Exploring Malaysian Netizens' Emotional Expressions towards Aviation Incidents through a Content Analysis of Twitter

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Abstract

This study explores the emotions expressed on Twitter in response to the loss of flights MH370 and MH17 among Malaysian netizens. The study adopts a quantitative content analysis design, whereby emotion words from tweets were categorized into distinct emotion categories. 2000 tweets relating to both the MH370 and MH17 events were collected for this study, using set criteria. A chi-square test was conducted to examine differences in emotion words pertaining to tweets for both the MH370 and MH17 events. Results showed that more anger was expressed towards the loss of MH17 whilst more fear was expressed towards the loss of MH370. There was more sadness expressed towards the loss of MH17 than in MH370. Hope was expressed more frequently in relation to the loss of MH370, than towards the loss of MH17. Results provide evidence and implications for differences in emotional responses expressed through social media regarding loss events.

Keywords: Emotion, social media, loss