore the proposed research questions and hypotheses. After the data collection phase, I used a combination of regression statistical testing, and constant comparative method to analyze and dissect the data. From this, I integrate the findings produced from the collected data to develop some final findings. I extend Standpoint Theory as a navigational lens to explore and understand the information. In the following sections of this chapter, I will discuss both the theoretical and applied contributions that the current dissertation offer. I will then discuss some other noteworthy findings. Next, I will confer the limitations that I faced in this particular study as well as the future directions. I will then close with some final remarks relating to my dissertation to conclude this dissertation.

Major Contributions

Contributions

In this dissertation, I applied Standpoint Theory to the organizational context to better understand organizational critical events. While there are other closely related theories available such as Coomb's Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT), I decided to not select those as guiding theories as the current study looks at a range of different events which could be positive or negative and theories such as SCCT looks particularly at crises, generally of a negative tone. To my knowledge, this is the first study to extend Standpoint Theory into this particular context. I extend Standpoint Theory by applying a behavioral component to what knowledge already stands. Specifically, in Chapter 3, I began theorizing about standpoint within organizations. In this theory, I proposed a few predictions that aimed to envisage behavior regarding social media use. I predicted that a member's rank would serve as his or her standpoint and will impact what issues he or she saw as salient, therefore, also impacting how they will make sense of the issue and how they chose to behave. Next, I predicted that members of a lower rank would be more likely to use social media, both for regarding organizations matters that they experienced within the workplace and for personal gain (coping, regaining power, self-promotion, etc.). In this same vein, I forecasted members of higher ranks using social media more for organizational gain in contrast to their own personal gain and less frequently. It is also important to note, that members can take on multiple roles within the organization, making their viewpoints a unique and blended one.

My mixed methods interpretations elucidate these predictions (see Table 6.1 below). These predictions contribute to literature some groundwork for predicting some social media behaviors. Practically, this means that as strategic leaders, we are able to have a better understanding of what actions or antecedents may lead to social media usage and what some

potential consequences could be. Beyond the outcomes, predominately affective in nature, that members may experience, these outcomes can most certainly have an impact on organizations. For example, once a member, who may be viewed as a more credible source, post about a negative organizational event online, some other members, both internal and external, could be impacted by this. The data unveiled that human capital or more clearly, potential members could be unattracted from considering and further pursuing membership within the organization. Participants confirmed in the data that they have witnessed potential members visibly reconsidering their connection with the organization with statements such as "I don't know if I should join 'x' organization anymore." Findings such as this further leads scholars to speculate about an internal versus external standpoint within Standpoint Theory. Also established from the data, is that people do look to others to decide on their personal feelings and behaviors and one primary place they look to is others via social media. This can impact the internal workplace as members carry those evaluations with them into the physical workspace. These factors also impact the organization's reputational capital, public image and perceptions of core elements such as trust. If organizations are unaware of the commentary that is happening online, this could also result in the loss of core information that leadership needs to know if order to correct, modify and amend any fragmented areas or understandings within the organization.

These social media post can also be used to the advantage of the organization. Organizations who do become aware of the information shared online and who view the negative post shared on social media can use the material as a means for educating leadership on what is lacking from the organization. Arguably, if members of the organization are going onto social media, it is often due to their lack of a particular resource in which the member opts to search online to obtain it. Moreover, members do also promote their organization and share positive

information online. With internal members posting positive content online, this could help with a reputational boost and the ability to reach a wider audience. This can then increase the very factors that could be damaged in the event of a negative post (i.e. human capital loss could now become human capital gain). My extensions to Standpoint Theory suggest that, organizations and roles within it, have an intriguing complexity to it, thus, power is not the only dominating or determining factor aiding in situational knowledge/social locations and how people may respond to situations within the organizational realm.

My findings also contribute to Event Systems Theory (EST). In EST, theory argues that events that come directly from the organization and its top management team are seen to have a direct impact on behavior at the individual level (Morgeson, Mitchell, & Liu, 2015). My findings suggest that some other factors should be included and are of critical concern as well. For one, communication involved could be a mediator within this relationship. The quality of information that individuals receive during critical events could be the deciding factor that determines how an individual will respond. Additionally, the individual's standpoint or rank within the organization is likely to impact his or her behavior. As my study showed, lower ranking members are likely to behave differently than those of higher rank. This can be further explicated in Figure 5.1 – Social Media Use Model. Additionally, as previously stated, I have incorporated findings from the current study and standpoint theory extensions theorized in Chapter 3 in the following table (Table 6.1).

Table 6.1 Standpoint Theory in Organizations

	The following predictions pertain to internal members and their social media use:
S	**Predictions**
T	1. A member's rank within a company will greatly impact which issues are salient, how they understand it and their means for communicating. Further, since people can be members of multiple groups or hold multiple roles within an organization, it is possible that people can have multiple standpoints or social positionings that can podge into a unique outlook.
A	**Mixed Methods Interpretation:** The issues they found important was generally similar. The difference was not in which issues were salient, but more so lied within how they approached the situation and the angle of the situation they looked at the situation. Some members were indeed "torn" as they held multiple position in which each position had its own motivations. Also, while there was not much of a difference in the desired outcome, there was a minor amount of difference in how members wanted to get there. Further, when there was an issue in which issue was salient, it reflected the person's position indirectly. For example, one participant who worked on one of the off-campus locations mentioned a logistical issue that impacted their workspace due to its proximity to it. Because of this person's position, it dictated where they were physically located and hence, what they saw or experienced thus, implying that position indirectly impacted what they saw as salient.
N	
D	
P	2. Organizational members of a lower rank will be more likely to use social media more frequently regarding the organizational matters than will those of a higher rank.
O	**Mixed Methods Interpretation:** From the data collected, organizational members of a lower rank are more likely to use social media regarding their negative experiences in contrast to those in higher positions, who are more likely to communicate about positive organizational outcomes such as receiving a grant or promotion of research. Further, yes, organizational members of a lower rank are more likely, overall, to use social media regarding organizational matters than higher ranked members. Most higher ranked members provided statements such as nothing being critical enough to make them take to social media, its lack of professionalism or mindfulness of ramifications to their career. Lower ranking members seemed to feel the presence of less stakes vested in the organization, thus, promoting "freedom" as some members referred to it as, to use social media regarding organizational matters. To be clear, these statements obviously do not apply to all; some higher-ranking members would and have taken to social media and some lower ranking members stated their hesitance to. Again, this may suggest other moderating factors possibly impacting the willingness to use social media.
I	
N	
T	
T	3. Organizational members of a lower rank will be more likely to use social media for personal gain or interest (on an individual level) regarding the organizational matters than will those of a higher rank.
H	**Mixed Methods Interpretation:** This statement secured support, but only to a degree. Members who were in a mid-level range of power did also mention going to social media for self-promotion, such as to promote their personal research/work or to announce a promotion or grant. Additionally, these individuals did so indirectly sometimes. For instance, they make announce an award one their students/employees received, but indirectly implying that it was their job-well-done that aided in that award. As explicated in the findings earlier, lower ranking members are taking to social media for personal gain such as to deal with critical events (i.e. coping, regaining power) and promotion of the self or affiliated groups (which taken through a social identity lens, promotion of affiliated groups is to increase evaluations of the self).
E	
O	
R	
Y	4. Higher-ranking members will use social media for more strategic or organizational benefit versus personal gain.
	Mixed Methods Interpretation: The higher-ranking members did indeed post more seldomly. Thus, many of the members within the group entailed their occasional use as related to promoting the organization, recruiting new members, or observing to understand what is happening among members and how the organization is being portrayed. These members mentioned being conscious of what they even liked or retweeted, being sure not post anything polarizing and mentioned their realization of their social media activity being linked to the image of the organization.

Perceptions of Social Media Use

The findings unveiled some novel and interesting findings as well as extend some already existing ones. For instance, I was curious about how members at the individual level used social media during critical events. Standpoint Theory suggested that how members perceived situation based on their standpoint or social location. Within the data, we find this to be supported. Higher ranking members either could not recall a time in which they vented online or if they did, they assured that it was some time ago and not recent. Meanwhile, members of a lower rank could easily recall a time in which they did and had clear reasons for doing so. Respondents, primarily of a lower rank, confirmed that either they have engaged in social media use or have witnessed other members within their organization or other organizations take to social media regarding issues in the workplace.

Data compiled from interviews and surveys show that members take to social media with different motivations such as to vent about an event, to engage in dialogue with others who may have similar experiences, to gather information or to bring awareness to an internal situation of hopes of bringing about change. These posts shared via social media can be positive (i.e. celebrating a personal or organizational accomplishment) or negative (i.e. talking about a negative experience within the workplace). While the critical event is the compound that ignites the fire, it is ultimately the lack of some resource within the organization that prompts the individual to go outside of the organization and thus, to social media. Those resources may include voice or the ability to be heard, discomfort with speaking within the organization or to leadership, attention (both to good and bad events), lack of trust or lack of community. As one participant stated, we are emotional beings, and that is the crutch of the explanation for why people ultimately go to social media: strong emotions. These emotions, often negative in nature,

include anger, passion, hurt & pain, sadness, frustration or more positively, pride and excitement. Many people noted their negative emotions when initially taking to social media, but then issued more positive descriptions of their affect after sharing their post online. These emotions included empowered, heard, relieved, satisfied and inspired. And even though members of the organization were cognizant of possible negative consequences, they still posted suggesting that their positive outcomes outweighed any possible ramification. Thus, being heard, engaging in dialogue or finding an inclusive community is more important than possible backlash. Further, findings that demonstrate members desire to find community is aligned with Baumeister and Leary's (1995) work highlighting the need to belong. Members have social attachment in some form thus, having a need to belong. Substantial evidence shows that this need can shape a member's cognitive and emotional state (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Considering that the data from the current study suggest that emotions are a significant driving source fueling the choice to post online, that need for belong which shapes emotion can further explain the motivation behind posting online. Additionally, when members referred to their possible subsequent negative feeling of nervousness, it was not due to backlash from the organization in most cases, but more so warranted to possible reprimands from peers and other online members. This reflects back to work conducted from Mayo & colleagues (1934) regarding the power of peer pressure as more influential and controlling than traditional hierarchical power in some circumstances. These findings support the notion that standpoint within an organization does indeed impact how members perceive information, how they choose to behave as well as how much access to power and information they have.

Aside from coping with critical events, participants also use social media to regain power. In chapter five, I provided some of the core ways they do so, such as through building

awareness (or online whistleblowing). This construct is unique, because when applied to social media, individuals are no longer whistleblowing to those with traditional sources of power such as a governing body, but rather to a collective unit of members online who then can jointly propel an issue to be recognized and addressed. Social media redirects who to blow the whistle to and how the change comes about. Other ways of regaining power during critical events include gathering information or fact finding or acquiring power in other forms, thus becoming an informal leader in some capacity and rechanneling energy. It is imperative for organizations to understand how members are using social media so that this can be considered in their strategic planning, restructuring of the internal culture or attended to during times of critical events. By understanding this, strategic leaders can either be proactive and implement the necessary tools or avenues for better receptivity of critical events or can be effectively responsive and knowing of behaviors post a critical events.

In another question that I pose, though a very straight forward one, I examine if members perceive social media to be an appropriate or acceptable space for organizations to communicate about critical events. Scholars and practitioners alike need to know expectations regarding social media use during critical events from a receiver's vantage point. From the current study, I can suggest that there are *more* individuals within the organizational context who approve of organizations communicating on social media about these critical events. Though there are more who approve of organizational use of social media, there were still a third of respondents who did not find this to be okay. This could be due to people still having a traditional viewpoint of critical events within organizations whose perceptions of social media use within the workplace has not yet evolved. Observing this perception in other industries or in another year could tell us if this viewpoint is unique to this particular organization or industry or if it may be due to time

and evolving perceptions. In the table provided in chapter five, I also provided some reasons for participants' selection of social media use being appropriate or not during critical events. Some reasons stated for why social media was deemed as an appropriate tool is because of the ability to widely disseminate messages and that it serves as an easier way to reach people and get the information to members. Contrary to that stance, respondents provided reasons such as inside members should be privy to the information first or that critical events should be kept private to reduce the possible of negative optics placed on the organization. Thus, while I can suggest that most people find social media to be an acceptable space, it is not with a high level of confidence due to there still being a hearty portion of respondents who did not find it okay.

In my dissertation, I also suggest that organizations cannot communicate too much, which aligns with Hass et al (1996). There are overall benefits that members experience when organizations communicate adequately and transparently, much to the points of Summers et al.'s 2010 work. Thus, these benefits that members experience tend to be more beneficial for organizations and their overall well-being and performance. Although the data insinuates that organizations cannot communicate too much, this is a metamyth (Haas et al 1996). Results suggest that organizations can communicate too much on a single platform and thus, opens recommendations for organizations to diversify their communication choices by using multiple sources during critical events.

Other Findings Worth Noting

Metaphors. Social media was referred to metaphorically several times and interestingly, in powerful senses. In one metaphor, social media was referred to as a drug. Participants suggested that the way it made you feel and the parallels of having withdrawals when not using it were commanding and encouragement for people to continue to use it. The second metaphorical

comparison was that, much in the way that we talk about organizations being living organisms, is the same way that others spoke about social media. In the data, individuals denote to social media and communication upon it as "having a life of its own", sometimes spiraling out of control from what the sender originally intended. Social media post dissemination was also referred to as a wildfire, again insinuating that the message, the intent or the intensity of the event could sometimes be out of control and splinter into multiple directions. One of the most entertaining metaphorical applications was applied to social media as the devil and the respondent felt that organizations had made a deal with it [social media/the devil].

Critical Events of Social Media

Social media has changed the landscape when considering critical events that organizations are facing. One way that it has changed the landscape is through the dispersal of the message. Prior to social media platforms, critical events could possibly be covered by news outlets, but it typically traveled through physical word of mouth, with no real stage for others to respond on. With the use of social media, not only can people comment instantly on a situation, but often times, critical events are already being talked about and sometimes brought to attention from an online user. Information about critical events are sometimes being dispersed online before organizations can even present the issue to its members and moreover, members are able to see the entire critical unfold from beginning to end in some cases. This now takes the control from solely the organization and traditional sources to now, unorthodox sources such as the general public.

The most interesting revelation and change to organizations that experience critical events in the age of social media is that social media can now be the cause of the critical event. For instance, if a member post newsworthy insight on the organization or engages in undesirable

wrongdoing, that member's affiliation is often mentioned, and the affiliated groups or organizations often suffer from backlash as well. Chiefly in cases where the organization is expected to take a position of the event. This now shifts a little more public light on the organization through members who customarily could not have much of an impact of the organization. Moreover, organizations can reprimand their members, but they cannot prevent members from placing their organizational in compromising publicly displayed positions on social media: one of the largest stages to exist at the moment. Regardless of the outcomes, most people felt that organizations needed to be on social media and if they were not, then it was a "gross absence" on behalf of the organization who failed to use it.

Limitations

As with any study, this dissertation had some limitations that it experienced. Due to the sensitive nature of the study, in which people had to reveal some of their personal behaviors or perceptions which may be seen as misaligned with their organization, responses may have lacked its full volume and therefore, have limited responses as people still wanted to manage their identity and security within the organization. This appeared to be particularly true for those of higher positions which, in actuality, corresponds with the current study, as higher-ranked members are likely to be more cognizant and weary of sharing personal opinions about matters, especially regarding their organization. Additionally, the context revolved around one type of organization, which was unique in nature. This prevented the study from being widely generalizable. This study can, however, be used as a foundational catalyst for future studies to apply to other sectors and organizational types. One additional limitation is the one factor scale used in the study. While I do provide a citation for this along with other studies conducted in the communication discipline utilizing one-item scales, some scholars can view this to be

problematic. Thus, future studies could further explore this topic with the implementation of a multi-item scale to combat possible limitations posed from the single-item scale.

Future Directions

As introduced to in the limitations section, this dissertation can serve as groundwork for future to studies going forward. A future direction could include studying the various partitions of this study such as how do members use social media to respond, cope or regain power during critical events, perceptions of organizational use of social media or further test and extending Standpoint Theory and predictive behaviors of members regarding social media use. It would serve literature well for these matters to be studied in various sectors to gain insight on nuisances between industry type, organizational type and rankings as conceptualized and thought of within different sectors. Future studies could use a wide variety of tools to study this including survey and interviews, such as the current study has, as well as focus groups and netnographies (online ethnographies).

Conclusion

This dissertation ultimately was about both the use and perceptions of social media within organizations and among its members during critical events. This dissertation yielded some critical information for organizational scholars going forward as we try to get a better grasp of the impacts of social media on the workplace as well as, further supported some notions already ingrained in our literature. For the current body of literature, I argue that some strong arguments were presented in this dissertation. The first contribution to the current literature includes the introduction of *Online Whistleblowing*. While there is a rich body of literature regarding whistleblowing, many scholars have yet to truly explore the conceptual grounds of whistleblowing in the online sphere.

Secondly, my dissertation extends the organizational literature by integrating Standpoint Theory to the organizational context. Standpoint Theory is a strong theory that can aid in further extending our knowledge within the organization domain. In the current dissertation, I extend Standpoint Theory which harvests assistance on framing and understanding perceptual and power dynamics and thus, also adding predictive capabilities for particular behaviors. With the application of Standpoint Theory within organizations, I provided a figure to predict antecedents that would lead to members taking to social media, subsequent experiences they may have and predicted how the member may behave. Practically applied, strategic leadership can proactively expend such predictions to better shape the resources that they are providing for members to address such issues or to be aware of, when certain situations take place, such behaviors may follow.

From a personal standpoint, I urge organizations to not reprimand individuals who do decide to take to social media for a number of reasons. First, if people are failing to get a particular resource, it is innately human nature to try to find and secure those lacking resources. It is the responsibility of the organization to provide those resources as it ultimately impacts performance. Therefore, organizations should understand and accept that if they are not providing a resource or outlet for its members, then those members may take matters into their own hands. Plus, if plugged into the social media sphere, it can be used to better understand the members of the organizations and their standpoint. Moreover, data suggest that members felt positive outcomes from posting online; I do believe that this should also be taken into consideration. Second, members may not hold the knowledge of the impairment negative social media post can have on their organization. This would be up to the organization to provide such a training section that educates members on the repercussions, professionalism and policies

regarding social media. Lastly, some members are posting positive experiences as well. Organizations should use it to their strategic and competitive advantage. This urge is not applied to repeat offenders; I do understand the need to manage organizational image. However, I ultimately encourage organizations to view this entire ordeal through the lens of lower-ranking members as opposed to their own high-power lens.

This dissertation provided a brief glimpse into the research I hope to continue, the contributions that I hope to make and the publications to come. Much to Kupritz & Cowell's point (2011), social media has drastically changed the workplace and I, as a researcher, want to explore those changes. To close, I would like to provide a direct comment from a participant within the study which, in my humble opinion, captures the essence of my dissertation and motivation for pursuing such a topic as well as a visual of the digital and organizational climate that we are in.

"*Joe Schmo's Twitter account is just as powerful as the President of the United States' Twitter account. They can Tweet at someone, whether it's justified, accurate, inaccurate, it doesn't matter. That information is out there.*"

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APPENDIX

A-1. Mixed Methods Interpretation

Area of Inquiry	Quantitative Data/Findings	Qualitative Data/Findings	Integrated Interpretation
RQ4 & RQ5	In the Qualtrics survey, members were asked an open-ended question about if they ever took to social media, what prompted them to do so: "I just wanted **to share my experiences with others**" "**Frustration** with response to incident and continued… practices" "Posted it because it was a reoccurring issue within the organization, so I was motivated **to try to incite a change** in this certain issue." "If I'm **proud** of my work I'll talk about it via Twitter or Instagram"	Members go to social media to cope with critical events within the organization through different actions such as venting or to try to regain power in a situation where they may feel less control or power. They enact this by building awareness to others and trying to invoke change.	The responses via the Qualtrics survey and the interviews both emerged similar responses. These findings support the figure that I proposed which included the antecedents of strong emotional affect that people see as unjust, unsatisfactory or in violation of a person's personal belief or stance prompting them to social media. In the model, I propose that simply sharing, reading, liking or commenting is sometimes used to carry out that coping or empowering action. Further, these post can be positive and is usually because the member is very proud or very excited about an event.
RQ1	64.9% stated yes, it is appropriate. Provided self-generated rationale such as: "A lot of people get their news from social media, and a post is more likely to be read than an email."	"…any thriving organization to not use social media in some capacity is a mistake." "I think it's powerful and necessary. You connect and can impact the most	In both the surveys and interviews, a majority of participants agreed that social media is a place in which organizations use to be. Reasons include that it being where people generally are and where they are getting their news. Therefore, it is easier to reach people and increases the chances of them seeing it. Plus, it disseminate messages more widely and more quickly, fashions an optic of organizations being open and transparent and

	"it reaches a large population quickly. Additionally, it creates an open and upfront atmosphere"	amount of people by Tweeting something out or responding to something via different social media platforms."	creates an atmosphere of dialogue. This is the general consensus. There are individuals who feel that social media is not an appropriate place to discuss critical events, based on members not being privy to information first and that it should be kept more formal and hence, communicated through email. **Recommendation:** Use social media in addition to formal outlets. Send emails out prior to sending out social media. Definitely, however, use social media and in the words of some respondents "but you better get it right the first time."
RQ2 & RQ3	Organizations cannot communicate too much as there are positive outcomes of more communication – As communication goes up, so does other factors such as satisfaction and comfort.	If members going online to find information, then this would indicate that organizations are communicating too little with those in a lower positions of power: "you feel really left out, like why aren't they talking to me?" "I immediately go to social media to find out what's going on." When asked about impact of position on access to information: "I think it stays more in the management type. The	Though you cannot communicate too much, some comments such as "I actually wish they would do that [post to social media] instead of sending me emails everyday… I get so many emails from them about stuff that honestly I have tuned out to it, I just delete them all when I get it, I don't even pay attention to what is really going on." suggest that while organizations cannot communicate too much, they **can** communicate too much via **one medium**. Thus, sending all information through emails is not effective, especially if a majority of members are not "there." Also- organizations may not be able to communicate too much conceptually but can communicate too little as witnessed through members going to social media for info. **Recommendation:** Do not communicate too much through one platform. Further, if an organization is to put all correspondence on one medium, it is recommended to place on social media, which is

		people that are over and not toward the workers. And which I don't think it's fair. I think they should keep us informed of everything that's going on."	one place members can easily go to and see all information at once. Participants mentioned websites are not effective as it feels further away and more difficult to locate in contrast to social media, which feels closer in proximity.
H1 & H2	Findings suggested not significant difference between perceptions of amount of information based on rank, but there was a significant difference regarding perception of message quality.	When providing a critical event, many of the respondents spoke about the same event, however, how much information they said they received, and the content varied.	Amount of information is something that can be more readily agreed upon as it tends to be more of an objective, measurable thing. However, quality elicits a bit more variance as the quality of something is subjectively evaluated.

A-2. Qualitative Instrument

Interview Guide

The following are questions to gather insight on how organizational members use social media as a tool of empowerment or a coping mechanism after a critical organizational event. The interviews will last 20 – 30 minutes in length and will be semi-structured to allow flexibility for probing questions that are sparked from interesting responses or to gather further insight. Questions start broadly and narrow in to a specific event.

Questions Regarding Critical Events and Social Media in general

1. How often do you use social media and what do you typically use social media for?
2. Tell me about how you use social media in terms of posting and observing.

Questions Regarding Critical Events and Social Media within organizations

3. Tell me about your thoughts regarding organizations using social media to communicate with members about critical events within their organization?
4. How do you think organizations should use social media to handle critical events?
5. How, if at all, should organizational members that take to social media to respond or deal with these events. (Should they? Why or why not? Why do you think that they do so?)

Questions Regarding Personal Use of Social Media during Critical Events

6. How has social media directly or indirectly impacted the way that you learn about events within organizations? Within your own workplace?
7. How has social media impacted the way that you respond to these critical events?
8. Has social media impacted what people talk about at work or how they talk about work?
9. Have you or your coworkers taken to social media to vent or discuss a critical event within their personal organizational (work, school, etc.) and what did that look like?
   a. → {IF YES}: What prompted you to take to social media? (Then skip to Q10)
   b. → {IF NO}: Would you ever use social media as a means to communicate about a critical event at work? Why or why not? What event would have to take place to make you take to social media? (Then skip to Q11)
10. How did responding on social media make you feel?
11. How do you currently deal with critical events within your organization?
12. How do you conceal your identity online? What about the organization's identity? What does this look like?

Questions Regarding Social Media Use & Personal Thoughts of specific context

Now, let's zoom in on a specific and recent event in your workplace or some organization that you are closely associated with.

13. Think about a current, recent event in your workplace– With confidentiality in mind, what did this situation look like? How much did you identify with involved parties and in what way did this person or event resonate with you? Using emotions, tell me how you felt within this situation.
14. Please describe for me any information regarding this event that you saw on social media.
    a. {IF YES}: How did the things that you saw make you feel?
    b. {IF NO}: Why do you think it is that you did not see anything about this or do you wish that you would have seen information about this critical event on social media and if so, from whom?
15. Tell me the role that social media played within this event.
16. Please describe for me what else or who else did you notice taking to social media regarding her termination?
17. Is there anything else that you would like to share regarding social media and the workplace?

VITA

Brandy Mmbaga was born in San Diego, California. Growing up as a dependent of a military serviceman, she had the opportunity to live in many different regions of the United States including Texas, North Carolina, and Pennsylvania among several other places. Brandy completed her undergraduate degree at Middle Tennessee State University where she majored in Electronic Media Management and minored in Psychology. She graduated with her Bachelor of Science degree in 2009. Afterwards, Brandy went on to pursue her master's degree from Belmont University in Nashville, Tennessee. During her time at Belmont, Brandy birthed her two children and finally graduated in 2014. She started teaching at the community college level and realized she had desires to pursue more within higher education, leading her to the University of Tennessee. In 2015, Brandy began her PhD and realized her interest lied at the intersection of communication, management and psychology. While at the University of Tennessee, Brandy presented her research at several conferences including the annual Oxford Reputation Conference, the Academy of Management annual conference and the National Communication Association annual conference. Additionally, Brandy committed to providing service to her university by serving in multiple capacities including the president of the Multicultural Graduate Student Organization, senator for the Graduate Student Senate, member of the executive leadership team and Chair for the Equity and Diversity Committee among other positions. In 2019, Brandy was one of two graduate students to represent her university to advocate on behalf of graduate students at Capitol Hill in Washington DC. Beyond school, Brandy loves to cook and upcycle old treasures in her spare time as well as hang out with her little ones and travel.

Brandy's research interest include the relationship between social media and organizations, receiver-based communication and perceptions, organizational reputation and

critical events within the organization. Brandy will be beginning her academic career at Butler University in Fall of 2019 where she will be an assistant professor, Organizational Behavior, in the Management Department.