

Micro-influencers play pivotal role in crises, study reveals

March 28 2024



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You don't need to be an influencer with hundreds of thousands of followers to have a real-world impact during a crisis, [according to a new study](#) published in the *Australasian Journal of Information Systems*.

Contrary to conventional views that associate larger online followings with greater influence, the study shows that micro-influencers on Twitter (now X) play the most significant role in disseminating information during crises.

Despite their relatively small networks, these influencers with between 1,000 and 10,000 followers have a greater impact than their meso-influencer (10,001 to 100,000 followers) and macro-influencer (over 100,000 followers) counterparts, especially when situated near the [crisis](#).

The researchers behind the study, Shohil Kishore (University of Auckland Business School) and Dr. Amy Errman (AUT), analyzed 3.9 million tweets related to three significant events: the murder of George Floyd, the Russo-Ukrainian War and the COVID-19 pandemic.

In doing so, they determined that, across the board, micro-influencers' crises-related tweets were more likely to be retweeted.

"It was surprising to me that micro-influencers, particularly those local to a crisis, are more likely to have their messages retweeted," says Kishore.

"Usually, you think that more followers imply greater online influence. In the context of brands, that's pretty typical, but when you look at crises, that's simply not the case."

Kishore says it's clear that the role of the micro-influencer is crucial in disseminating timely and relevant information to affected communities. "However, they also have the potential to spread misinformation."

Given the influential role of micro-influencers in shaping [public opinion](#) during crises, he says it's imperative for [government agencies](#), policymakers, and [social media platforms](#) to encourage influencers, particularly micro-[influencers](#), to cite factual sources and engage in responsible online content creation when disseminating information during crises.

More information: Shohil Kishore et al, Doing Big Things in a Small Way: A Social Media Analytics Approach to Information Diffusion During Crisis Events in Digital Influencer Networks, *Australasian Journal of Information Systems* (2024). [DOI: 10.3127/ajis.v28.4429](https://doi.org/10.3127/ajis.v28.4429)

Provided by University of Auckland

Citation: Micro-influencers play pivotal role in crises, study reveals (2024, March 28) retrieved 28 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2024-03-micro-play-pivotal-role-crises.html>

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