DEPARTMENT OF MEDIA, JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATION (JMG)

QUENCHING THE THIRST FOR INFORMATION WHEN THERE ARE NO GATEKEEPERS.

A study examining trust in social media crisis information based on the source of the information.

Ebenezer Odai Afortey

Essay/Thesis:	30 hp
Program and/or course:	Master's Programme in Political Communication/MK2502
Level:	Second Cycle
Semester/year:	St/2022
Supervisor:	Marie Grusell
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Abstract

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Keyword:	COVID-19, crisis communication, source credibility, trustworthiness, willingness, Authority heuristics, focus heuristics, agency cues, interactive cues, Affordances, Gatekeeping, Information source, social media.

Social media is rapidly being used as a source of information, including crisis-related information. The current study investigates how the sources of information available on social media affect users' trust in certain information. The study adopts the covid-19 pandemic as an empirical crisis to investigate the trust. The study was conducted among students at the University of Gothenburg. Specifically, a survey was conducted among students at the university measuring two trust constructs, the trustworthiness in social media crisis information and the willingness to follow crisis instruction on social media.

The theoretical framework for the study was the MAIN model where Authority heuristics and focus heuristics of the model were examined on how they trigger trust. User's trust in crisis information on social media was tested on three main sources, Authoritative source, known source, and unknown source. The results of the study indicate that Authority heuristics triggers high trust in respondents' trust in social media crisis information. These findings have numerous implications for crisis communication theory and practice. These ramifications are examined, as well as the study's shortcomings and future research prospects.

Foreword

My whole career has been dedicated to youth development and entrepreneurship. With little knowledge on Media and communication, embarking on a journey of acquiring a master's degree in political communication was not an easy decision but was motivated to do so in my ambition to open a new chapter in the field of politics. I have been a distant admirer of politics, but my inefficient communication skills have kept me away from this interest. I finally decided to go into the political world in 2018 and a year later opted to embark on this academic journey to equip myself with more skills and knowledge. With the experience I have had in the past 2 years, the challenge I took is worth it.

I will chance upon this opportunity to acknowledge a few individuals who have contributed immensely to this journey. A massive thanks to my wife Abigail Afortey for her support and the translation of my questionnaire from English to Swedish. I would also like to express my gratitude to my mate Golinski Wilhelm for the review and corrections he made to the translated questionnaire. Not forgetting about my sister Bernice and her husband David who have been supportive from the very beginning, it would not have been possible without their support.

Also, a massive and big thanks to my supervisor Marie Grusell for relentless support, guidance, and coaching in the last few months. No amount of words can express the gratitude I have to offer her, all I can say to her is I am grateful.

Finally, I would like to dedicate this work to my parents Thomas and Rebecca, they have been there since day one. Speedy recovery to dad, I know you will overcome.

Ebenezer Afortey

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The disturbing guerrilla scenes that took place in our hospitals due to an uninvited guest who stole our joy and freedom and took away our loved ones from us is yet to be forgotten. A situation were our only form of association and contact was Zoom, Google Meets, Skype, and social media. Educational institutions, churches, night clubs and many other interesting places that bonds us together were closed due to the arrival of this unwelcomed guest. Corona virus really did a lot of harm to us and threatened our very existence as humans. We are yet to fully recover from the qualms of this deadly virus. The entire universe was faced with a crisis that was never anticipated. A crisis which has consumed about 6,142,735 beings with about 486,761,597confirmed cases as of 27 March (WHO, 2022a).

Crises in general refer to "an undesirable and unexpected situation"; meaning, a crisis is said to have occurred when something bad threatens a person, group, organization, culture, society, or when we think big, the world at large (Boin et al. 2017, p. 5). This definition can be said to be exactly what happened when the SARS-CoV-2 struck the world in 2019. The outbreak of the coronavirus was an unexpected and undesirable situation that had a high impact on society and threatened the very existence of humans. Crises occur when members of a social system sense that the core values or life-sustaining features of a system have come under threat (ibid, p. 5).

Crises usually create high information needs. To resolve the uncertainty inherent in crises and to reduce anxiety associated with this uncertainty, people do not simply rely on one source of information. Instead, they actively seek out multiple sources that aid in creating a comprehensive understanding of the crisis (Anthony et al. 2013, as cited in Ye & Ki 2017, p. 1). The academic field of crisis communication is more significant than ever before as a result of the digital media revolution, creating new rules for how to handle crises. People's ability to

communicate and receive information during a crisis has expanded thanks to newer communication technologies. As a source of information, social media is one such tool that has grown in popularity. Social media has evolved to become an essential channel for enterprise online communication (Stieglitz et al. 2019, p. 922).

Social media outlets have become mainstream venues for crisis communication between organizations and the public. These outlets are typically more dialogic, interactive, and immediate than classical media (van Zoonen & van der Meer 2015, p. 371). These attributes of social media were manifested in the study of Johansen et al (2016), they demonstrated that social media, has become more interactive. They found out that crisis communication on social media is not just between the organization and its stakeholders, but a medium of interaction between these two as well as hate-holders and faith holders. Therefore, "social media outlets might be vital assets when informing the public seeking crisis-related information" (van Zoonen & van der Meer 2015, p. 371) and must be regarded as an important tool. Social media have increased public expectations that crisis responses are quicker, more accurate, and even more transparent, as the public is engaged in crisis management via social media in a way they never have been before (Park & Avery 2018, p. 1). Due to their ubiquitous nature, social media platforms are expected to offer a unique opportunity for crisis communication (Roy et al 2020, p. 1). Social media enables an organization to deliver messages rapidly, directly communicate with its stakeholders, discover their concerns, detect misperceptions that need to be corrected, and potentially diminish the negative effects if the organization employs appropriate crisis communication strategies (Ye & Ki 2017, p. 1).

Despite the numerous advantages of using social media to communicate during times of crisis, there are also problems. Unlike traditional media, information shared on social media frequently lacks professional gatekeepers to oversee content and hence lacks some of the usual

indicators used to assess the reliability of the source of the information, highlighting the dangers involved in seeking out crisis information on social media (van Zoonen & van der Meer 2015, p. 372). To this extent, the question of how crisis information on social media is regarded by the public is therefore interesting to investigate. This study aims to use the source of crisis information on social media as a reference point to investigate the trustworthiness ascribed to social media crisis information by the audience as well as their willingness to follow crisis instructions on social media based on the source of the information.

The parts that follow will give a summary of the research problem that is being addressed, followed by the research question, as well as the significance of this work. The Background of the study will be discussed in the next chapter, and then the theoretical framework of the study as well as the relevant literature will be evaluated. The methodology used in conducting this research study will be described in the method section. The report finishes with a presentation of descriptive and explanatory quantitative findings, a discussion of them, and a conclusion about the findings of the current study.

1.1Research Problem

To resolve the uncertainty inherent in crises and to reduce anxiety associated with this uncertainty, people do not simply rely on one source of information. Instead, they actively seek out multiple sources that aid in creating a comprehensive understanding of the crisis (Anthony et al. 2013, in Ye & Ki 2017, p. 1). Because of the digital media revolution, the academic area of crisis communication is more relevant than ever, defining new norms for how to handle crises. Social media has evolved to become an essential channel for enterprise online communication (Stieglitz et al 2018, p. 922). Organizations now can disseminate crisis information to a large audience in the shortest possible time via social media. Previous studies have examined the usefulness of social media as a source of information for the audience during a crisis as well as its usefulness as compared to traditional

media (e.g., Austin et al 2012, Eriksson & Olsson 2016, Park & Avery 2018). The findings of these studies suggest that traditional media has the urge over social media as a trustworthy source of information during a crisis, but all studies found social media to be an important tool for crisis communication. To explore the less trust in social media as compared to traditional media, the current study aims at investigating the relationship between crisis information source on social media and citizens' trust in such information as well as their wiliness to follow crisis instructions. This study will be an enhancement of the work of Park and Avery, (2018), whose findings were based on hypothetical crises. The current study will focus on the covid-19 pandemic which is a real crisis to investigate this relationship.

In addition, the coronavirus outbreak in recent times came along with different forms and degrees of control measures and restrictions, which made face-to-face interaction very limited. As a result, people have had to rely on social media even more extensively to stay informed and engaged. Consequently, social media usage has escalated, and it has quickly established itself as a critical medium of communication for information generation, distribution, and consumption (Effenberger et al., 2020; Fischer, 2020). A recent study published by the Swedes and Internet indicates that the internet specifically social media has become very important for gathering information and conducting political discussions. Within social media, they found out that young people most often use Instagram to take part in political discussion. People born in the 2000s also use Twitter more than older generations and are alone in using Tiktok for political information. Older generations mainly use Facebook instead for political information. Facebook is also the most common place online to express political views, for all but the youngest voters (The Swedes and the Internet, 2022). Due to this escalation, a study is needed to analyze if instructions given by authorities that are chanced on social media would be adhered to. "Social media for news consumption is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, its low cost, easy access, and rapid dissemination of information lead people to seek out and consume news from social media. On the other hand, it enables the

widespread of fake news, that is low-quality news with intentionally false information" (Shu et al 2017, p. 22). This was evident in the study of Waszak et al (2018), they identified that 40 percent of the most frequently shared links they investigated contained text they classified as fake news. To this extent, there is the perception of people not trusting information on social media. This study will help to unravel the veracity of this notion as well as provide useful information to crisis managers on how best to adopt social media as a tool for crisis communication.

"Scholars have found that an information source becomes more important in the social media space because multiple actors are engaged in delivering and sharing crisis information rather than a single organization or an official spokesperson" (Frandsen and Johansen, 2010; Heath, 2010; van Zoonen and van der Meer, 2015 as cited in Kim and Park, 2017). Studies by Austin et al. 2012, suggest that the public's use of social media for crisis information varies by the information sources in crisis communication. The hypothesis of the current study is that with health-related crises such as the coronavirus, the audience will adhere to crisis instructions when the information is from an authoritative and well-known source as confirmed by the study of Liu et al (2016). As Stavrositu and Sundar (2008) put it, for organizational crisis responses to be acceptable, the messages should have credibility because the public is more likely to overlook them if they do not trust or believe what they see or hear from online sources. Therefore, the credibility of the source of information directly affects the trust audience ascribes to such information. The study will aim to examine how the source of information on social media affects the trust and willingness of individuals to adhere to crisis information.

1.2 Significance of the study

The current study seeks to investigate how the source of crisis information on social media affects audience trust in this information. This will be done by investigating how user of social media ascribe trustworthiness to information they come across on social media based on the source the

information is emanating from. Also, the willingness of user to adhere to specific crisis instruction on social media based on the source will be examined. Trustworthiness and willingness will hence be used as a trust construct to measure the trust users have in social media crisis information. The investigation will be done through the use of an online survey among students at Gothenburg University. Although previous research (Park and Avery, 2018), has been carried out on social media information sources and trust in social media, it was based on hypothetical crisis situations and the sources the information was emanating from was not considered. What this current study seeks to achieve is to use a real crisis that the audience has experienced to test trust in crisis information on social media based on the source the information was emanating from. This study will contribute toward theory building in the field of crisis communication research as well as assist crisis managers in the use of social media for providing information during crises. Specifically, the study will test the trust in social media crisis information among university students in Gothenburg. Available Statistics on the population of Sweden show that 89 percent of the population aged 16–85 years, corresponding to 7.3 million people, use the internet essentially every day (Statistics Sweden, 2021). This information was emphasized by a study by the Swedish Internet Foundation (2021) which reported that every 9 out of 10 Swedes are connected to the internet. Furthermore, the survey by the Swedish Internet Foundation also revealed that when young people follow current news it happens mainly on social media. To this extent, a study to establish the relationship between social media usage for crisis information and the trust in social media information will help crisis managers and individuals with the usage of social media as a tool for crisis communication. The study will also make use of the Social-Mediated Crisis Communication Model and the MAIN model (which will be discussed in detail in the Theoretical chapter) as the theoretical framework for the study. The study made use of the Social-Mediated Crisis model to examine how the public consumes crisis information during a crisis. Also the social-Mediated Crisis model was used as a guide to generate the sources of

information on social media. On the other hand, the Main model was used to access how audiences use both agency cues and interactivity cues to ascribe trust in crisis information on social media. The use of these two models to investigate trust in social media crisis information in this study will contribute toward theory building in the field of crisis communication.

1.3 Research Questions

Two research questions have been posed to summarize the study's overall goal, and they will be answered through the interpretation of findings derived from the quantitative analyses undertaken later:

RQ1. Does the source of crisis information on social media affect the trustworthiness of audience (user) in the information?

RQ2. Does the source of crisis information on social media affect the willingness of the audience to follow crisis instructions?

2.0 BACKGROUND

Corona swept across the world and many countries adopted measures such as lockdown, forced quarantine, and mandatory wearing of mask to limit the spread of the disease. Sweden attracted international attention for their unusual approach to the pandemic, which avoided country-wide lockdowns. The current chapter provides explanation for Covid-19 in general, then proceeds to provides an account on Covid-19 in Sweden, an information on social media usage for crisis information would also be provided. The chapter would end with an account of internet and social media usage among Swedes.

2.1 Covid 19

In December 2019, an outbreak of pneumonia of unknown origin was reported in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China. Pneumonia cases were epidemiologically linked to the Huanan Seafood Wholesale Market. Inoculation of respiratory samples into human airway epithelial cells, Vero E6 and Huh7 cell lines, led to the isolation of a novel respiratory virus whose genome analysis showed it to be a novel coronavirus related to SARS-CoV, and therefore named severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). SARS-CoV-2 is a betacoronavirus belonging to the subgenus Sarbecovirus. The global spread of SARS-CoV-2 and the thousands of deaths caused by coronavirus disease (covid-19) led the World Health Organization to declare a pandemic on 12 March 2020 (Ciotti et al. 2020, p. 2). There have been 486,761,597 confirmed cases of covid-19, including 6,142,735 deaths, reported to WHO. As of 27 March 2022, a total of 11,054,362,790 vaccine doses have been administered (WHO, 2022a).

The SARS-CoV-2 virus spreads between people in several different ways, current evidence suggests that the virus spreads mainly between people who are in close contact with each other, for example at a conversational distance. The virus can spread from an infected person’s mouth

or nose in small liquid particles when they cough, sneeze, speak, sing, or breathe. Another person can then contract the virus when infectious particles that pass through the air are inhaled at a short-range (this is often called short-range aerosol or short-range airborne transmission) or if infectious particles come into direct contact with the eyes, nose, or mouth (droplet transmission). The virus can also spread in poorly ventilated and/or crowded indoor settings, where people tend to spend longer periods. This is because aerosols can remain suspended in the air or travel farther than conversational distance (this is often called long-range aerosol or long-range airborne transmission). People may also become infected when touching their eyes, nose, or mouth after touching surfaces or objects that have been contaminated by the virus (WHO 2022b).

To protect ourselves and those around us from covid 19 infection, one must follow the listed safety and preventive measures: Get vaccinated as soon as it's your turn and follow local guidance on vaccination; Keep a physical distance of at least 1 meter from others, even if they don't appear to be sick. Avoid crowds and close contact; Wear a properly fitted mask when physical distancing is not possible and in poorly ventilated settings; Clean your hands frequently with an alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water; Cover your mouth and nose with a bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze. Dispose of used tissues immediately and clean hands regularly; If you develop symptoms or test positive for covid-19, self-isolate until you recover. (WHO, 2022d)

The covid-19 virus did not only affect human lives but rather, rapidly affected our day-to-day life, and businesses, and disrupted world trade and movements. The impacts of covid-19 in daily life are extensive and have far-reaching consequences. The effect of the virus can be divided into various categories: Healthcare, Economic, and social (Haleem et al., 2020).

Healthcare: Some of the effects of covid-19 on healthcare include, challenges in the diagnosis, quarantine, and treatment of suspected or confirmed cases; High burden on the functioning of the existing medical system; Patients with other diseases and health problems are getting neglected; Overload on doctors and other healthcare professionals, who are at a very high risk; Overloading of medical shops; Requirement for high protection; and disruption of medical supply chain (ibid 79).

Economic: Economic effects of corona virus include, slowing of the manufacturing of essential goods; Disrupt the supply chain of products; Losses in national and international business; Poor cash flow in the market; Significant slowing down in the revenue growth (ibid p. 79).

Social: The following include the social effect of corona virus, the service sector not being able to provide their proper service; Cancellation or postponement of large-scale sports and tournaments; Avoiding national and international traveling and cancellation of services; Disruption of celebration of cultural, religious, and festive events; Undue stress among the population; Social distancing with our peers and family members; Closure of the hotels, restaurants, and religious places: Closure of places for entertainment such as movie and play theatres, sports clubs, gymnasiums, swimming pools, and so on (ibid p. 79).

2.2 Covid 19 in the Swedish context.

According to the Krisinformation.se, the first case of covid was reported in the country when a woman from the county of Jönköping arrived back in Sweden from China on 24 January 2020 and she contacted the healthcare service herself when she started to experience coughing. Since then, information available to the World Health Organization indicates that, in Sweden, from 3 January 2020 to 4:59 pm CEST, 1 April 2022, there have been 2,487,852 confirmed cases of

COVID-19 with 18,365 deaths, reported to WHO. As of 20 March 2022, a total of 20,028,687 vaccine doses have been administered in the country (WHO, 2022c).

When corona swept across the world, many countries tried to limit the contagion using restrictions based on lockdown, forced quarantine, and other strategies to control citizens' actions, in some cases supported by police or military enforcement and legislation to regulate violations. Sweden received worldwide attention for its unique approach to the pandemic that refrained from country-wide lockdowns (Weman, 2021). Despite many countries taking strict steps to minimize the transmission, the Swedish response to the virus was unique and different.

> Sweden's response to covid-19 has been less invasive than in many other countries, with no general lockdown. Bars, restaurants, public spaces, kindergartens, and schools for children up to the age of 16 continued to operate throughout the pandemic, but schools for older children were closed for three months. In the first eight months, Sweden did not enforce quarantine for infected households or parts of the country. Physical distancing was strongly recommended, but was only mandatory in bars, restaurants, at events, and when visiting elderly care homes. Wearing facemasks was not recommended. People were urged to work from home, if possible, to minimize travel (Ludvigsson 2020, p. 7).

To understand the Swedish approach, you need to know that this country has a long history of high trust in authorities, institutions, and science (Falk, 2020 as cited in Weman, 2021). The stance taken by the Swedes is backed by the constitution of Sweden. In an article, in the Swedish daily newspaper, Dagens Nyheter on August 1, 2020, Jonung and Nergelius reviewed the legal framework for the pandemic in Sweden.8 They suggested that the main reason for avoiding a

general lockdown was that since 1974 the Swedish Constitution has stipulated that 'Swedish citizens have the right to move freely within Sweden and leave the country. Although the Swedish Infectious Diseases Act can restrict individuals, it does not allow for a general lockdown, which is why so many covid-19 measures in Sweden have been voluntary, rather than compulsory. The Constitution also stipulates that the Government cannot influence how individual Government agencies carry out their work, especially regarding individual citizens. Government Ministers have been able to voice their opinions but have had no power to override the actions of independent agencies. The Public Health Agency (folkhälsomyndigheten) plays a very strong role in Sweden, and while the Government can reject the Public Health Agency's recommendations, it has traditionally followed them (Ludvigsson 2020, p. 6).

Another school of thought is of the view that the liberal nature of which Sweden handled the virus was born out of "*Herd immunity.* They believed that at the heart of the government's strategy was the implicit and controversial idea that, rather than contain the spread of disease, a country could achieve herd immunity by allowing a proportion of the population to be infected—at the expense of deaths among the vulnerable (Habib, 2020). Herd immunity describes the condition in which most of a population is immune to an infectious disease, thus conveying indirect protection to those who are not immune. This indirect protection is called herd immunity, also sometimes referred to as herd protection. For example, if 80 percent of a population is immune to a virus, four out of every five people who encounter someone with the disease won't get sick, and thus won't spread the disease any further. In this way, the spread of infectious diseases can be kept under control (Johns Hopkins University, 2020). Advocates claimed that the Swedish approach would be more sustainable in the long run than other countries' harsher measures (Habib, 2020). The rationale and the appropriateness of the strategies used by the Swedish authorities are not the focus of this study, this is just to give a

piece of background information on the covid 19 pandemic taking into consideration the Swedish perspective. This brief information about how the virus was handled in Sweden will help us to understand how the Swedish public trust crisis information from various sources most especially when chanced on social media.

2.3 Social Media Usage

A crisis, by nature, interrupts daily routines, throws organizations and stakeholders into chaos, and creates uncertainty. Affected individuals tend to launch immediately into an information-seeking mode to find answers and reduce cognitive discomfort (Heath & Gay, 1997). The information-seeking process is often heightened at the beginning of a crisis when uncertainty looms largest and threats remain unknown or unclear (Stephens & Malone, 2009). Due to this, the growing reliance on social media during crises raises concerns regarding the value and judgment of information sources.

The use of social media by the public to seek information to deal with their uncertainty has become enormous (Weick, 1995; Westerman et al., 2012 as cited in van Zoonen & van der Meer, 2015). Social media have become a heavily used channel through which the public receives crisis-related information (Spence, Lachlan, & Griffin, 2007). However, as information through these channels is not subjected to media gatekeepers or journalistic scrutiny, users need to determine the credibility of the sender and the content themselves (Kent, 2013). This situation was evident in the work of Austin et al (2012). In their study to explore how audiences seek information from social and traditional media and the factors that affect media use during crises, they found out that, Traditional media primarily were used for information needs because participants perceived traditional media (especially broadcast news and newspapers) to be more credible than social media. Their findings indicate that social media

is seen as less credible and sought out less frequently by the public during crises. They indicated that participants still use forms of social media during crises to share or obtain insider information and check-in with family and friends and use traditional media for educational purposes.

2.4 Internet and Social media usage in Sweden

Society is largely becoming digital and online life is gradually becoming part of most people's daily routines. People use digital media for their work, school, and even their leisure. "Of the entire population in Sweden, 9 out of 10 use the internet every day, and every fifth person currently in a relationship met their partner online. Among students, 100 percent have a smartphone that they use regularly. At home, the internet is also constantly present. Aside from mobile phones, computers, and tablets, 7 out of 10 people have other connected devices in their homes, such as a connected smartwatch, and/or smart switches and lamps" (The Swedish Internet Foundation, 2021). It is evident from the survey carried out by the Swedish internet foundation that the majority of Swedish citizens have a so-called digital life. The survey also revealed that when young people follow current news it happens mainly on social media. The results of this survey make it interesting to investigate the crisis information consumption on social media by university students in Sweden.

3. PREVIOUS FINDINGS

Several studies investigating the use of social media as a source of information and the willingness of the audience to comply with this information have been conducted in the past. It is important to draw from such studies methodologically and complement their findings with my study. From the existing literature that I was able to peruse, the following are studies that are similar or related to my study; Park & Avery (2018), Liu et al. (2016), Edwards et al. (2013), and Westerman et al. (2012).

3.1 Trust in social media information

Park and Avery (2018) investigated the effects of the media channel, crisis type, and demographics on audience intent to follow instructing information during a crisis. They conducted an online survey which was participated by 507 respondents. Through their study, they concluded that regardless of crisis type, people who seek information about crisis using traditional media (e.g., TV and radio) reported higher intentions to follow directives than social media and website users did. That is, active dissemination of instructing information using TV and radio can be an effective tool for officials for managing crises to promote adherence to response protocol. Nevertheless, they argued that the effect of crisis type should be an important consideration when delivering instructing information, as this study offers evidence that crisis type significantly influences individuals' media selection for information seeking. The study also revealed that despite the conclusion above, in crises such as public health and political crises, online sources such as websites and social media were important information sources of crisis information. The implication of the study of Park & Avery is for crisis managers and officials should focus on message quality, timing, and source to boost the low over all motivation to comply when delivering messages to younger people during crisis. They used

several crisis typologies to conduct their work but drawing inspiration from the study of Park and Avery, the current study will focus on only one crisis typology, that is health related crisis (Covid-19 pandemic).

3.2 Source credibility

Although there is information readily available on social media, the credibility of such information is often debatable. Social media users have their motivations and agendas for producing content. These motivational assumptions may have important implications in terms of information processing of those receiving the content, i.e., crisis information sent by either the content creators might be received differently by the mass public (Sutton et al., 2008; van Zoonen & van der Meer, 2015). Although in traditional media the sources and information are checked on veracity, thus ensuring some extent of source and information credibility (Salcito, 2009 as cited in van Zoonen & van der Meer, 2015), this process is absent on social media. On social media, users personally determine the believability of the communicator, as the gatekeeping function shifts from the producers of content to the consumers of content (Shoemaker & Vos, 2009; Westerman et al., 2012, van Zoonen & van der Meer, 2015). Due to the lack of "traditional gatekeeping systems" on social media, a lot of information passes through which are not credible, therefore users need to evaluate the source from which they encounter information on social media. To a large extent, the source of crisis information on social media will help users to filter out credible information from fake news on social media. When people trust a source, they become more likely to implement the information into their decision (Pieniak et al., 2007). van Zoonen & van der Meer, (2015) in their study emphasized the importance of the source of information on social media by concluding that, "not only is social media important for crisis response but that the employees as an online source of information can provoke favorable effects on reputation through source and content credibility"

(p. 14). Not only must crisis information be available, but it must also be credible. When searching for dependable guidance, people often gravitate toward information sources they already know and trust (Siegrist & Zingg, 2014). Publics also use perceived source credibility as a filtering mechanism, or peripheral cue, when perusing and selecting risk-related information from a range of sources (Petty et al., 1981 as cited in Steelman et al., 2015). Higher source credibility boosts a message's persuasiveness, prompts attitude shifts, and encourages compliance in most cases.

3.2.1 Liu et al. (2016)

Using the MAIN model as their theoretical framework, Liu and his colleagues examined how individuals evaluate the source credibility of tweets and retweets based on non-content attributes. From their results, they concluded that participants view authority cues as the most credible. They noted that, it is critical for public health communities or federal agencies to use social media to directly communicate with the public during health risk situations. Also, when a public health organization or other official agencies are not available to reach certain public communities, having more people, as well as members of the same community, disseminate the information on social media may achieve similar effects. Overall, the findings indicate that authority cues most influence source credibility perceptions among participants. The outcome of this study is congruent with the expectation of the current study. But this study was focused on only the Agency affordance of the MAIN model. As submitted earlier and would be discussed in the theoretical part, there are various source from where information can originate on social media. Therefore, an investigation into a segment of those sources might not provide us with an extensive explanation on the issue of trust in social media information. The current study will improve upon the work of Liu et al by testing two affordances of the model, that is the Agency cue and the Interactivity cue.

3.2.2 Edwards et al. (2013)

In their study, Edwards and his colleagues aimed at testing the effects of system-generated cues (i.e., Klout scores) from a social media page on the perceptions of credibility. “Klout is a system-generated tool for measuring influence; in other words, it is a potential rating system that can be used as a measure of credibility” (ibid p. 13). Through the study, they found out that, the mock Twitter page with a high Klout score was perceived as higher in competence and character than the identical mock Twitter page with a moderate or low Klout score. The study of Edward et al just like Lin et al focused on only the Agency cue of the Affordances of the MAIN model. The current study as stated earlier will aim at testing more cues.

3.2.3 Westerman et al. (2012)

To examine how system-generated cues available in social media impact perceptions of a source’s credibility, Westerman et al experimented with university students using a mock Twitter account. Specifically, they examined the effects that the number of followers and the ratio between Twitter followers and follows had on ratings of competence, goodwill, and trustworthiness. They found out that the number of followers a person has did not lead to increased judgments of competence. On the other hand, the ratio of the number of followers to the number of followers led to increased judgments of competence.

3.3 Summary

All the studies discussed above either used a mock Twitter account or a hypothetical crisis in an experimental design. With my current study focusing on a real health-related crisis (Covid 19 pandemic), I seek to explore the extent to which people are willing to trust social media crisis information due to the source the information in originating. The study will specifically focus on 1) whether audience trustworthiness in social media crisis information is triggered by the source the information originated from; 2) Whether audience wiliness to follow crisis

instructions on social media is triggered by the source of the instruction. The study will be based on the experience of respondents' during the covid-19 pandemic. It will seek to elicit the likely trust they will attach to crisis information they came across on social media based on the source of such information. The study will focus on sources identified by the researcher on social media that information is likely to originate from using the Social Mediated Crisis Communication model as a guide for the selection of sources.

4.0 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This part of the study will examine two theories (The social-mediated crisis communication model and the MAIN model) that will be applied in this study. These two theories are all theories that have been developed concerning the source information is emanating from digital media. The social mediated crisis communication model will help to identify the sources information originates from on social. On the other hand, the MAIN model will be utilized to examine how heuristics trigger trust I social media crisis information.

4.1 **Introduction**

A crisis is a ‘‘specific, unexpected, and non-routine event[s] or series of events that create high levels of uncertainty and threaten or are perceived to threaten high priority goals” (Seeger et al., 1998, p. 233). These goals may include the protection of human life, property, or community well-being (Spence et al., 2011). In a period of crisis, the need for information is high among citizens. Crisis managers must be able to meet this need of the audience to protect the reputation of the organization. An organization’s survival in a crisis depends greatly on its speed of response (Benoit, 1997), and this response will be a source of information for the audience to help them cope with the crisis at hand. The information need of the audience coupled with the need to respond quickly by organizations has metamorphosed “social media to become a vital crisis communication tool, creating new possibilities for both governmental organizations and citizens to produce their content, monitor potential crisis issues, and engage in decentralized speedy communication” (Eriksson & Olsson, 2016). Social media have increased public expectations that crisis responses are quicker, more accurate, and even more transparent, as the public is engaged in crisis management via social media in a way they never have been before (Park & Avery 2018, p. 1).

Organizations and the public now use social media sites to communicate during times of crisis. These outlets are typically more dialogic, interactive, and immediate than classical media. Therefore, these outlets might be vital assets when informing the public that seeks crisis-related information(Schultz, Utz, & Goritz, 2011; van Zoonen & van der Meer, 2015). In a time of crisis, there are three types of behaviors that the public manifests to cope with the crisis; "information seeking, information sharing, and protective action" (Jin et al., 2016). When a crisis occurs, the audience first seeks information about the crisis, when they chance on the information, they, in turn, share the information with their family and friends through various media most especially social media. Lastly, the audience takes protective action against the situation at hand using the information received. As Mileti & Sorensen (1990) stated; after initial exposure to crisis information, the public engages in additional information seeking and sharing as they cognitively and emotionally cope with crises (Jin et al., 2016). With the advent of social media coupled with the primary motivation of information seeking, the audiences have become very active on various social media platforms seeking information to quench their thirst for crisis information in the time of crisis.

Trust in social media content is one of the key issues that is discussed when seeking information on social media. This is due to the lack of professional gatekeeping to monitor social media content (Westerman et al, 2012). The issue of trust is directly related to the source the information is coming from. Knowing the source of an information will assist user to filter out which news they believe to be true and the one which is false. As found out by Pieniak et al., (2007), when people trust a source, they become more likely to implement the information into their decision.

To this extent, the source of information on social media needs to be examined and this will be done through the social-mediated crisis communication (SMCC) model. Also, to trust the

source of information, the credibility of the source is an issue that needs to be addressed and this will be done through the MAIN model by examining how authority heuristics and focus heuristics trigger trust.

4.2 Social Mediated crisis communication model

Scholars recently have called for more theory building in crisis communication research (e.g., An & Cheng, 2010; Avery, Lariscy, Kim, & Hocke, 2010). Dominant crisis communication theories such as situational crisis communication theory (SCCT) (Coombs, 2012) and image repair theory (Benoit, 2004) do not address how information forms (traditional media, social media, or offline word-of-mouth communication) and source can impact the publics' crisis communication behaviors. So, with the high penetration of social media into our communication landscape, the question now is posed, whether the strategies proposed by these theories can be applied on social media? Do these strategies take into consideration the form and source of the crisis information? This question has led to the research into the effectiveness of these theories on social media by various scholars. Instances of such research are Samantha & Perrault (2019) and Ki & Nekmat (2014). Ki & Nekmat (2014) acknowledged in their study that the companies that they were considered for their studies did not effectively use the SCCT on social media. That is, the majority of the crisis-related messages posted by companies do not match the optimal response strategies to crisis types as proposed by the SCCT. They found out that only a small percentage of companies (16.3 percent) were seen to have applied appropriate response strategies such as 'denial' and 'justification' during 'victim' and 'accidental' crises, majority of the companies had responded inappropriately by offering 'justification and 'full apology' messages when they were involved in low responsibility 'victim' situations. Samantha & Perrault (2019) in their study to examine the effectiveness of the Image Restoration theory in a socially mediated crisis observed that, there were some aspects of a socially mediated crisis

(e.g. deleting a complaint and ignoring a complaint by a customer on social media) are not addressed by the image restoration theory and thus needs further theory building.

To address the applicability of crisis communication theories on social media, Jin & Liu (2010) developed the social-mediated crisis Communication (SMCC) model.

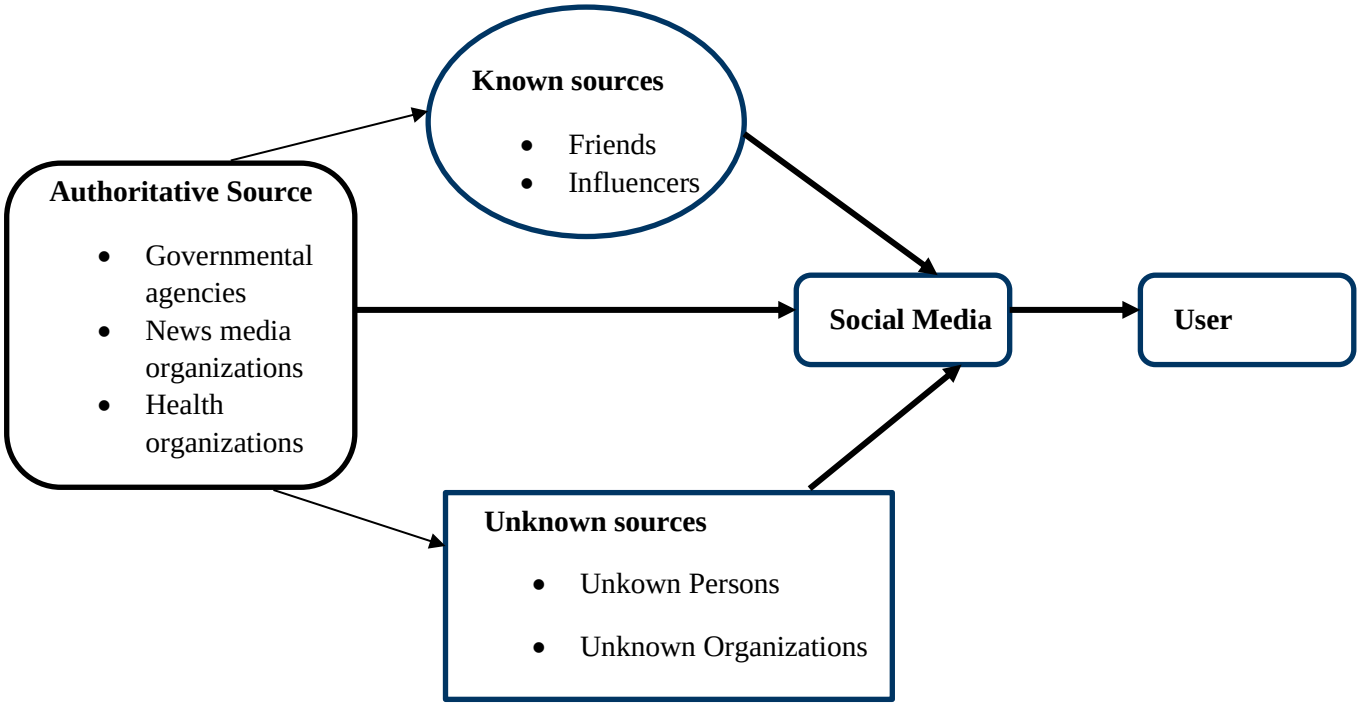
This model is categorized into two parts that explain (1) how the source and form of crisis information affect organizations' response options and (2) recommended social-mediated crisis response strategies. The source of information highlighted by this theory is what is significant to this study, hence I am only going to discuss this aspect of the model.

4.2.1 Information source

For crisis information sources, the model depicts the interaction between a given organization experiencing a given crisis and three types of publics who produce and consume crisis information via social media, traditional media, and offline word-of-mouth communication: (1) influential social media creators, who create crisis information for others to consume; (2) social media followers who consume the influential social media creators' crisis information; and (3) social media inactives, who may consume influential social media creators' crisis information indirectly through word-of-mouth communication with social media followers and/or traditional media who follow influential social media creators and/or social media followers. The model divides crisis information sources into two categories: from the organization and a third party outside of the organization (Liu et al., 2011). Social media creators can either be the organization in crisis or a third party outside the organization who posts content on social media. In this regard information source refers to where information on social media is originating from, this can either be an individual or an organization. For the current study information sources for covid-19 are governmental agencies, news media organizations, Health and Non-

governmental organizations, social media Influencers, Friends on social media, Persons, and organizations unknown to a person on social media. Government agencies, news media organizations and health organizations will be categorized as authoritative source where other content creators will pick crisis information from to create their own content on social media. Since covid-19 is a global pandemic, content creators can also pick up information from outside the country to create their own content. For instance, a content creator can pick an information from the World Health organization and post it on social media. So with this, the information posted does not have any bearing with the authoritative sources. Therefore, the crisis information on social media that the user receives can be in two ways, directly from the various sources or indirectly from the content creators (known and unknown sources). Figure 1 illustrates the relationship between the various sources with respect to how social media crisis information originates and how it gets to the final user. Since the other content creators in some instances rely on the authoritative source to create their content, users will be more likely to trust crisis information from those sources than any other source.

Figure 1 Social Media Crisis Information source



Information flow on social media. Deep arrows illustrate direct source of information, whereas light arrows illustrate indirect source.

4.3 The MAIN model

In traditional media, the information that is chosen for publication and presentation is done through a process known as gatekeeping (Shoemaker & Vos, 2009 as cited in Westerman et al., 2012). Simply put, gatekeeping refers to the process through which content creators select what information should be disseminated and how it should be delivered. There are frequently many gatekeepers in traditional news platforms, such as newspapers or television news, including journalists, editors, and event sponsors and owners. Gatekeepers are seen to be reviewing information for truthfulness, and as a result, they became vital in the process of assuring that information disseminated meets the requirement of trustworthiness. Because there are no professional gatekeepers to oversee information in newer, online channels, several of the conventional signals used to assess source credibility are missing. Indeed, the gatekeeping

function on the internet appears to be shifting from content creators to content consumers (Westerman et al., 2012). The lack of gatekeepers on social media content raises the question of the credibility of information chanced on social media by users. To address this shortcoming of credibility, the study will make use of the MAIN model to establish how users utilize two of the affordances (Agency cues and interactivity cues) proposed by this model to establish the credibility or trustworthiness of the source of crisis information on social media. Source credibility or trustworthiness for this study refers to judgments made by a perceiver about the believability of the content and/or the communicator (O'Keefe, 2002).

The MAIN model (Sundar, 2008) outlines four technological affordances presented in most social media and explicates the process how interface cues embedded in those affordances, trigger cognitive heuristics about the nature of the underlying content (Liu et al. 2016, p. 265). The four affordances identified by Sundar (2008) in his model are, Modality (M), Agency (A), Interactivity (I), and Navigability (N). "These affordances are present to a greater or lesser degree in most digital media and seem promising in their ability to cue cognitive heuristics about credibility assessments because they are all structural features that underlie the design aspects or surface-level characteristics associated with powerful first impressions of Web site credibility" (p. 79). A cue is anything in the context of digital media use that might serve as a trigger for the operation of a heuristic. A heuristic is simply a judgment rule (e.g., "responsiveness is good customer service") that can result in estimations of content quality. The concept of content quality is variously defined but encompasses such considerations as utility, importance, relevance, completeness, level of detail, clarity, variety, accessibility, trustworthiness, uniqueness, timeliness, and objectivity, among many others. Many of these considerations play a critical role in users' perceptions of the credibility of information (ibid, p. 80). The current study will use two of these affordances to explain how users' perception of

credibility is formed which later will be used to analyze the data collected. The affordances to be discussed are Agency and Interactivity. I present a brief overview of the Modality and the Navigability affordances.

The concept of modality is closely allied with the concept of medium because, historically, media differed according to their modality, with print being predominantly textual, radio being aural, and television being audiovisual. However, the arrival of computer-based media has complicated this modality-based distinction between media by offering content in several different modalities. Hence the label "multimedia" that we see applied to digital devices, even though they do not represent many media, but in fact many modalities rolled into one medium (Sundar 2008, 80). In simple terms, Modality refers to the mode of information presentation. It is often classified in terms of text, audio, video, and haptic in rough correspondence to human senses and perceptual system (Sundar et al., 2008 p. 223).

Given the space-based metaphors assigned to digital media (site, cyberspace, information superhighway), the affordance of navigability (i.e., the interface's ability to facilitate user navigation or movement through the site or device) is particularly critical for imbuing a sense of spatial presence among users. The navigability affordance more than others, has the dual ability to directly trigger heuristics with different navigational aids on the interface as well as to transmit cues through the content that it generates (Ibid, p. 225).

4.3.1 Agency(A)

The credibility considerations of a user are usually centered around the source of information. While the source is obvious in most traditional media, the identity of sources in computer-based media is often murky. Is the source of online news a Web site? Or is it the computer itself? Is it the author of the story? Or could it be the news organization that was responsible for putting

together a given piece of news? In some ways, all these can be construed as sources (Sundar 2008, p. 83). Agency cues are those cues that capitalize on heuristics that grant special weight to credibility cues that, for example, are computer- (rather than user-) generated. Sundar (2008) calls one common heuristic that people use when examining online information, the machine heuristic. The machine heuristic suggests that people assign greater credibility to information that is verified or chosen by a machine or computer. The rationale for this heuristic is that something that has no thoughts, feelings, political affiliations, etc., therefore must be free from bias (whether or not it is the case that an algorithm, in actuality, is free from bias) (Westerman et al., 2011). For example, the number of followers one has on Facebook or Twitter is a system-generated cue that attests to a profile owner's influence on social media. The number of followers the influencer has is not generated by him/her, but it is generated by the system. Users of social media may depend on the number of followers the influencer has and ascribe credibility to him/her as a source. There are two very important heuristics that Sundar (2008) identified with the Agency cue, the Bandwagon heuristics, and the Authority heuristics. The bandwagon heuristic follows the example given above. People assign credibility to online information by association. If others think the information is credible then he/she should also think so. So, this in effect plays a role in people assigning credibility to information from influencers. The authority heuristic on the other hand is when people view information as credible when it is coming from an official source. This heuristic was illustrated in the study of Liu et al. (2016), where the results suggested that participants view authority cues as the most credible source of information on social media.

4.3.2 Interactivity(I)

Interactivity is probably the most distinctive affordance of digital media, with most traditional analog media having little of it and some digital media possessing more of it than others. Yet,

there is no universally accepted definition for the concept, and each researcher emphasizes a slightly different aspect of interactivity as its definitional core. The term interactivity implies both interaction and activity. Digital media devices could possess attributes that make explicit these two qualities of an interactive device or medium (Sundar 2008, p. 85). The telepresence heuristic and the focus heuristics are two heuristics of interactivity that the study will focus on due to their relevance to the study. The telepresence heuristic "is the feeling of being transported to a physically different location or a dynamic virtual environment". Focus heuristic on the other hand is likely to be automatically activated when user skills and system demands are in such synchrony that the user is challenged without being bored or frustrated" (Sundar et al. 2008, p. 224).

It is my reasoning that, when individuals are friends on social media or know the source, an information is originating from on social media, this focus heuristic is triggered. Thus, a person might trust information coming from a friend or a known source on social media more than a person unknown to them. For instance, a Tweet by an influencer such as Zlatan Ibrahimovic on covid 19 information is likely to be more credible to users than a Tweet from an unknown person on social media.

4.4 Summary

The MAIN model will be utilized in this study to determine how users perceive the trustworthiness of various social media information. Out of the four affordances proposed by the model, two of them will be focused on in the analytical part of the study. That is, the Agency cue and the Interactivity cue will be used to establish how the audience ascribes trust to information online (social media) when the information is originating from an official source, authority, Influencers, media, organizations, and friends on social media. The focus of the

agency cues will be on the official source and authoritative source while Interactivity cues will focus on influencers and friends on social media. These affordances will be examined on how they form various heuristics in users which influence their credibility and trustworthiness assessment. That is, does the source information emanating from on social media influence the credibility and trustworthiness assessment of the audience.

5.0 METHODOLOGY

The theoretical models discussed in the previous chapter will be tested using a quantitative research approach. This part of the study will be focused on the methodology and materials used for the study. More detailed insight into the research design, internal and external validity, reliability as well as the sampling technique will be discussed. The various variables for the research and how they were collected will as well be discussed with much insight into how variables were recoded or merged. The chapter will end with a summary of the data collection process.

5.1 Research Design

To answer the research questions posed in the current study a survey was utilized as the instrument for the collection of data. A survey is a tool that is used to collect information from a sample of respondents from a well-defined population. Surveys are research tools used for measurement in social science research. Survey research is a broad term that refers to any assessment process that involves asking respondents questions. Surveys can be grouped into two general categories: questionnaires and interviews. These two categories of the survey can be conducted in various forms. Questionnaires are normally drafted and given to respondents to complete. With interviews, the interviewer asks an interviewee some questions and completes the interview depending on the information provided by the interviewee. Surveys are also available in a variety of formats and can be distributed by a variety of media, including written, oral, and electronic surveys. The instrument employed for this study is an online questionnaire. Online surveys are very convenient, that is they are fast, more accurate, quick to analyze, and very easy to use for both the researcher and the participants. In an online survey,

the questionnaire can be given by a web link, and the results of the items can be automatically gathered and recorded in the database.

A survey was chosen for this study to have another methodological approach to investigating the trustworthiness of social media crisis information and willingness to follow crisis instructions on social media based on the originating source of the information. Previous studies on trust in social media information and sources (Lin et al, 2016, Westerman et al, 2014, Westerman et al, 2012) used an experimental approach to conduct their studies. The use of the Survey approach will provide a methodologically different in investigating the trust in social media as well as help to consolidate the findings of these previous studies and/or come out with a a new outcome if any.

Various websites can be used to administer an internet survey such as Survey Monkey, Survey sparrow, and Medallia. Among these numerous options available, Qualtrics was the software chosen and used for the administration of the survey questionnaire. Qualtrics was chosen due to its advanced data collection, ability to run more than one project at the same time, ability to create complicated projects, ability to create a project in more languages, and its advanced statistical analysis with just a click of a button. The survey questionnaire was constructed in two languages, Swedish and English. The decision to conduct the survey in two languages was influenced by used of these languages as the medium of instruction at the University of Gothenburg. Most undergraduate programs at the University of Gothenburg are organized in Swedish and most master's and doctoral programs have English language as the medium of instruction. Administering the questionnaire in two languages would help to have students at all levels participating in the survey and further help to improve the survey participation.

5.2 Sampling

The population for this study is university students in Gothenburg. The sampling frame for the study was students of the Department of Journalism Media and Communication (JMG) and the Department of Political science. This frame was chosen due to the ability to have access to students of these departments via email. Secondly, it is the believe of the researcher that the sociodemographic characteristic of this frame has the ability to be used as a representation of the population. The total student population for these two institutions at the time of the study stands at 550 for the Department of Journalism Media and Communication (JMG) and 512 for the political science department. Overall, the frame chosen as a student population of about 1,062. The sampling strategy for the study was a probability sampling. An invitation to the survey was sent the email addresses of students of all these departments. Attached to the email was the survey link of which when they click, they will be linked to the survey. The email addresses of students was used to contact them are the ones they used when they were applying for their education at University of Gothenburg and stored in Ladok. The activeness of these emails could therefore not be immediately ascertained by the researcher hence the sending of email to all students. Secondly, the email was sent to all student due to the fact that the researcher was provided with only one email address and told if the invitation is sent to, all student of the department will receive. In addition to the emails sent, the invitation was sent to the WhatsApp page of second year master's students of Political communication of the Department of Journalism Media and Communication (JMG). Since the researcher is off the same year group, he is a member of the page and have access to post information there. This WhatsApp page has a total of 24 participants. After the sending the email to potential respondents, random responses were received from the students. In all, a total of 154 responses were received at the time the survey was closed (April 29, 2022). Overall, the survey was administered over a period of five weeks.

Out of the total number of responses that were received, 13 of these responses were not completed due to various factors. Four respondents visited the survey site and did not complete the survey at the time it was closed. These individuals could not be contacted to complete the survey since the researcher was not having the individual email addresses of students and in addition, the instrument was designed to make respondents anonymous. Therefore, there was no way to link a particular response to the one who responded. The remaining respondent who couldn't complete was due to technical error caused by the site used for the administration of the instrument. The reason given by the software used (Qualtrics) was that the respondents could not get access to some question when they progressed to some stage. All the responses that were not completed were not included in the analysis. Table 1 summarizes the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents and the complete population.

A comparison between the sample and the population shows some similarities in some instances and in others there were vast differences. A look at the sex of the sample as compared to the population shows that females are dominant in both cases. With the percentage difference between male and female being smaller in the sample as compared to the population. It is the believe of the researcher that this difference might not have any significant impact on the study. Furthermore, the educational level of the respondents matched against the population shows a significant difference. There were more graduate students responding to the survey than undergraduate students. This might be as a result of the researcher posting the survey on the social media page of Political communication students. This outcome may have an impact on the outcome of the study with results skewing towards the opinions and reflections of graduate students. Percentage difference between doctoral respondents and that of the population was not very significant.

Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents

		Sample		**Population**	
		Number of students	Percentage	Number of students	Percentage
Sex	Male	62	45	11 790	37
	Female	75	54	20 075	63
	Others	1	1	-	-
	Total	**138**	**100**	**31 865**	**100**
Educational level	Undergraduate	46	33	22 511	71
	Graduate	89	64	7 503	24
	Doctoral	4	3	1 850	5
	Total	**139**	**100**	**31 865**	**100**
Citizenship	Swedish	70	50	NA	
	Citizen of another country	62	45	NA	
	Both Swedish and citizens of another country	7	5	NA	
	Total	**139**	**100**		
User language	English	76	54		
	Swedish	65	46		
	Total	**141**	**100**		

Note: A summary of the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents. All percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number. The figures presented for sample represent valid responses only with nonresponse treated as missing variable. Figures for population was sourced from ÅRSREDOVISNING 2021 of University of Gothenburg. NA = Information not available

5.3 External validity

The question of whether a finding of a study based on the sample selected can be generalized to the population. Although the problem of external validity might not have been conclusive, certain measures were taken to address it. One of the main challenges external validity poses to survey research is the sample selection. The sample selected must be a representation of the general population, and the characteristics of the sample must reflect that of the population. In this instance, the sample selected must be a representation of the University of Gothenburg students. To address this challenge, the survey was sent to students of two different departments at the University of Gothenburg, Journalism Media and Communication (JMG) and the Political science department. These departments consist of all three levels of university education namely, Undergraduate, Graduate, and Doctoral. It is the believe of the researcher that although this step might not solve the issue of external validity completely, it will in the right direction to help address the issue. The projected response for the study was 200 responses, with an unacceptable response being a number any number below 100. To boost the response rate, participants were sent a reminder. Overall, 154 responses were received with 141 considered for statistical analysis and 13 dropped from the analysis due to not being complete. Therefore, out of about 1,000 students who are presumed to have received the survey, about 10 percent responded. This can be attributed to many things. Firstly, the survey was out for a short period. Also, the period the survey was conducted might have been timed wrongly, as such is hectic for students with lots of examinations and course papers to present. Finally, surveys nowadays seem to generally have a reduced scale of responding rate. So, from this perspective the sample is a "good" frequency, and the result can be seen as a "pattern" or an indication. Therefore, the aspect of underrepresentation can be seen to have been satisfactorily addressed thereby enhancing the external validity of the study.

5.4 Internal Validity

To limit the risk of internal validity, a comprehensive assessment of the literature was conducted and identified various variables that could be alternate explanations for the model's knowledge contribution. The MAIN model which is the theoretical framework for this study explains how users of online information ascribe credibility to that information based on the source it is emanating from. To test this model an instrument was designed consisting of various sources and some information originating from them. It is the researchers who believe that these variables will be the best explanations for knowledge contribution in the model. However, because a survey was chosen to conduct the study, it is not impossible to dismiss the possibility of alternate reasons. Therefore, the instrument was constructed in a way that will ensure the realization of the purpose of the study as well as answer the research questions.

Another internal validity threat that is important to be addressed is non-response bias. To limit this problem the following measures were taken; the questionnaire was made short and respondent friendly. A total number of ten major questions in all were posed and the average completion time of the survey was about four minutes and thirty seconds. The questions were also structured in a manner that will suit respondents in the event of them using mobile phone devices in answering. Additionally, basic language was used, and terms that could be misinterpreted were explained and examples give were possible. Important questions were made mandatory which when not responded to, one could not advance forward. Respondents were likewise informed of the anonymity of their responses, and sensitive topics were avoided to the greatest extent possible. A reminder was also sent to respondents to remind them of the survey if they are yet to participate in it.

5.5 Variables

Variables chosen for the analysis are briefly described in this section. The two variables that will be discussed, are dependent variables and independent variables.

5.5.1 Dependent Variable

The study examines trust in social media information by users based on the source of the information. Trust in social media information was measured with two constructs, trustworthiness of social media information and willingness to follow crisis instructions on social media. Two separate items were used to collect data for these dependent variables. For the trustworthiness, respondents were asked to indicate in general, how likely they are to trust crisis information from these sources on social media (Official social media pages of governmental agencies, Official social media pages of news media organizations, Health organizations, social media Influencers, Friends on social media, Persons unknown to you and Persons unknown to you). A four-point response scale was used for this item (1 = very likely, 2 = quite likely, 3 = quite unlikely, 4 = very unlikely, and 5 = don't know). This variable was recoded to reverse the score with very likely being the highest score (4) and the response "don't know" was treated as a missing value. Data for willingness was collected using the item; Tick the Preventive measures that you are likely to adhere to base on the source you chanced the information on social media. More than one option can be selected in this section. There were six preventive measures presented to respondents to choose from (Avoid crowds, avoid shaking hands, avoid touching my face, stay at home, vaccinate against covid-19, and wash hands with water and soap). Each preventive measure chosen gives a particular source a point, a maximum point of six can be attained by a source, and a zero point if respondents are not likely to adhere to any crisis instruction from the source. The overall scale reliability of the dependent variables was acceptable with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.800. A reliability coefficient

of each dependent variable was also acceptable with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.725 for trustworthiness and 0.841 for wiliness.

5.5.2 Independent variable

The source from which a piece of information is emanating on social media was treated as the independent variable. A total of seven sources were provided in the instrument, these sources were grouped into three broad categories which eventually were used as the independent variables. Therefore, the independent variables for the study were Authoritative sources, Known sources, and unknown sources. The authoritative sources comprise three sources from the instrument, these are the official social media page of governmental agencies, the official social media page of news media organizations, and the social media page of Health organizations. Social media influencers and friends on social media were grouped as known sources. The last group of unknown sources was made up of persons and organizations unknown to the respondents. So, in all there were 3 independent variables that were constructed out of the seven sources used in the instrument.

5.6 Summary

The data collected for this study had a satisfactory response rate considering the declining response rate of survey research in recent times. As noted by Czajka, & Beyler (2016) the viability of surveys is being challenged by declining response rates and related developments that affect not only the quantity, but the quality of the information collected (1). The satisfactory response rate that was achieved can be attributed to the web-based survey and the mobile phone friendliness of the instrument as well as the survey being conducted in two languages (Swedish and English). The socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents can be said to be as representative as possible. Measures were also taken to ensure the validity of the content of the

instrument. Overall, the reliability test of the scales suggests that the test measures are dependable and consistent.

6.0 RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

As said earlier, the current study aims to examines the trust social media user have in social media crisis information. The study adopted the covid-19 pandemic as a practical case to investigate how users' trust in social media crisis information is influenced by the source the information is coming from. Two trust constructs were used to measure the trust of the user (Trustworthiness and willingness). To test trust in social media information, a one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) with Simple contrasts was performed for the two trust constructs. The use of multivariate analysis of variance made it possible to identify and compare how the three groups of sources differ in terms of the trustworthiness of the source of information and willingness to follow instructions based on the source the information is originating from. Before the MANOVA was performed, specific assumptions of MANOVA were tested on the data. These assumptions are high correlativity between dependent variables, no outliers (Mahalanobis' distance), and Box's test of equality of covariance. The descriptive statistics of the study will be presented in this chapter followed by the test of assumptions, and the data collected as well as the analysis of the data for the study based on the research question will be finally presented.

6.1 Descriptive statistics

The descriptive statistics of the dependent variables are presented in this section. Table 2 includes the descriptive statistics for the dependent variables disaggregated by the independent variables. The total number of responses was $N = 951$. If one could recall the total number of respondents stated earlier was 141. The difference in the two figures is because of each respondent being ask a question on each of the seven sources (141 x 7 = 987) bearing in mind

missing values. Since sources of crisis information was treated as independent variable results from each unique source was computed for each respondent.

The figures presented in table 2 suggests an authoritative source to be a highly trusted source of crisis information on social media, with the average score of trustworthiness in the source closer to very likely ($\mu = 3.31$ on a 1 – 4 scale). The average score of known sources is closer to the quite unlikely ($\mu = 1.97$ on a scale of 1 – 4). Finally, the degree of trust in unknown sources scored an average of 1.77 out of 4 which is similar to the average of known sources gearing closer to quite unlikely. The results suggest that known sources are less trustworthy than authoritative sources but more trustworthy than unknown sources. Overall, unknown sources had the lowest average among the three sources that were captured.

Additionally, the table further show that the authoritative sources had an average score of ($\mu = 4.29$) for willingness. This suggests that users are willing to follow crisis instructions on an average of 4.26 out of the 6 preventive measures presented to them when the source is an authoritative source. Out of the 6 preventive measures known sources had an average score of ($\mu = 2.34$). Which suggests that on the average, users were willing to follow 2.34 of the crisis instruction when the instruction is coming from a known source. Lastly, unknown sources had an average score of ($\mu = 1.72$) which was the lowest score among the various sources. This result suggests that users are more likely to follow crisis instructions when the source is authoritative than when it is from known and unknown sources. On the other hand, while users are less likely to follow crisis instructions of known sources compared to authoritative sources, they are more likely to adhere to crisis instructions of known sources than unknown sources.

Table 2: Dependent variables' Descriptive statistics disaggregated by the independent variable (N = 951)

Crisis information source	***Authoritative (n = 419)***		***Known (n = 270)***		***Unknown (n =262)***	
	M	***SD***	***M***	***SD***	***M***	***SD***
Trustworthiness	3.31	0.79	1.97	0.90	1.77	0.89
Willingness	4.29	2.05	2.34	2.37	1.72	2.25

Note: All values are rounded to two decimal places where applicable.

6.2 Assumptions for a MANOVA

For the one-way MANOVA, the preliminary assumption testing was conducted. Mahalanobis distance was used to assess multivariate outliers; the critical value of 13.82 was not violated (max. value = 6.22). The association between the dependent variables was significant, r = 0.472. The correlation coefficient was less than 0.9; thus, multicollinearity is not a concern (Tabaknick & Fidell, 2007). Singularity was not a concern since there was high significance between the two dependent variables. The assumption of homogeneity of variance-covariance is tenable based on the result of an insignificant Box's M test (16.32). The results of the assumptions test suggest that there are no extreme outliers and thus a MANOVA can be constructed. The results of the multivariance analysis yielded that there was a statistically significant multivariant main effect between the three groups (authority sources, known sources, and unknown sources) on the combined dependent variables, Wilks' Λ = 0.551, Multivariate F (4, 1894) = 164.267, $p <$ 0.001, Partial η^2 = 0.258, observed power = 1.00. The results suggest significant differences between the three identities for trust in sources (Authority, Known, and unknown) with a large effect size. The observed power was 1.00 indicating that there was a 100% chance that the

results could have come out the significant. The results for the assumptions test and the MANOVA are present in table 3.

Table 3: One-way MANOVA: multicollinearity of willingness and trustworthiness

Variables	**Willingness**
Trustworthiness	0.472***
Box's *M* test = 16.32**	
Mahal Distance = 6.22	
N = 951	

Note: ***$p < 0.01$. *$p = 0.012 > 0.001$

6.3 Trust and sources

Since the multivariate analysis of variance suggested significant difference between the various social media crisis communication sources, a follow-up ANOVAs were conducted to understand where the differences are. This follow-up ANOVA will help to identify whether there is a difference between the sources for any of the two dependent variables (Trustworthiness and Willingness). Using the Bonferroni method, each ANOVA was tested at a 0.025 (0.05 / 2) alpha level. 0.025 was used to control for familywise error. The results demonstrated that there was sufficient evidence that the source of social media crisis information significantly influenced the trustworthiness user to ascribe to such information, F (2, 948) = 338.452, $p < 0.001$, partial $\eta^2 = 0.417$ observed power = 1.00. Also, the results further suggest that the source of social media crisis instruction significantly influenced the willingness of users to follow such instruction, F (2, 948) = 128.074, $p < 0.001$, partial $\eta^2 = 0.213$ observed power = 1.00. The effect size was large for both ANOVAs. And the strength of the relationship between social media crisis information source and trustworthiness was strong, with the crisis

information source accounting for 41.7% of the variance of the dependent variable. The strength of the relationship between social media crisis information source and willingness was also strong, with the crisis information source accounting for 21.3% of the variance of the dependent variable. The observed power of 1.00 indicated that there was a 100% chance that the results could have come out significant for both analyses. The results of the ANOVA are presented in table 4.

Table 4: ANOVA of willingness and trustworthiness

Variable	***F***	***df***	***partial* η^2**
Trustworthiness	338.452***	2, 948	0.417
Willingness	128.074***	2, 948	0.213

Note: ******p* **< 0.01. ****p* **= 0.012 > 0.001

6.4 Analysis

A comparison of the data from the two trust constructs suggests that the authority heuristic of the MAIN model is triggered by the authoritative source on social media. That is the authority sources induced trust in crisis information on social media. The trust in the authoritative source was significantly higher than in any of the source constructs. The authority heuristic of the MAIN model was thus confirmed by the study when respondents viewed information from the authoritative source as trustworthy and were willing to follow crisis instructions from such a source. Therefore, the findings implies that Authority heuristic triggers trust in social media information and thus in time of crisis, crisis communication managers should utilize these media (Official social media pages of government agencies, news media organizations, and Health organizations) in communicating with the publics.

Secondly, the data also suggests that the focus heuristic of the interactivity cue triggered by known sources induced trust in crisis information on social media. The trust in known sources was lower than the trust in the authoritative source but higher than in unknown sources. Although the difference in trust between known sources and the unknown source was not too high, there was a significant difference between these two sources. This implies that users might not have high trust in crisis information emanating from social media sites of friends and influencers, but they trust such sites more than information coming from an unknown persons and unknown organization.

The findings of this study suggest that social media crisis information has a high trust when the source is considered an authoritative source. This finding supports the theory that authority heuristics are triggered when the user thinks a source of information is from an authoritative source. The findings of this study are consistent with previous findings of Liu et al (2016), where they found that authority cues most influenced source credibility perceptions. Additionally, the findings are consistent with previous research on health information seeking behaviour. People are prone to seek health risk information directly from official government websites or the accounts of health officials, as these are likely perceived to be more credible (e.g., Sundar, Rice, Kim, & Sciamanna, 2011; Spence et al., 2015, as cited in Lin et al 2016, p. 269). Since covid-19 is a health-related crisis, respondents are likely to seek out information and instruction from sources that they perceive to be authoritative than all other sources. Although analysis of individual items that were grouped to construct authoritative sources was not the focus of this study, a look at the data depicts that official social media page of government agencies was the most trusted source among the three items. The official social media site of news media organizations was the second most trusted site. This can be attributed

to the pandemic being a global issue an government agencies within countries were mostly in charge of the management of the crisis.

Furthermore, the data shows no significant differences between known sources and unknown sources. Respondents perceived unknown sources to be the least trusted source of crisis information on social media. Since the known source was made up of individuals that whom the respondents are familiar, one might expect to see higher levels of trust for this source, but the results did not manifest the expectation. This therefore implies that the focus heuristics of the main model could not be establish by this study. This outcome could be as a result of the combination of two sources to construct known source. As stated earlier, analysis of individual items of the group was not the focus of the study. But the data for individual items shows respondents to have a good level of trust in friends but surprisingly, influencers seem to have a very low trust which affected the group constructs, and this shortcoming of the results will be discussed shortly at the limitation of this study and a proposal would be made for further studies. On the other hand, the less trust in unknown source implies that participants could not use identity cues or familiarity to judge the stranger in any of the circumstances because there were no identity cues for the stranger. This finding contrasts with the findings of Liu et al (2016). They found out that stranger accounts were all higher on the three dimensions of source credibility than were for the peer source. The difference in these two results can be attributed to two factors. Firstly, the two studies used different approaches in their collection of data. Lin et al. used an experimental design whereas the current study used a survey. Secondly, Liu et al used only one source (peers) to investigate the focus heuristic whereas the current study used two sources to investigate the focus heuristic.

One instruction that respondents were not willing to follow even when the source of instruction was authoritative was Vaccination. Among all the instructions, it was the least that respondents

were likely to follow at all levels of the source. This could be a result of beliefs and conspiracy theories surrounding the covid-19 vaccination. This explanation is speculative and will require more investigation.

6.4.1 Research Question 1

Does the source of crisis information on social media affect the trustworthiness of audience (user) in the information? The results from the data suggest that the source of crisis information on social media influences the trust users have in the information. Users tend to trust some source more than other source hence from the result of our study the answer to this question would be in the affirmative, the source of information trigger trust in the information. The degree of trust differs across all sources, and some sources were seen to have triggered more trust than others.

6.4.2 Research Question 2

Does the source of crisis information on social media affect the willingness of the audience to follow crisis instructions? The result from the study suggests that crisis information source on social media affects the willingness of users to follow crisis instruction. This was evident with the differences in the mean score for the three sources. So, by implication, user of social media is motivated to follow crisis instruction when they believe they information is from an authoritative source.

7.0 DISCUSSION

The findings of the analysis are summarized in this chapter, and conclusions are drawn. Contribution to theory, consequences for practice, limitations, and future research are all considered.

7.1 Conclusion

The goal of this study was to establish the relationship between social media crisis information and the source of the information coming from. Seven sources of information on social media identified by the researcher were examined. They are official social media sites of government agencies, news media organizations, health organizations and non-governmental organizations, influencers, friends, unknown organizations, and unknown persons. These sources were grouped into three broad categories to synchronize with the Agency and interactivity affordances of the main model. Two trust constructs were used to investigate the trust in social media crisis information. Trustworthiness of social media crisis information and willingness to follow crisis instructions on social media were considered by the researcher as the best measure of trust in crisis information on social media. The findings suggest that participants trust in social media is influenced by the source of the information. Therefore, source of social media crisis information influences trustworthiness as well as motivates users to follow crisis instruction. The result further suggests that authority heuristic triggers trust in social media. As a result, university administrators need to use social media to interact directly with students amid health-related crises. Overall, the findings indicated that authority cues most influenced trust in social media information and further imply that people pay attention to heuristic cues when making trust judgments regarding material posted on social media.

7.2 Contributions to theory and practice

Overall, the current findings may also have contributed to the learning processes associated with crisis communication research. The current study enhances the theoretical arguments of the MAIN model, most especially, the Authority heuristics. This study will also provide crisis managers with an empirical framework that will assist them to communicate with university students in the time of crisis. The finding suggests that students at the University of Gothenburg trusts crisis information when it is from an official source and are further willing to follow crisis instruction when it is from an official source on social media. Since trust is a key factor to compliance of crisis information, this study assures crisis managers of the theoretical framework that when crisis information on social media is from an authoritative source, user will trust such information. Hence crisis managers must a adopt social media as a crisis communication tool utilizing the authority heuristics to trigger trust in whatever information they transmit in the time of crisis.

Also, as found out by Austin et al 2012, Eriksson & Olsson 2016 and Park & Avery 2018 that social media is a less trusted site as compared to traditional media, the result of this study further explains the less trust in social media. The results implies that the less trust in social media information may be due to the less trust users have in some sources on social media. Therefore, trust in social media information during crisis is influenced by the source of the information.

7.3 Limitations and future research

The current study has some limitations. Firstly, the groupings of items to form the independent variables (authoritative source, known source, and unknown source) are subjective in their classification, and this led to some items in the contrast influencing the mean of the group negatively. For instance, Influencers were classified as a known source, but although

respondents might know influencers from afar, they might not know them on a personal level and thus could not trigger the focus heuristics. The classification of influencers under the focus heuristics might not have been the best. It might have been best investigated under the bandwagon heuristic as done in the study of Westerman et al (2012), although they did not find the number of followers to influence trust. Influencers might not have triggered much trust also due to the level of education of the population used. University students are highly educated and might not be influenced by the so-called influencers. As noted earlier, there was an over representation of the graduate student level as compared to the population, and this might have also skewed the results against influencers, since graduate student are mostly matured and are not that obsessed with influencers.

Altogether, further studies will be needed to test how heuristics of the MAIN model are triggered in the various construct of the source individually. Also, the sources presented were too general since there can be a lot of permutations attached to a source. For instance, a friend who is a health professional will trigger more trust than a lay friend and an influencer who is a health expert will also trigger more trust than a footballer who is an influencer. It is therefore my view that further research with an experimental design where the background information of the source is presented will yield a more positive outcome than the mere generalization of the sources.

Additionally, a controversial instruction such as vaccination which is viewed as a controversial instruction being used to measure trust might not elicit the response needed. Future studies should consider alternative means to eliciting discussion on controversial topics such as Covid-19 vaccination. Furthermore, the space in time between the onset of covid-19 and the time the data was captured will have a negative impact on the data collected. The effect of the virus seems to have lowered and most countries especially Sweden as returned to normal life. This

therefore might have affected respondents' recollection of the deadly nature of the virus and consequently affect the judgement on trusting information they find on social media. It will be therefore prudent for future studies that seeks to use practical crisis to do so in the heat of events. Finally, the research did not investigate how these heuristics differ between various socio-demography. Since the instrument captured the gender, age, and citizenship of participants, it will be interesting to investigate how these heuristics differ across sociodemographic characteristics. It's worth noting that university students are strong social media users, and the Covid-19 problem is relevant to the sample because it disrupted face-to-face instruction and forced most studies to be conducted online. As a result, future research can investigate similar topics within different population.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Survey Questionnaire English

University of Gothenburg
JMG
Survey Questionnaire

The purpose of this survey is to gather information about the use of social media as a source of crisis information by university students in Sweden (Gothenburg University). This is a research project being conducted as part of a master's thesis by graduate student Ebenezer Afortey, at the University of Gothenburg.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. Filling out a 10-minute onlinesurvey is the only requirement for your participation. Your responses will be treated with confidentiality, and we will not gather any personally identifiable information. All information gathered will be used only for the purpose of this study, all information gathered through this study will be protected from public access. The surveys will not contain any information that can be used to individually identify you to preserve your privacy.

The findings of this study will only be utilized for academic purposes.

If you have any question regarding this survey, you can contact me or my supervisor on the following emails respectively: benafot77@gmail.com or marie.grusell@jmg.gu.se

Background Information

Q1. Are you a: Swedish citizen ☐ citizen of another country ☐ Both Swedish and citizen of another country ☐

Q2. Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Others: ……..

Q3. Study level: ☐ Undergraduate ☐ Graduate ☐ Doctoral

Q4. Which year where you born? E.g. 1983 ☐☐☐☐

Social Media Usage

Q5. Are you a registered user of any social media site? Eg. Facebook, Instagram, snapchat, Tik Tok, Twitter or YouTube.

1. Yes ☐
2. No ☐ (End the survey)

Use of social media for crisis information

During the Covid-19 pandemic, a lot of information about the virus was shared on social media by individuals, experts, influencers, health organizations, governmental organization etc. The next set of questions will ask you about your use of social media as a source of crisis information and the trust in the various sources that produce social media content (crisis information). Select the option next to each statement that most closely describes how likely or unlikely you would use and trust social media information in each statement during the pandemic.

In general, how likely you are to trust crisis information from these sources on social media (NB. Not retweeting, sharing, or commenting):

	very likely	quite likely	quite unlikely	very unlikely	don't know
Official social media page of governmental agencies	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Official social media page of news media organizations.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Health organizations.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Social media Influencers.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Friends on Social media.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Organizations unknown to you	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Persons unknown to you	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Adherence to crisis information

The next set of questions is about prevention measure for Coronavirus and the likelihood of you adhering to them based on the source of the information. Tick the measures that you are likely to adhere to based on the source you chanced the information on social media. More than one option can be selected in this section.

Official social media page of governmental agencies

1. Avoid crowds
2. Avoid shaking hands
3. Avoid touching my face
4. Stay at home
5. Vaccinate against covid-19
6. Wash hands with water and soap

Official social media page of news media organizations.

1. Avoid crowds
2. Avoid shaking hands
3. Avoid touching my face
4. Stay at home
5. Vaccinate against covid-19
6. Wash hands with water and soap

Health organizations.

1. Avoid crowds
2. Avoid shaking hands
3. Avoid touching my face
4. Stay at home
5. Vaccinate against covid-19
6. Wash hands with water and soap

Social media Influencers.

1. Avoid crowds
2. Avoid shaking hands
3. Avoid touching my face
4. Stay at home
5. Vaccinate against covid-19
6. Wash hands with water and soap

Friends on social media.

1. Avoid crowds
2. Avoid shaking hands
3. Avoid touching my face
4. Stay at home
5. Vaccinate against covid-19
6. Wash hands with water and soap

Organizations unknown to you.

1. Avoid crowds
2. Avoid shaking hands
3. Avoid touching my face
4. Stay at home
5. Vaccinate against covid-19
6. Wash hands with water and soap

Persons unknown to you.

1. Avoid crowds
2. Avoid shaking hands
3. Avoid touching my face
4. Stay at home
5. Vaccinate against covid-19
6. Wash hands with water and soap

Appendix 2: Survey Questionnaire Swedish

Göteborgs universitet

JMG

Enkätundersökning

Syftet med denna enkätundersökning är att samla information om användningen av sociala medier som källa för krisinformation av universitetsstudenter i Sverige (Göteborg Universitet). Denna undersökning genomförs som en del av en masteruppsats av Ebenzer Afortey vid Göteborgs universitet. Deltagande i undersökningen är frivilligt.

Allt du behöver göra är att fylla i en kort online-enkät. Dina svar kommer att behandlas konfidentiellt och informationen som samlas in kommer enbart att användas för studiens ändamål. Enkätundersökningen kommer inte att innehålla någon information som kan användas för att identifiera enskilda deltagare. Resultatet från studien kommer endast att användas för akademiska ändamål.

Om du har frågor kring undersökningen kan du kontakta mig på följande e-mail benafot77@gmail.com. Du kan också kontakta min handledare på marie.grusell@jmg.gu.se

Bakgrundsfrågor

Q1. Är du: Svensk medborgare ☐ Utländsk medborgare ☐ Både svensk och utländsk medborgare ☐

Q2. Är du: ☐ Man ☐ Kvinna ☐ Annat:.....

Q3. Studienivå: ☐ grundutbildning ☐ masterstudent ☐ doktorand

Q4. Vilket år är du född? ☐☐☐☐

Användande av sociala medier

Q5. Använder du sociala medier? T.ex. Facebook, Instagram, snapchat, Tik Tok, Twitter eller YouTube.

1. Ja ☐
2. Nej ☐ (avsluta enkätundersökning)

Användning av sociala medier för krisinformation

Under Covid-19-pandemin delades stora mängder information om viruset på sociala medier av enskilda individer, experter, influencers, hälsoorganisationer, statliga myndigheter etc. I denna del kommer frågor om din användning av sociala medier som källa för krisinformation och förtroende för olika källor. Välj ett alternativ för varje påstående som beskriver hur troligt det är att du skulle använda och lita på information i sociala medier under pandemin (Q9).

Allmänt sett, hur troligt är det att du skulle lita på krisinformation från följande källor i sociala medier.
(OBS! Ej retweets, delningar eller kommentarer):

	Mycket troligt	Ganska troligt	Inte särskilt troligt	Inte alls troligt	Vet ej
Officiella konton för statliga myndigheter	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Officiella konton för nyhetsorganisationer	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Hälso- organisationer	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Influencers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Vänner i sociala medier	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Okända organisationer	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Okända personer	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Efterlevnad av krisinformation, råd och rekommendationer

Följande frågor handlar om förbyggande åtgärder mot coronaviruset och sannolikheten att du skulle följa rekommendationer utifrån informationskällan. Markera de råd och rekommendationer som du sannolikt följer, utifrån källan för informationen i sociala medier. Mer än ett alternativ kan väljas i denna del.

Officiella konton för statliga myndigheter.

1. Undvik folksamlingar
2. Undvik att skaka hand med andra människor
3. Undvik att röra ansiktet
4. Stanna hemma
5. Vaccinera dig mot Covid-19
6. Tvätta händerna med tvål och vatten

Officiella konton för nyhetsorganisationer.

1. Undvik folksamlingar
2. Undvik att skaka hand med andra människor
3. Undvik att röra ansiktet
4. Stanna hemma
5. Vaccinera dig mot Covid-19
6. Tvätta händerna med tvål och vatten

Hälso- organisationer

1. Undvik folksamlingar
2. Undvik att skaka hand med andra människor
3. Undvik att röra ansiktet
4. Stanna hemma
5. Vaccinera dig mot Covid-19
6. Tvätta händerna med tvål och vatten

Influencers i sociala medier.

1. Undvik folksamlingar
2. Undvik att skaka hand med andra människor
3. Undvik att röra ansiktet
4. Stanna hemma
5. Vaccinera dig mot Covid-19
6. Tvätta händerna med tvål och vatten

Vänner i sociala medier

1. Undvik folksamlingar
2. Undvik att skaka hand med andra människor
3. Undvik att röra ansiktet
4. Stanna hemma
5. Vaccinera dig mot Covid-19
6. Tvätta händerna med tvål och vatten

Okända organisationer

1. Undvik folksamlingar
2. Undvik att skaka hand med andra människor
3. Undvik att röra ansiktet
4. Stanna hemma
5. Vaccinera dig mot Covid-19
6. Tvätta händerna med tvål och vatten

Okända personer

1. Undvik folksamlingar
2. Undvik att skaka hand med andra människor
3. Undvik att röra ansiktet
4. Stanna hemma

5. Vaccinera dig mot Covid-19
6. Tvätta händerna med tvål och vatten