

Crowd control and human behaviour in emergencies

Introduction

Crowd — a large group of people who have gathered together, for example to watch or listen to something interesting, or to protest about something.

Crowd psychologists about crowds

[crowd behavior, default behavior of crowds, negative representation of crowds: heightened emotionality, emotional outburst, reduced intelligence, irrationality, people get ‘whipped up’, absence of self-control, madness of the crowd, indiscriminately violent, ...].

Crowds in literature

[Shakespeare's ‘Julius Caesar’, ... examples, ...].

Main part

‘Madness of the crowd’ and ‘power of the crowd’

Unpack the point

[crowd as a social problem, threat to civilization, threat to humanity, collective identities, a sense of social support, ...]

Crowd as an adaptive mechanism that frees humans from restrictions

Crowd control and helping people in emergencies

[affiliation theories, fight or flight instincts, rules of conduct that govern the behaviour, attend to the safety of sb, observe normal courtesies, competitive behaviors, social bonds, turn into savages desperate to escape, await rescue, buddy system, warning signals, emergency planners, ...].

Emergency situations (hotel fire, robbery, breakdown, going through airport security, a delayed flight, life-threatening situations)

Behaviour in Stressful Situations

- fire emergency in a tunnel
- a volcanic eruption
- terrorist attack

[comply with fire safety instructions, fire alarm, high rise fires, phased evacuation, altruistic behaviour, prevent flight behaviour, protect-in-place approach, egress, get trampled]

Decision-making in emergency

Decision-making in emergency vs day-to-day decision-making

[much is at stake in emergency decisions, time available is limited, lack of information, ambiguous information]

e.g. A list of **fire precautions** that should be undertaken to minimize the risk of damage from fire:

1. Make emergency plans, develop escape routes, shelter-in-place measures.
2. Install and maintain firefighting equipment.
3. Install fire alarms.

4. Ensure that all emergency escape routes are safe so that they can be easily followed during an emergency.

5. Ensure that the building or facility is equipped with the structural features necessary to stop the spread of the fire long enough for individuals to escape safely.

...

Methods of speeding up reactions to danger

[actions that increase the chances of survival, get knowledge of the risks associated with...; to recognize danger; carry out appropriate actions; to enhance self-preservation; motivate reaction and action; flee danger at all cost ...]

Conclusion

Recommended vocabulary

like-mindedness in a critical situation

determination to be rescued

affiliation theorists

fight or flight instincts

a case in point

warning signals

a mad scramble

a bolt out of the blue

unnerved

ominous

a quitter

at stake

at play

high rise fires

altruistic behaviour

flight behaviour

a lethargic response

phased evacuation

egress

non-viable

to remain committed to the rules of conduct

to attend to the safety of sb

to observe normal courtesies

to turn into savages desperate to escape

to await rescue

to provide credible information about

to make way to the emergency stairs

to dash back

to put oneself at risk

to cancel credit cards
to sort everything out
to survive the ordeal
to motivate reaction and action
to flee danger
to get trampled
to get out of hand
to comply with fire safety instructions
The alarm went off.
I lost my cool.
Every time I went through the scanner...
All outgoing and incoming flights have been cancelled.
I'm a lot more resilient than I thought.