

Public opinion survey paper



HURRICANE IKE AND OPINIONS ABOUT ITS IMPACT This study presents the comparison on the various response or reactions on Hurricane Ike, before and after its landfall. It assessed various reactions and opinions coming from the government, local, state and national sectors. The study likewise provides an understanding of how the American public views the inevitable natural calamities that wrecks a wide scale havoc not only on the lives of ordinary citizens but affects the overall economy of the country.

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to portray the effect of of Hurricane Ike before and after its landfall. In particular, this study aims to describe:

1. Ike's economic impact before its actual landfall
2. The response from governmental, national, state and local emergency and disaster support units.
3. The various feedbacks and opinions of local citizens from communities that were hit by Hurricane Ike.

Literature Review

According to the Pew Research Center (2008) Hurricane Ike was followed closely via news watch by a large portion of the viewing public who were concerned as the devastating storm approached the United States Gulf coast.

The research methods used in in this study to obtain public opinions would be the telephone survey method and the mail survey method. Telephone survey methods according to StatPac, Inc (p. 1), are the quickest method of obtaining information from a large sample of respondents that number approximately from 100 to 400. In this type of survey, the interviewer is guided by a prepared questionnaire. Although the mail survey has almost

the same features as the telephone survey, the differences are that the mail survey method does not permit any deeper probe on the expressed opinion and it usually takes the mail survey to be accomplished in 8 to 12 weeks.

Twice longer than the telephone survey.

Methodology

The procedures used in the study is the telephone and mail survey methods.

The questionnaire is composed of ten questions, which are in a simple and direct English language so as not to confuse the individual answering the questions. The most important questions are placed at the first half of the questionnaire wherein sufficient space is also provided after each question, allowing other comments/opinions to be expressed. For the mail survey, the return address is printed on the questionnaire and a self-addressed postage paid stamp is sent along with the mail survey forms (StatPac, Inc., 1-2).

Discussion

Before Hurricane Ike made its actual landfall, 50% of the viewing public was closely watching its progress (The Pew Research Center, 1), and has already triggered gas prices to soar (cbs11tv.com, pp1-3). Concerned government offices and personnel disseminated safety warnings and encouraged local residents to evacuate and leave their homes due to pending disasters. A week after Hurricane Ike's landfall, residents were persistent in finding out all they could about their homes including going back to see how things are. Authorities on the other hand on the other hand are issuing warnings again to not go back to their properties until things are better since there are still lingering dangers. But most ignored the safety warnings again (Lane, 1).

While relief efforts are underway at the local and state levels, an article describes how local politicians ride out the worst, when a natural calamity has recently devastated their area of jurisdiction (McCauley, 1). This is usually the time when a leader either shines or has a “melt down”, since it would prove their decision making capabilities and hands-on capacity that garnered the trust of their constituents during election time.

Based on the above, the study could conclude that:

Before landfall, state and national officials and personnel advised local homeowners where the storm is expected to hit to evacuate and seek safety within provided shelters. But most residents did not listen to this sound piece of advice and other safety measures.

As the storm progressed, many made late decisions on actually getting themselves and their loved ones to safety, which caused a number of deaths.

After the storm's landfall, concerned government units at the local and state level join forces to continuously work to help those who were hurt or put at risk by the passage of Hurricane Ike.

It is quite unfortunate that many do not realize the dangers they face during a natural calamity. Hence, it is always better to be safe than sorry and heed the advice for safety measures at an early stage. For more information about safety measures and relief operations, visit the FEMA and Red Cross websites.

References

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