Final exam essay questions

Essay Two – Collaborative Emergency Management

Collaborative emergency management is defined as the implementation of emergency management practices through joint activities between two or more establishments (Kapucu, Arslan, & Demiroz, 2010). Since the 1960s, there has been a greater emphasis on the development of partnerships as a fundamental component of successful emergency management (Kapucu, Arslan, & Demiroz, 2010). In emergency situations, the partnerships between public, private, and nonprofit sectors, the media, and the communities affected are crucial to the execution of emergency preparedness, response, and recovery (Kapucu, Arslan, & Demiroz, 2010). This essay reviews the role of the emergency manager, the pros and cons of collaborative emergency management, and best practices.

History of the Emergency Manager

The role of the emergency manager (EM) has evolved greatly since the 1990s from the traditional role of authoritarian to the current role of organizer or implementer (Kapucu & Özerdem, 2013). The primary reason for the switch is the implementation of collaborative emergency management. In the past, emergency managers met periodically for training, rarely communicating with one another otherwise (Kapucu & Özerdem, 2013). As the profession has changed, the degree of duties has increased, requiring managers to have greater insight into disaster readiness (Kapucu & Özerdem, 2013).

The influence of emergency managers at the policy level is one of the greatest changes from the traditional role. Kapucu & Özerdem (2013)

emphasize the importance for an EM to be assertive during opportunities for changes in emergency policies and procedures. In addition, today's EM is tasked with maintaining relationships with stakeholders that can help them execute an emergency plan successfully (Kapucu & Özerdem, 2013). Emergency managers are considered the " link" between all organizations that have resources to offer in times of emergency (Kapucu & Özerdem, 2013). As collaborative emergency management becomes the " norm" in today's society, there is an increased emphasis on emergency managers' ability to strengthen relationships, co-manage emergency situations, and build networks.

Collaborative Emergency Management Pros & Cons

There are countless benefits to the implementation of collaborative emergency management. These advantages include the distribution of responsibility, fostering of community relationships, sharing of resources, and delivery of information (Kapucu, Arslan, & Demiroz, 2010; Kapucu & Hu, 2014). Collaborative emergency management also creates open communication between organizations and entities before, during, and following an emergency situation (Kapucu & Özerdem, 2013). In addition, collaborative emergency management assists managers in the organization of emergency response and recovery efforts (Kapucu & Hu, 2014). In summarization, Kapucu & Hu (2014) explain that the key to productive emergency management lies in the collaborative networks developed by emergency managers and community officials.

According to Kapucu, Arslan, & Demiroz (2010), emergency managers must be prepared for potential shortcomings of collaborative emergency

management. The first is unorganized or inconsistent communication. Because there are several parties interacting with one another, information can be misinterpreted or lost in translation (Kapucu, Arslan, & Demiroz, 2010). Issues in communicating can lead to poor planning or poor execution of ideas. Collaborative emergency management gives emergency managers a greater responsibility, as they now have to foster relationships, share resources, and manage more than their own organization or entity (Kapucu, Arslan, & Demiroz, 2010). Finally, Kapucu & Hu (2014) explain that collaborative emergency management can elicit issues in accountability if there isn't a balance of power or structure in collaboration efforts.

Incorporation of Collaborative Emergency Management

Waugh & Streib (2006) explain the importance for emergency managers to implement strategies that encourage change and collaboration in emergency management. Their influence promotes a shift in deriving authority from hierarchy to authority through partnerships in managing emergencies (Waugh & Streib, 2006). To effectively manage emergencies in all areas, collaborative efforts are a necessity and should not be dependent upon the administration of one person. To implement collaborative management, FEMA recommends that emergency managers invest in training, develop cooperative competences, and understand methodical challenges (Waugh & Streib, 2006). In addition, Waugh & Streib (2006) suggest utilizing traditional activities to build collaborative management strategies. For example, seeking solutions that suit the community versus themselves or entrusting the authority of specific activities to collaborative partners (Waugh & Streib, 2006). In addition, managers can provide incentives for collaboration, such

as resource sharing inside and outside of emergency management (Waugh & Streib, 2006). To influence others to move into collaborative efforts, managers should obtain quality information and distribute it freely, fostering trust and encouraging actions (Waugh & Streib, 2006).

Conclusion

Community organizations, as well as nonprofit and private establishments, maintain an increasing role in crisis response and recovery, summoning the importance for collaborative systems in emergency management (Kapucu & Hu, 2014). Collaborative emergency management enables a community to share resources, coordinate efforts, and form networks that affect the success of emergency preparedness, response, and recovery actions (Kapucu & Hu, 2014). These collaborations depend on the cultivation of trust and development of relationships within a community, in order to build and execute effective emergency management plans (Kapucu & Hu, 2014).

Essay Three – Social Media and Emergency Management

Social media represents applications that accelerate networking, content sharing, and the distribution of information quickly and extensively (Luna & Pennock, 2018). It has been the rising phenomenon in society for the past decade, developing into the most common interaction channel between individuals and groups. As a primary form of communication in today's society, emergency management organizations are prone to take advantage of its benefits, such as affordability, flexibility, and adaptability (Luna & Pennock, 2018). The purpose of this essay is to define risk communication, identify trends in emergency management social media usage, and determine the advantages and disadvantages.

Risk Communication

According to Kapucu & Özerdem (2013), risk communication is defined as the communication with the community about threat and safety issues, through multifaceted, intricate, and growing methods (Kapucu & Özerdem, 2013). It introduces a reciprocal communication model, as opposed to the one-way processes traditionally used (Kapucu & Özerdem, 2013). These traditional models include telephone, email, fax, and radio communication (Kapucu & Özerdem, 2013). Additionally, traditional forms of emergency communication are comprised of television programs and newspaper articles. The challenge with these models of communication is their lack to provide instantaneous responses, therefore inducing shared interactions. Risk communication provides a platform for exchange for both emergency management officials and/or broadcasters and their audience (Kapucu & Özerdem, 2013).

Current Trends

The adaptation of social media in emergency management is a trend within itself as it has grown increasingly popular throughout the years (Luna & Pennock, 2018). Luna & Pennock (2018) explain that social media is being used at the pre-event, event, and post-event phases of emergency management. Now, more than ever, organizations are utilizing social media as alert systems, to share disaster discovery, and to facilitate preparation procedures (Luna & Pennock, 2018).

During the presence of an emergency event, social media plays a large role in requesting assistance, broadcasting a safety status, and providing real-time news updates (Luna & Pennock, 2018). For example, a few years ago,

Facebook began implementing a built-in tool for all accounts to utilize during emergencies and crisis, the " mark safe" initiative. During the Pulse Orlando shooting, for example, Orlando residents (as well as surrounding and former residents) could alert Facebook friends/family about their safety status during each situation.

Following an emergency episode, social media is being used to provide assistance, offer resources, recruit volunteers, solicit donations, and distribute general information about recovery plans. In addition, social media has provided a platform for others to openly observe losses, honor casualties, and share thoughts and feelings. The Pulse Orlando Shooting situation prompted heavy utilization of social media in announcing safety alerts, memorializing victims, and opening a dialogue for change.

Advantages and Disadvantages

Like all forms of communication, social media has advantages and disadvantages to its usage in emergency management. According to Shawn Gossman (2016), using social media as a form of communication in emergency situations can build relationships, raise awareness, and provide quick cautionary news. Luna & Pennock's (2018) list of advantages also incorporates synchronization between all patrons and the supervision of actions by both the public and emergency officials. In addition, social media provides a fast, economical way to disseminate information to the public in dire situations, especially if there was a lack of preparation (Luna & Pennock, 2018; Gossman, 2016).

Kapucu & Özerdem (2013) states that social media may not be the best choice in emergency situations if there is a lack of training or challenging equipment, software, or design, making the information inaccessible to the targeted audience. Shawn Gossman (2016) explains that because of social media's concealment behind a screen, there is a chance of rapid negative feedback or impulsive, inaccurate public representatives during emergencies. These situations lead to inaccurate information, misapprehensions, and unnecessary rumors (Luna & Pennock, 2018; Gossman, 2016; Kapucu & Özerdem, 2013). In addition, in times of emergency, social media requires constant monitoring and updating, which demands a dedicated staff.

Successful Example

According to a recent publication by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) (2013), The Colorado National Guard (CNG) has implemented a successful social media plan, specifically during the 2012 Colorado wildfire season. As the state's first military responders in emergencies, the Guard provided safety assistance and resources to the public (The Department of Homeland, 2013). The Guard's Public Affairs Office manages a website, along with Facebook, Flickr, Twitter, and YouTube social media accounts, all linking to one another in some way (The Department of Homeland, 2013).

During the 2012 Colorado wildfires, The CNG used Facebook to post numerous, daily updates regarding the status of wildfire activity and the Guard's actions (The Department of Homeland, 2013). Flickr was primarily used to show the use of resources, accurately display the threat, and bring comfort to the public through photos of the safety efforts by the Guard (The

Department of Homeland, 2013). The DHS' report (2013) indicated that the use of Twitter grew exponentially during the wildfires by providing collaborative communication and quick, effective responses. Finally, YouTube gave the CNG the ability to broadcast road closures and safety updates, as well as provide evidence of support throughout the incident.

Conclusion

The communication of information to the public and partnering organizations is crucial in emergency situations. While there are many forms of communication, social media has been on the rise and is being implemented in organizational emergency plans. As previously stated, social media is a fast, reasonable way to broadcast information to constituents in times of emergency (Luna & Pennock, 2018; Gossman, 2016). As the population increasingly utilizes social media platforms and new applications are developed, emergency management organizations will need to determine how they plan to join the movement.