“Heightened Mindfulness” in Government Decision Makers: Antecedents and Consequents During Crisis Management in the Emerging Interactive Information Environment

Ravindra Singh Bangari

1Affiliation not available

June 17, 2021

Abstract

Mindfulness in decision makers has important implications for public leadership. A more nuanced understanding of mindfulness emerges from our grounded research into three national-level crises in the emerging interactive information environment, faced by the Indian government, wherein, the media, stakeholders and the interactive information environment combined to bring the visibility factor to fore, influencing significant aspects of individual, group, organisational and societal sensemaking, framing, cognition, and behavioural responses, amidst ongoing interactions. The research led to identification of a micro-level framework, comprising the antecedents and consequents of the occurrence of “heightened mindfulness” in decision makers in the emerging interactive information environment; leading to a better understanding of the process of influence of the ongoing interactions in the emerging information environment on decision making and crisis management. This “heightened mindfulness” in decision makers and its influence on crisis decision making, in turn, are particularly significant because of their wider organisational and societal implications. The research findings and the proposed framework of crisis decision making have important implications for governments and public leadership in their decision making effectiveness during similar crises.
“Heightened Mindfulness” in Government Decision Makers: Antecedents and Consequents During Crisis Management in the Emerging Interactive Information Environment

Sample Exhibits of Grounded Theory Research Operationalisation

The purpose of this Appendix is to give a glimpse of the research methodology operationalisation followed in the underlying thesis research. Over the period of months, while the researcher went over the news and media reports, voluminous notes and reports gathered from various sources, including, nearly 25 plus books exclusively covering the three crises case studies, besides others covering parts thereof, it required constant going back and forth, over and over again, to gather one’s thoughts and scribbled notes into some coherence, so as to finally emerge in the form of open, axial and selective coding results shown in the thesis report.

Illustrative extracts from this process for the Kandahar crisis are presented below, organised as under:

Open Coding
(a) Chronological sequencing of crisis events and associated significant observations arrived at by triangulation method (upto arrival of IC-814 in Kandahar only).
(b) Scheme for coding of level of information exchange between the government decision makers and the public/media.
(c) Coding of level of information exchange between the government decision makers and the public/media through the major crisis stages.
(d) Developing Categories in terms of their properties and dimensions (not shown here, but applied/discussed in the paper and incorporated in the framework)

Axial Coding
(e) An example of a Paradigm Model (reflecting important linkages associated with the selected category).

Selective Coding
(f) Integrating situational variations from within and across cases into a Conditional Matrix.
Integrating “process”—An example of “Deviation Amplifying Mutual Causal Relationships.” (see Figure 2 in the paper; also, Figures 1 and 3 in the paper for other examples of this)

**Chronological Sequence: IC-814 Kandahar Hijack 1999 Crisis**
(upto arrival in Kandahar)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date &amp; Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>24 Dec</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.05 p.m.</td>
<td>IC-814 takes off from Kathmandu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.10 p.m.</td>
<td>IC-814 hijacked over Lucknow</td>
<td>Denied permission to land at Lahore; turns back to Amritsar; response of the CMG, NSG, Aerodrome Committees, and the Air Force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.01 p.m.</td>
<td>Lands at Amritsar</td>
<td>Missed “window of opportunity”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.49 p.m.</td>
<td>Takes off from Amritsar</td>
<td>Poor information dissemination to affected public; crisis management machinery fails to respond at all levels; responsibility disowned, “passing the buck”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.07 p.m.</td>
<td>Lands at Lahore</td>
<td>Diplomatic level contact with Pakistan initiated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Takes off from Lahore</td>
<td>Another possible opportunity lost, as dithering continues at the Government level; role of NSG/anti hijack forces?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>25 Dec</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.30 a.m.</td>
<td>Lands at Dubai</td>
<td>Diplomacy activated, but forced action options restrained by local government; some negotiations; 26 women and children released; body of Rupin Katyal handed over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.30 a.m.</td>
<td>Take off from Dubai</td>
<td>Efficacy issues of international diplomacy; question of inadequate exercise of right to rescue Indian nationals?; contingency planning?; intelligence gathering?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.30 a.m.- 9 a.m.</td>
<td>Lands at Kandahar</td>
<td>To negotiate or not to; limited channels of communication; attitude/approach to hijackers’ demands; international pressure activation; gathering of intelligence; proactive use of the media vis-à-vis easy awareness to the hijackers (through the media) of the government’s state of affairs/despondency?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Category: Information Exchange by the Government During the Crisis**

**Scheme for Coding:**
Level of information exchange has been coded as shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Absolutely no information exchange with the affected persons/media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low, i.e., inadequate information exchange, which is not enough to satisfy the questions raised by the affected people and the media; leaves dissatisfaction due to this shortcoming</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
People and the media generally agreed that information exchange meets their requirement; some questions and doubts may be left unanswered, but these cause no great dissatisfaction.

Initiative on the side of the government, which is itself forthcoming with information; government wooing of the media and the people for transfer of information.

Out and out proactive efforts by the government to share information with the people and the media.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Level of Information Exchange</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Post-hijack— 24/12 (4.39-7.49 p.m.)</td>
<td>Immediate period following the crisis</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Rise of rumours, misinformation; hostages’ relatives in anxiety; media hounding for information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24/12 (8.07p.m.)-25/12 (8.30 a.m.)</td>
<td>Events at Karachi/Dubai, till arrival at Kandahar</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Victims unable to authenticate information being beamed over the various media; uncertainty, fear increases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25/12 to 26/12</td>
<td>Period of no dialogue with hijackers; indirect communication only</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Government crisis management process—invisible; media barrage and highlighting of victim’s plight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27/12 to 28/12 (trigger for forced action by victims: 1 p.m. deadline)</td>
<td>Negotiations with the hijackers, after threat to kill hostages</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Gate-crashing tactics by victims to draw attention; force government to attend to concerns; seek promises to resolve crisis satisfactorily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28/12 to 31/12</td>
<td>Terms of negotiation for ending the crisis—bargaining phase</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Pressure of public commitment; government resolve weak; leads to tame surrender</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Note: Links to data files/references not shown here, which provided facts and basis for the coding.
An Example of “A Paradigm Model” (also referred to as a Logic Diagram)

In grounded theory, categories and subcategories are linked together in a “set of relationships denoting causal conditions, phenomenon, context, intervening conditions, action / interactional strategies, and consequences” (Strauss and Corbin, 1990: 99). The simplified model looks something like under:

(A) Causal Conditions  (B) Phenomenon  (C) Context  
(D) Intervening Conditions  (E) Action/Interaction Strategies  
(F) Consequences.

An example with regard to the category “Information Availability to Stakeholders” is shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Causal conditions</th>
<th>Phenomenon</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>State of Secondary Crisis Victims &amp; Media:</strong></td>
<td>Anxiety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Lack of information of the goings-on</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Lack of empathy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Temporal match of level of information exchange to phenomenon</td>
<td>Increased anxiety &amp; frustration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Context</strong></td>
<td>State of agitation &amp; building up of tension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Ongoing crisis—Uncertainty and anxiety</td>
<td>Trigger (in form of a serious threatening likelihood—approaching hijacker’s deadline)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Lives of primary crisis victims at risk</td>
<td>Resort to disruptive measures to press for demands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- An unresponsive government, with not-too-successful track record of dealing with similar crisis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Situation aggravated by the seemingly lackadaisical attitude displayed by government/bureaucracy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intervening Conditions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Structural Factors:</strong> Power: Force projection capability; Special forces’ preparedness; Intelligence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Diplomatic Standing:</strong> Bilateral agreements of cooperation; Capability to leverage and apply pressure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action/Interaction Strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Misreading of the developing crisis and stakeholders’ feedback and concerns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of empathy towards the crisis victims—deficiency in value terms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of strong assertive leadership: To coordinate responsiveness, signalling effects, initiate ‘sensemaking’, come to grips with the crisis expeditiously, and exert positive control on the evolving situation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consequences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increased criticism in media due to slant of coverage—outcome of emerging technology and societal interface in form of infotainment; societal norms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wider stakeholder generated pressure on government decision makers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depiction of the Government as a ‘soft state’ in international geo-political context, as well as towards internal stakeholders</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Subsequent developments related to the above category as Government begins to redress any further deterioration of situation:

- Attempts to correct the above deficiency by:
  - Special ‘secondary victims’ and media briefings—reaching out
  - Projection of independent expert / analyst opinion in support of government actions, also incorporating them in advisory capacity
  - Simultaneous action to generate consensus with other major political parties
  - Orchestrated show of support to government crisis management by its supporters

Consequences:

- Positive response from the secondary victims and reduction of bias in media coverage
- Appreciation of the complexity of the evolving situation in interactions over the emerging ICT environment
- Reduced pressure on government decision making
- Environmental support to ongoing crisis management efforts
**An Example of Integration of Situational Variations from Within and Across Cases to Formulate Theory**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crisis</th>
<th>Government Response to the Crisis (in the immediate context)— Speed and Esteem</th>
<th>Government Response to the Crisis (in the subsequent context)— Esteem of Action Orientation</th>
<th>Responsiveness and Transparency</th>
<th>General Awareness of Crisis Context</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kargil crisis</td>
<td>Initially – Low Subsequently – Correction of error</td>
<td>High/Certain</td>
<td>Initially – Uncertain Subsequently – High/Slightly ambiguous</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kandahar crisis</td>
<td>Initially – Low Subsequently – Low/Neutral</td>
<td>Low/Confused</td>
<td>Initially – Low/ poor Subsequently – Forced, slightly better</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“HEIGHTENED MINDFULNESS” IN GOVERNMENT DECISION MAKERS: ANTECEDENTS AND CONSEQUENTS DURING CRISIS MANAGEMENT IN THE EMERGING INTERACTIVE INFORMATION ENVIRONMENT
“HEIGHTENED MINDFULNESS” IN GOVERNMENT DECISION MAKERS: ANTECEDENTS AND CONSEQUENTS DURING CRISIS MANAGEMENT IN THE EMERGING INTERACTIVE INFORMATION ENVIRONMENT

ABSTRACT

Mindfulness in decision makers has important implications for public leadership. A more nuanced understanding of mindfulness emerges from our grounded research into three national-level crises in the emerging interactive information environment, faced by the Indian government, wherein, the media, stakeholders and the interactive information environment combined to bring the visibility factor to fore, influencing significant aspects of individual, group, organisational and societal sensemaking, framing, cognition, and behavioural responses, amidst ongoing interactions. The research led to identification of a micro-level framework, comprising the antecedents and consequents of the occurrence of “heightened mindfulness” in decision makers in the emerging interactive information environment; leading to a better understanding of the process of influence of the ongoing interactions in the emerging information environment on decision making and crisis management. This “heightened mindfulness” in decision makers and its influence on crisis decision making, in turn, are particularly significant because of their wider organisational and societal implications. The research findings and the proposed framework of crisis decision making have important implications for governments and public leadership in their decision making effectiveness during similar crises.

Keywords: Mindfulness; Emerging interactive information environment; Decision making; Crisis; Stakeholders; Media.
INTRODUCTION

The political, economic, and social dimensions of the emerging information environment are yet to fully unfold and be understood in their entirety, along with their implications, particularly, for policy and governance. The emerging information environment, or more broadly, the emerging information and communication technology (ICT) environment\textsuperscript{1}, including the media, bring the visibility factor dramatically to fore in present day crises,\textsuperscript{2} and influence government decision makers in both direct and more subtle indirect manners. This emerging phenomenon has yet to be studied in depth and understood in order to establish validated causal linkages that could help stakeholders, media and the government decision makers to develop more effective strategies to meet the demands of developing crises situations.

Our research focused on three crises that took place in India in the period 1999-2000 at a time when these influences were beginning to come into their own, along with the Internet (dotcom) boom. However, these three crises also involved its neighbours in South Asia, with eventual broader implications of these crises’ fallouts. By the time of the crises’ development, emerging ICTs, encompassing many associated technological advances in the broader sense of the term, had already begun to percolate into areas of the nation’s hinterland. The implementation of economic liberalisation in 1991, following a severe balance of payments crisis, in the wake of the first Gulf War which caused a spike in oil prices, had led to a fillip in liberalization, industrial investment and opening of the Indian economy. Cable television, mobile telephony and cheaper surface and air transportation were well on their way to consolidating

\textsuperscript{1} The terms “information” and “ICT” environment have been used interchangeably, as has been the usage elsewhere generally. It connotes more than the sum total of the individual technical appliances alone—it also incorporates implications from their usage, and their individual and combined socio-psychological influences in a holistic sense.

\textsuperscript{2} Hermann’s (1969) definition is one of the best known models of crisis. Many researchers have used the same definition or modified it appropriately, as their starting point. I use the term to incorporate: (1) a threat to basic values (Brecher, 1980); (2) surprise (Hermann, 1969); (3) finite time (Brecher, 1980); and (4) limited and unclear information.
their presence in the Indian consumers’ lives. Given the fillip of the dot-com boom, the growing technology-savvy educated urban population had begun to use the Internet ever more than earlier. These three national level crises were therefore widely broadcast over diverse forms of media and they attracted a high level of public interest, in light of their direct ramifications for the nation’s security.

In an unusual departure from past crises, the public was kept almost abreast of the crises’ developments as they came to light. As a result, the government found itself being looked at askance by, particularly, the affected stakeholders and the media. In this respect, this was a radically changed environment in which government’s crisis decision making took place. No longer did it have the luxury to look for more information and rationally examine its options before making a considered decision; instead it found itself reacting to the crises under direct stakeholder monitoring and questioning. At the same time, under constant barrage from the media and the effected stakeholders, the government did try to present a picture of composed rational decision making, in order to convey that it was in control of the situation. Clearly, things were occurring simultaneously at multiple levels. In order to understand the phenomena more intimately and discover the causal linkages between relevant events, influencing factors and the actor’s responses, we carried out a grounded research study of the three crises which occurred sequentially within a period of over a year in 1999-2000. The objective of the study was to understand the emerging phenomenon in greater detail, establish significant causal linkages and develop a more generalized theory, to help make better sense of it, in order to help future decision makers work towards better quality decisions when confronted with, similar circumstances or crises conditions.
From the research, we identified the antecedents and consequents of what emerged as a significant causal outcome of the growing pervasiveness of the emerging information environment, viewed holistically, amidst the increased stakeholder interactions, namely: “heightened mindfulness in government decision makers” when confronted with the crisis in the said information environment. Further, we also propose a macro- and a micro-level framework of the causal antecedents and consequents of this heightened mindfulness observed in decision makers during crisis decision making.

Towards the end, in the discussion of the policy implications, we briefly apply the proposed framework to a more recent crisis contingency—the 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks of 2008, and the Indian government’s response to it—to help update and validate the basic framework arrived at in our research.

**RESEARCH PHENOMENON & METHODOLOGY**

The basic research problem we set ourselves was to identify the influences of the emerging interactive information environment, including media coverage and the resulting visibility, on government decision makers during national level crisis decision making, in-as-much it appeared to be an important organizational and societal phenomena during crises in the emerging environment. We approached the problem by carrying out in-depth research into three recent crises (George and McKeown, 1985), using the Grounded Theory research approach (Creswell, 1998; Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Strauss and Corbin, 1990; Turner, 1983), to come up with an inductively derived theory of the phenomenon, in form of generalised causal propositions and a proposed integrated explanatory framework.

**Selected Cases**
The following crisis cases from the Indian context are taken up for study:

(a) Kargil border intrusions, 1999.
(b) IC-814 Kandahar hijacking crisis, 1999.
(c) Sri Lankan (Jaffna) crisis, May 2000 (from the Indian government’s and public’s perspective).

Data

The researcher perspective that we adopted is that of an observer (of the ongoing crises, media coverage and interactions over the emerging information environment) analysing the nature and content of the interactions between different actors/stakeholders in the specific environments. The data comprises of researchers’ observations of the crises evolution and government decision making process, as communicated by it to the public and the media, and the ongoing media coverage (both electronic and print). We also took into account analysts’ comments and observations printed in the media, post-hoc accounts of the crises by reporters and researchers (including from independent think-tank groups), some accounts by the participants in the decision making process, and the publicly reported/commented upon portions of reports by government-appointed commissions into the causes of first two of these major crises. In order to build up a validated account of the crises’ progression and important decision points, we used the triangulation methodology, employing the complete crises coverage in the print editions of three of the nation’s leading English language dailies and two of the leading English news-magazines (one a weekly and the other a fortnightly), supplemented by other relevant sources, where available and adding value to the research findings.

Operationalisation of the Research Methodology
Operationalisation process followed in this research is shown at Table 1 (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). In analogous previous research, Turner (1978) analysed past large-scale accidents (employing grounded theory methodology) using documentary materials, treating them like sets of “field-notes” to generate “categories” and carry out causal analysis. We adopted a similar process, as briefly explained and presented below.

--------------------------------------------------
Insert Table 1 about here
--------------------------------------------------

The three crisis cases represent interesting, yet contrasting, examples of crises faced by the Indian government, very much in the glare of the emerging information environment, and, importantly, mark a distinct qualitative shift from similar past occurrences in this respect, as has also been reported by various reports and commentaries, referred to subsequently. We first applied Grounded theory research technique (Creswell, 1998; Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Strauss and Corbin, 1990) to two of the crisis cases selected for in-depth analysis, i.e., the Kargil intrusions and the Kandahar hijacking crises, to come up with an inductively derived framework of the phenomenon of “heightened mindfulness” in decision makers, along with its antecedents and consequents (see also Turner, 1983), in the form of more generalised causal propositions. In this step, we carried out in-depth “within case analysis” into these two selected cases, to discover significant hypothesised relationships between significant categories identified during data analyses, to explain the “microlevel processes” (Fiol and O'Connor, 2003) underlying the overt behaviours in the phenomena under study. Then, a “cross-case analysis” was carried out, across these two cases initially, and then finally validated across the third case, i.e., the developing Sri Lanka (Jaffna) crisis, which was also situated in a closely similar contextual framework.
From the initial within case analyses, “the richness of the material available and the coherent quality of the emerging model” (Turner, 1983) made it seem reasonable to try to construct an “integrated micro-level framework of heightened mindfulness,” based on further exploratory research. Some examples of basic building blocks of the logical arguments developed through data analyses, i.e., “logic diagrams,” can be seen at Figures 1 to 5, and comparative tables at Tables 2 to 3, as introduced subsequently in the paper.

In order to keep the discussion focused, this paper does not include the complete operationalisation of research methodology, because it necessarily involved moving back and forth between events and data, across multiple units and levels of analyses, as described above (for more on this, refer first author’s, Xyz [2005]; however, a preview of the grounded theory research operationalisation process, with some illustrative extracts, is placed online at ..... [attached separately here for the reviewers]). Here, we primarily present data analysis and research findings that have been derived through this operationalization process. For this reason, our references to data points that are used for illustrative purposes in the following account of analysis and discussion, treats them as such, and avoids making repeated reference to their origins. What appears here is a focused and concise description of the significant causal associations between categories and subcategories (Strauss and Corbin, 1990) closely associated with “heightened mindfulness” in decision makers, across the three crisis cases, with the focus squarely being on the first two cases, which were taken up for in-depth “within case analysis”, with references being made to the third case briefly, where illustrative, and which was really used for purposes of validation/refinement of the emergent causal propositions (George and McKeown, 1985). Where applicable, we also highlight any significant characteristics or differences that emerged between the three crises, as necessary.
The paper is broadly organised in four sections. In the first section, after introducing the background and certain essential characteristics relating to the crises’ context, we bring out the causal associations between significant categories that led to the development and emergence of the feature we have termed, “heightened mindfulness” in the decision makers, during the phase of crisis development and its initial management. The second section elaborates upon the insights obtained from these crises into an understanding of “heightened mindfulness” observed in the primary decision makers in these situations. The third section discusses the consequents of “heightened mindfulness” and their causal associations with the end-outcomes on crisis decision making, specifically, the implications for the quality of the decision making process. Finally, two integrated frameworks encompassing heightened mindfulness in decision makers in the emerging information environment are presented, followed by conclusion.

ANTECEDENTS OF HEIGHTENED MINDFULNESS

Crises’ Context

A brief overview of the three crises, along with the associated crisis flow diagrams of the two crises selected for in-depth analyses, is given at Appendix 1. These emerged from Xyz (2005) which lays out the details of the process followed. This provides the necessary granular details for readers who may not be familiar with the crises’ context. The flow diagrams present important phases of crises development and decision making inflection points, as appeared critical to us. For those unfamiliar with the background to the crises, it is pertinent to bring up here, that India is a parliamentary democracy and the elected head of the central government is the Prime Minister (hereafter, referred to as the P.M.). The P.M. is the primary decision maker.
accountable for all actions of the central government, even as he is assisted in the conduct of governance by his ministerial colleagues, who may be directly in charge of a particular ministry in whose domain the crisis itself may fall. Matters with implications for security of the nation are normally overseen by the Cabinet Committee of Security (C.C.S.), which is an executive think-tank and advises the P.M. on all such issues of national importance. The C.C.S. had a role to play in all the crises studied here.

As earlier mentioned, there were certain significant characteristics of the emerging environment that signalled a distinct change in these crises’ context, as compared to what has been observed to be the case so far in earlier comparable crises. These characteristics signify the extent of change in terms of improved information access and availability of cheaper and faster communications with all stakeholders. Its impact on society at all levels is a subject of much-needed research, for it is actually a vast and complex area of study, which is yet to be fully comprehended in all of its dimensions. However, this research will confine itself to issues of primary concern to us, i.e., their influence on the government decision making process during crises. These significant changes were observed along the following dimensions, during the study of the selected crises:

(a) Information availability
(b) Information transparency
(c) Faster and cheaper communication technologies
(d) Live TV coverage, beamed worldwide near instantaneously
(e) Larger numbers of electronic media channels and improved crisis coverage, consequent to increased competition
(f) Loss of government/institutional control over media and greater ability of even minority stakeholders to voice their opinions forcefully over the emerging media

(g) Cheaper public transportation

From a detailed “within case analysis” of the two selected crises, it was gradually possible to identify relevant categories/subcategories and significant phenomena during the crises. Tables 2-3 summarise, compare and contrast the highlights and characteristics of the Kargil and the Kandahar crises derived from this research to allow us to proceed to the next level of analysis. Figures 1 to 5 graphically present the combined interactive effects of significant causal and/or cyclical influences on crisis development and resolution (George and McKeown, 1985). The escalation process in all the three crises, under the glare of continuous media coverage and gradually increasing public stakeholders’ involvement, is worth noting particularly for the manner in which it led to contrasting end results—in terms of the influence exerted by the stakeholders, mediated via the emerging information environment, on the crisis decision making process itself (Table 2 and Figures 3 to 5).

-----------------------------------------------
Insert Tables 2 to 3 and Figures 1 to 5 about here
-----------------------------------------------

From this initial data analysis, a few defining characteristics of the emerging interactive environment, significant categories and their inter-relationships, as related to the observed phenomena emerged clearly and strongly, as presented below. In the remaining section, we discuss these related categories and their causal associations that lead to the development of, what we term, “heightened mindfulness” in primary decision makers, who are closely involved with and directly responsible for seeking a resolution to the crisis. This section then sets the stage
for discussion in the following section, that more closely focuses on the phenomenon of
development of “heightened mindfulness” in primary decision makers.

**Emerging Media’s Influence on Crisis Coverage**

New emerging forms of media are beginning to radically redefine the crisis context, as
against the control exercised by governments in the not too long past. Because of the nature of
their broadcast and live coverage by these 24-hour electronic channels, there is a bias towards
graphic images and sensationalisation of crisis events. All of this is aimed at capturing increased
public “viewership,” as against more balanced coverage and quality in-depth analysis,
traditionally associated with print media. There is a subtle exploitation of images and emotion in
the so-called “eye-ball” warfare. The Kargil battle has been variously described as “India’s first
media war,” “first television war” (KRC Report, 2000), and so on. The Kandahar crisis was
brought to the living rooms of the people by the electronic media and it progressively drew them
deeper into the ongoing hostage drama. Emotion and drama usually associated with a crisis make
for greater all-around interest and the emerging interactive information environment facilitates its
satiation through streaming communication (24-hour news channels, internet web sites and news
portals, news-alerts on mobiles, etc.). It appears that there is a need to adopt a holistic approach
while considering the media’s impact. Subtle lifestyle changes brought about by many inter-
related technological advances, such as, better transportation and easier communication, for
example, enable us to have time at our disposable and access to become both consumers and
producers of this media content by participating in the ongoing interactions over the wider ICT
environment.
A closely related facet that emerged was the intensity of the negative bias in media’s crisis coverage, as seen from the decision maker’s perspective, in face of information deficiency and crisis resolution related uncertainty, and its repercussions. Emerging electronic media is particularly effective in highlighting and giving much wider instantaneous publicity to such consequential negative emotions—the despair; fear and uncertainty; and anger—of stakeholders directly affected by the crisis. This media influence was observed to affect the government decision makers in both Kargil intrusions and the Kandahar hijacking crises, as well as during the run up to the Sri Lankan Jaffna crisis in May 2000 (Xyz, 2005).

Governments and decision makers can henceforth no longer afford to remain unmoved by “news” of their shortcomings being widely circulated uncontested in this interactive information environment. Jaswant Singh, India’s Foreign Minister during the three crises, writes that, it was the “first media war’ that India was experiencing”, and that, “It was very important that even as the conflict continued we gained proficiency in the use of this additional tool, employing it for national purpose” (Singh, 2006: 207). This apparent confidence in one’s ability is, however, shaken when Singh describes the coverage accorded to the increasing demonstrations by the relatives of the Kandahar hijacking: “initially perhaps spontaneously but thereafter as part of some sponsored embarrassment to the government—gangs of political activists were persuaded to block roads, interrupt press briefings and…so shamefully (sic) roll on the roads as if in a kind of collective hysteria…We were making a spectacle of ourselves, and in this hour of trial” (p. 240). He does not allude, though, to their desperation at watching a government seemingly paralysed by the crisis.

The following propositions emerge from our grounded study with regard to crisis coverage over the emerging information environment:
P1a: Higher the emotion and drama associated with a crisis by stakeholders, higher the intensity of crisis coverage over the emerging information environment.

P1b: Higher the emotion and drama associated with a crisis by stakeholders, higher the probability of (harmful or adverse) bias in crisis media coverage (seen from the decision maker’s perspective), in absence of credible information availability and resulting crisis uncertainty, over the emerging interactive information environment.

Facilitation of Formation of Stakeholder Networks

The emerging information environment, by virtue of lowering transaction costs and facilitating increased cooperative interactions by small groups of (even minority) stakeholders, enables formation of temporary “purpose-specific” networks during emerging crises. These temporary networks quickly learn and adapt to exploit the characteristics of the emerging interactive information environment and media to try to set the agenda and to press forth their demands on the decision makers. Radical, photogenic and vocal minority and stakeholder groups, realising the power of the electronic media, seek to reach out to wider audience through the emerging media, in an emotive and dramatic manner, so as to force policy makers to take their interests into consideration. This was observed across all the three crises. Senior government leaders accepted as much subsequently that the ongoing media coverage of the crises and the slant it provided to the public audience, did influence their decision making process—even to detriment of national interests, in specific instances.

While, in the case of Kargil intrusions, as the matter was closely intertwined with national prestige/security, a large number of support groups sprang up (Figures 1 and 3), but, in case of Kandahar hijacking, the shaky and confused government response to the crisis in the
critical opening phase led to growing discontent in the primary affected constituency (the relatives of the hostages), which gave rise to its own dynamics, affecting crisis decision making adversely (as seen in Figures 2 and 4). The causal linkages in the formation and rise of these networks influencing the decision making process is seen diagrammatically in Figures 3 and 4.

In the Sri Lankan Jaffna crisis, Tamilian supporters of the extremist group Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) grouped together to protest against the stated government intent to intervene proactively in the developing crisis, if necessary (Figure 5). This phenomenon of formation of pressure groups is similar to the formation of “transnational advocacy networks” studied by Keck and Sikkink (1998), though there are important differences in a few pivotal dimensions. These are short-term and loose; formed around perceived grievances, particularly in crisis situations; and bonded strongly on emotion and group-interests, rather than rational thinking-backed analysis alone. Pressure groups of this kind were operative in all these crises. Interestingly, they also displayed shrewd appreciation of the power of the emerging electronic media and made judicious use of its leverage to press for their end-objectives.

Comments on whether the pressure on decision makers to accommodate demands of these stakeholders necessarily leads to an overall adverse effect on the decision making process will be reserved here. Suffice to say that that shall depend on the specific context and many associated factors, though the likelihood of certain biases creeping into the decision making process are positively increased. The more pertinent point is that this is likely to be an increasingly commonplace phenomenon in times ahead, as seen in the near replication of this strategy by the relatives of three Indian truck drivers, who were taken hostage in Iraq in
September 2004, so as to draw attention of the media and to pressure the Indian government to intervene on their behalf. That they quite succeeded in achieving their major goals reflects the power of these purpose-specific networks amidst increased interactions over the emerging information environment.

Hence, the following propositions emerge with regard to formation of networks in this environment:

P2a: The emerging interactive information environment facilitates formation of temporary “purpose-specific” networks, particularly during a crisis.

P2b: These temporary “purpose-specific” networks (in turn) leverage the characteristics of the emerging interactive information environment to pressure the decision makers to achieve their end-objectives, particularly during a crisis. Possible ways in which this occurs is through a combination of: bias in crisis coverage; influence on framing of crisis situation; and influence on the decision makers’ mindfulness in the crisis context.

“HEIGHTENED MINDFULNESS” IN DECISION MAKERS

The above two identified categories, with their associated implications and interrelated influences, as discussed above, are powerful influencers in the emerging interactive environment. A related fallout is that, in a significant departure from the past, they help create an environment that enables the loose ring of public stakeholders around the immediate affected participants and/or ‘primary victims’ in a crisis (Seeger et al., 2003), to act as public watchdogs and voice their collective concerns and responses in an empowered manner, in-as-much they have a stake in and consequently are effected by the goings-on, if not resolved soon satisfactorily. Decision

---

3 This refers to the kidnapping of three Indian truck drivers by militants in Iraq in September 2004, followed by demands for their ransom and the consequent pressure brought to bear on the Indian government by the relatives of the hostages (Krishnan, 2004).
makers, certainly the primary decision makers, on whom the onus of crisis resolution eventually lay, therefore, appeared to sense the changed environmental context and, in response, were observed to display a “heightened sense of mindfulness” during these occurrences in all three crises case studies. (The primary decision maker in all the above crises was the Indian P.M., being the elected and accountable head of the government.)

Based on our observations from crisis data analyses and identification of categories, “heightened mindfulness” phenomenon is defined here as the state of keen self- and environmental-awareness of the decision maker, brought about by increased stakeholder awareness and continuing interest, causing a sharper stakeholder-orientation, amongst other key orientations, as defined by Weick, Sutcliffe and Obstfeld (1999)^4, with an eye on achieving efficacious crisis resolution, as per demands of the situation. An obvious question is: How is this different from mindfulness, defined in literature (based primarily on Weick, Sutcliffe and Obstfeld, 1999), so far? To answer this question, we need to briefly explore and draw from the long-standing Normal Accident Theory (NAT) and High Reliability Theory (HRT) debate (Perrow, 1984, 1994; Rijpma, 1997, 2003; Rochlin et al. 1987; Sagan, 1993; Shrivastava et al., 2009; Weick et al., 1999). The context of our research being crisis management, it quite naturally aligns with the above debate: Can leaders and organizations prevent accidents or are these simply inevitable in complexly interactive and tightly coupled systems? While NAT focuses more on the technical aspects of systems (complexly interactive and tightly coupled), HRT has now moved

---

^4 Weick, Sutcliffe and Obstfeld (1999) proposed that “collective mindfulness”, if carefully and richly configured, can help HROs cope with risk and accident, by increasing “the comprehension of complexity and loosening tight coupling”. Five cognitive processes together contribute to the creation and maintenance of collective mindfulness: preoccupation with failure (maximising opportunities for learning to avoid failure), reluctance to simplify interpretations (cultivating requisite variety and multiple perspectives), sensitivity to operations (seeing the big picture of operation and preparing forwards), commitment to resilience (ability to bounce back from errors and cope with unexpected events via improvisation), and underspecification of structures (organized anarchy via fluid decision-making). These processes “create a rich awareness of discriminatory detail and facilitate the discovery and correction of errors capable of escalation into catastrophe” (Weick et al., 1999, p. 81).
away from “a lack of variance in performance” to “to stable processes of cognition that must
make sense of and reconcile the varying processes of production” (Shrivastava et al., 2009).
Weick et al. (1999) label these cognitive processes as mindfulness, with their “joint capability to
induce a rich awareness of discriminatory detail and a capacity for action”. Herein, we find that
mindfulness, as defined, is specific to high reliability organizations, with a focus on techno-
operational management. Crises, especially, of the kinds that national governments are faced
with, have much wider implications and encompass socio-political-economic and technological
dimensions. In these situations, the primary and secondary stakeholders and the public become
important participants and need to be incorporated for any crisis resolution and management
efforts. In this sense, government decision makers in a crisis need to display additional
sensitivities, over and above, mindfulness, as defined by Weick et al. (1999). Our research into
these crises was able to study the interactive influence on the decision makers with regard to
these additional dimensions and their influence on crisis resolution efforts.

We term this “heightened sense of mindfulness” in decision makers that signifies an
accentuated sense of accountability towards their stakeholders, amongst other important
environmental sensitivities—this, in turn, appears to lead to greater environmental sensitivity, as
defined in literature. It is a more nuanced and sensitive form of “mindfulness” (Fiol and
O’Connor, 2003; Langer, 1989; Weick, Sutcliffe and Obstfeld, 1999) apparent in the decision
makers, brought about by prevalent transparency, reach and involvement of the constituencies
they are accountable to, that places all their actions under constant scrutiny. It goes beyond mere
“technical” mindfulness alone, as appears used in current management literature, especially, that
relating to HRT, to incorporate a sense of accountability (including, in some sense, moral) to
stakeholders and a primary responsibility to achieve a satisfactory outcome to the developing
crisis, safeguarding key stakeholder interests. (We revisit this concept later again, where it is represented more graphically, bringing out the subtle differences against our existing understanding of mindfulness, when we introduce an overarching conceptual framework that puts the whole phenomenon into a comprehensible snapshot perspective, i.e., discussion along with Figure 8 following.) This heightens the sense of stakeholder accountability and tends to place a seemingly moral obligation upon the decision makers to resolve the emerging crisis in the best immediate and also longer term interests of all sections of stakeholders. While this may sound somewhat idealistic in some sense, the collective stakeholder expectations evidenced through, as well as, magnified and heightened by ongoing media interactions, are able to create an environment where the primary decision makers come to be held accountable against these benchmarks, even as the crisis is developing and is yet to be fully comprehended, in some instances. This is reflected in the evidence that these decision makers appear concerned about how the primary (or close) stakeholder environment responds to what it sees or perceives them to be doing in the context of an unfolding, particularly crisis, situation. Accentuating circumstances during such crises also help us in identifying the related antecedents and the consequents more clearly; hence, these tendencies are highlighted more starkly during critical crises, even as things may seem to be spinning out of control.

We now focus on defining this emerging characteristic in further detail and identifying its relatedness to decision making, crisis management and good governance. A critical point is to be noted here: the emerging interactive information environment creates conditions that influence, facilitate and indeed call out for “heightened mindfulness” from the decision makers, but this, in itself, is no assurance that all decision makers will respond appropriately. Those decision makers, who do not, are likely to find themselves out of tune with the stakeholder expectations and
consequently implement decision processes that are more likely considered suboptimal in the end analysis.

Previous researchers have spoken of mindfulness and its importance in their work. Langer (1989) introduced the concept of mindfulness as a state of alertness and lively awareness that is manifested in active information processing. Mindful attention is the scarce resource that decision makers allocate in the information rich environment to make information meaningful (Fiol and O’Connor, 2003). Those who manifest mindfulness “engage in thought patterns that allow them to make a large number of currently relevant, more precise distinctions” (Fiol and O’Connor, 2003). Since it enables “adaptive responsiveness to shifts in their environment,” such decision makers are better prepared to “greet the unknown” (Weick, Sutcliffe and Obstfeld, 1999). Weick et al. (1999: 82) find that high reliability organizations (HROs) “embody processes of mindfulness that suppress tendencies towards inertia,” enabling them to operate safely in complex environments. They also propose a mindful infrastructure for high reliability (Weick et al., 1999: 89), showing processes, which lead to mindfulness, which further leads to high reliability. Describing authentic leaders, Goffee and Jones (2005) remark: “Highly attuned to their environment, they rely on an intuition born of formative, sometimes harsh experiences to understand the expectations and concerns of the people they seek to influence.”

Decision makers, particularly political leaders and heads of state, are attuned to the responses and moods of their constituencies, on which their political futures are dependent. Good leaders display the ability to remain “in-touch” with their constituencies. The emerging interactive information environment, which facilitates speedy and instantaneous availability of information to stakeholders, cutting across any artificial boundaries, thus places a burden on these decision makers, that was not considered as this relevant in the past, when access to
information could be strategically controlled at source or even during its passage through the media and information channels. This is an important psycho-socio-cognitive influence of the emerging interactive information environment, when viewed in this holistic sense.

We found evidence for presence of this sense of mindfulness, whether heightened and consequently more effective or inadequate and ineffective, in all these three crises case studies, to different degrees. Organisations and decision makers became aware of the pressure of the stakeholders with the onset of the crisis because the emerging ICT environment and media placed them on a visible pedestal, with the public’s and other stakeholders’ interest mounting to know how they intended to resolve the crisis. Decision makers and organisations, who displayed appropriately balanced “heightened mindfulness”, were able to read the environmental concerns, sentiments and feedback correctly, and took timely action to start and implement a crisis-resolution process, which adequately reflected and addressed critical concerns of the stakeholders, while decision makers and organisations, who displayed lower levels of this mindfulness, on the other hand, were often not in sync with critical stakeholder concerns, sentiments and environmental feedback. The latter read the incoming information and feedback incorrectly, if at all, appeared rigid and tended to exhibit biases in their interpretation of the crisis, which resulted in qualitatively deficient decision making processes as a result, often not addressing both the crisis and their stakeholders’ concerns appropriately.

Based on our grounded research of the crises, we argue that heightened mindfulness in organisations and primary decision makers helps them to recover quickly and more adequately from the crisis’ setbacks, because it enables them to get a better sense of the turbulent

---

5 Compare the situation during the Kandahar hijack crisis (1999), as described in Xyz (2005), with, say, the Cuban missile crisis, where President Kennedy had the luxury of undisturbed deliberations with his core team over nearly six days even when faced with a serious crisis, while the news was kept from the general public, aided by subtle hints dropped to news editors who smelt something amiss (Allison, 1971; “Altered statesman: John F. Kennedy,” Discovery Channel, October 2004).
environmental realities and stakeholder concerns and expectations (Tables 2 and 3), leading to its final resolution. By staying closely in touch with the shifts in the moods, influences and the prevailing societal norms and stakeholder expectations, they are also able to calibrate their response in a manner more attuned to achieving a satisfactory crisis resolution. Decision makers who employ/exhibit lower levels of this mindfulness find themselves out of tune with the environmental realities and stakeholder expectations. Thus, their response is often wide off the mark, and there is a high probability of aggravation of the crisis, instead.

Let’s first take, specifically, the Kargil intrusions crisis. Leaving aside the initial culpability for lax vigilance, the government, on the whole, and the army displayed high mindfulness during the crisis, leading to generation of widespread stakeholder support and consensus, that culminated in satisfactory crisis resolution (Tables 2-3 and Figures 1 and 3). We find that once an organisation’s decision makers become aware of the importance of this facet of accountability in corporate governance and adopt it visibly as an organizational driver, both internally and externally, champions within the organisation too find it easier to push forward and put in place norms for organisation-wide conduct, ethics and values; thus, bringing about organizational cultural adjustment and realignment. Crisis, in this respect, helps organisations carry out radical changes to further their survival and longevity in turbulent environments.

On the other hand, the Kandahar hijacking crisis comes across as an apt example of lack, or clearly lower levels, of “heightened mindfulness” in the decision makers. The government decision makers and the associated bureaucracy were so far removed from the needs and apprehensions of the “secondary crisis victims” (Seeger et al., 2003), the media and the other stakeholders, including their general public, that they took an inordinately long time to even begin to keep them posted with basic information and updates on progress of dialogue with the
hijackers and/or any contemplated action. This lack of timely assurances and concern had a deviation amplifying effect, as seen in Figures 2 and 4, aggravating the crisis situation greatly.

It is also interesting to note that this “heightened mindfulness” in the decision makers as an antecedent sets into motion various self-correcting actions within an organisation, at all levels, besides encouraging positive (including, critical) feedback from employees/stakeholders about situations that could possibly develop, thus helping pre-empt a crisis from taking a turn for the worse. Weick et al. (1999) analyse how mindfulness, “with its rich awareness of discriminatory detail, enables people to manage juxtapositions of events they have never seen before” in high reliability organisations (HROs) (pp. 117). Increasingly, non-HROs face similar environmental complexities as well. As Weick et al. (1999: 104) put it, “Many organizational settings contain a million accidents waiting to happen, but most organizations don’t see things that way.” Therefore, the need for organisations, especially, in the public domain, to ensure that, as they come to exhibit the “tightly-coupled, interactively complex profile of many HROs” in the currently emerging interactive information environment, they are also accompanied by an increased capacity for heightened mindfulness in their top decision makers, as well as the wider circle of front-line officials.

There are a few points of additional detail that need to be brought up at this stage. The first pertains to whether this would apply only to decision makers who owe their position and, hence, their allegiance to public stakeholders. While this happens to be true in these three cases, there is some evidence that even military dictators and heads of governments from single party systems too come under the same pressures as the information revolution spreads. To some extent, however, the context of an unfolding crisis would be an important parameter. Some of

---

6 This specific comment, incidentally, was written much before the Arab Spring revolutions that sprung up from the year 2011 onwards. In the sense, the generalization is somewhat prescient, though that was only to be expected in these emerging times.
these aspects do need further deliberation in future research and may prudently be taken as boundary conditions for our current research findings. Another issue pertains to whether or not “heightened mindfulness” plays a part in the crisis recognition process itself. It surely does, and past research supports this (Seeger et al., 2003; Weick, 1979). Decision makers may continue to “deny” presence of a crisis for much longer than is justified by available evidence if they exhibit lower or degraded levels of heightened mindfulness. The cognitive biases research literature says much the same. Yet another aspect is the natural expectation that organisations with a robust value system should normally exhibit higher levels of this mindfulness, as defined. A reasonable hypothesis would be: Generally, yes, but it is yet possible that minor or subtle slippages may occur inadvertently, bringing to fore lower mindfulness in stray instances, or for certain periods of time. Then again, an organisation with a robust value system could reasonably be expected to move in quickly to plug this gap, e.g., as seen in case of the Indian army in the Kargil crisis. This takes us to the central propositions of this research:

P3a. The facilitation of increased stakeholder interactions by the emerging ICT environment and the consequent increased crisis coverage, likelihood of harmful or adverse bias in crisis coverage in absence of credible information and proactive actions by the decision makers, and the easy formation of temporary “purpose-specific” networks during an emerging crisis, combine together to create conditions for occurrence of “heightened mindfulness” in the primary decision makers and/or concerned organisations during crisis development.

P3b. The occurrence and presence of “heightened mindfulness” in the decision makers facilitates crisis mitigation and/or its resolution, by sensitizing decision makers and providing better quality inputs to their decision making process.
CONSEQUENTS OF HEIGHTENED MINDFULNESS

The occurrence of heightened mindfulness in decision makers was observed to bring about many interrelated significant changes in the manner these decision makers managed and responded to the ongoing crises and the attitude they displayed towards their stakeholders. This complex interrelatedness is not easy to capture and convincingly argue for. However, causal associations between important categories and subcategories that emerged during the grounded research enable us to present some significant associations that appeared more starkly in the observed context. Four important consequences of heightened mindfulness in decision makers that were identified from these crises are as listed and discussed below:

(a) Greater ‘Responsiveness and Transparency’ towards the stakeholders during crisis resolution;
(b) Increased adoption of ‘Flexible and Consensual Approaches’ in decision making during crisis resolution;
(c) Increased ‘Self-esteem’ exhibited by decision makers, towards seeking a meaningful crisis resolution from the stakeholders’ perspective; and,
(d) Lowering of ‘Extraneous Influences on Framing of the Crisis Situation’ in and by decision makers.
The above consequents are important effects of heightened mindfulness in decision makers and helped them to exhibit greater awareness of the stakeholder environment and, in turn, be more responsive to its needs. The causal influence of these consequents is discussed next, based on observations from these crises.

**Responsiveness and Transparency**

In the initial stages of both Kargil intrusions and Kandahar hijacking crises, when the government decision makers delayed acknowledging the magnitude and severity of the crises and from keeping the stakeholders informed of the steps being taken to defuse the crises, there was sharp reaction and criticism of government’s crisis management by relevant stakeholders. In the emerging interactive information environment, it is becoming increasingly difficult for any government to maintain control over information relating to a crisis occurring in the public domain for long, even in respect of what were earlier considered as remote, inaccessible areas. As the government, in both these crises, changed its strategic tack subsequently and also took its case to the people, through the media and increased information dissemination, positive support slowly emerged for the government in seeking a resolution to the ongoing crises. There is significant evidence in literature that nationalistic emotive appeals result in willing public support and visible readiness to rally around their respective governments when faced with an external crisis (borne out here by evidence from Kargil intrusions, as also from the more effective government information sharing campaign in the later stages of the Kandahar hijacking crisis).

In the Kargil crisis, the government’s approach with regard to media interaction and information sharing swung from one extreme of initially being minimal and partly misleading to
the other, more normative one, of being much higher, more honest and transparent; moving somewhat back and forth thereafter, as it went into the crisis resolution mode. This apparently was primarily shaped by the government’s guiding norms of “media management” and the accompanying tendency to view the media as a “force multiplier,” balanced alternatively by pressures arising due stakeholder accountability (for example, see: The KRC Report [2000; 214]; Rai [2001: 36]; Tellis et al. [2001: 54-56]; Manchanda [2001]).

In the Kandahar crisis, the government machinery failed to take due cognisance of the concerns of the most affected lot, i.e., the hostages’ relatives or the “secondary victims”. This had the snowballing effect of highlighting the callousness of the government, picking up momentum as the story was fed along by the media and ongoing interactions over the emerging ICT environment. This inspired the relatives to form temporary “purpose-specific” networks, coming together to jointly strive to achieve their end-objectives by pressuring the government, as seen earlier.

In the Sri Lankan Jaffna crisis, the Indian government, sensing the somewhat sharp reaction to its test balloons employed to gauge public support for its more proactive intervention intent in the crisis, later changed its mind and decided to adopt a more passive, neutral approach to the developing crisis. This action of the government decision makers shows the clearly more guarded approach adopted by it towards the general media and stakeholders, as a consequence of its earlier experience in the foregoing crises. In this case, the government decision makers decided to adopt a cautious approach and avoided taking any chances of aggravating the situation. In this sense, there was an element of pre-emption here, which nevertheless reinforces the need to be more responsive and transparent to their stakeholders’ concerns.
The causal association between the level and quality of government’s interactions with the crisis victims, the relevant stakeholders and the media, typified by levels of responsiveness and transparency of the process, and their effects on the quality of crisis coverage, consequently creating an environment more conducive to better quality decision making processes\textsuperscript{7}, were both found to be well supported.

P4a: Higher the level of heightened mindfulness exhibited by the decision makers during a crisis in the emerging ICT environment, higher the probability of greater responsiveness and transparency by the decision makers during the crisis decision making process.

P4b: Higher the responsiveness and transparency by the decision makers during the crisis decision making process, lower the probability of (harmful or adverse) bias in the media crisis coverage in the emerging ICT environment.

P4c: Higher the responsiveness and transparency by the decision makers during the crisis decision making process, lower the extraneous environmental pressures affecting them, hence, higher the quality of the crisis decision making process.

**Shifts in the Decision Making Process**

- **Flexibility in the decision making process.** The core decision making group, which remained essentially the same in these three crises, led by the P.M., was constantly being exposed to different view-points and perspectives, optimal alternatives and pressure groups of varying shades across the spectrum during the crises. Though there is some evidence of the P.M. being partially swayed by some of these at different points in time, by and large, he appeared to

\textsuperscript{7} Quality of decision making process emerged as a significant category during the grounded analysis of crisis data, in as much, it emerged as an important key-actor and stakeholder concern who seemed to use it more in an intuitive and holistic sense and from their respective perspectives, in ‘comparison’ with what should have been, or their sense of the normative. We define and set some more specific parameters, derived from past research, to it as applied here, in the next section.
follow his gut feel and instincts, seemingly heightened by the state of mindfulness, and listened only to advice that he judged as being most appropriate under the emerging circumstances. For example, this is clearly reflected in the series of decisions taken during the Kargil intrusions, specifically: the decision not to violate the Line of Control (LoC), even in face of difficulties and mounting casualties in the clearing operations; pursuing diplomatic channels vigorously to bring the crisis to a speedier resolution, by bringing international pressure to bear on Pakistan (not forgetting, continuing the so-termed track II “unofficial” diplomacy with Pakistan at the same time); not allowing the conflict to escalate to other areas despite provocation from both sides of the border; making offer of “safe passage” to the intruders to bring the crisis to an end; and, finally, agreeing to the US offer (to permit safe withdrawal of the intruders from their positions) and the joint Washington declaration of July 4.

The P.M. depended on a small “in-group” through these crises. Though other representatives and experts were called in to give their advice, as required, any decision was taken only after the feasible options and their consequences had been comprehensively debated within this group. The P.M. appeared to be guided by certain governing parameters during each of the crisis decision making process, which reflected the core group’s understanding of the crisis and the possible ramifications of various end-outcomes. These governing parameters are listed below:

Kargil

(a) Restoration of status quo ante with regard to the LoC; no loss of territory acceptable.

(b) No violation of the LoC by own forces.

(c) No escalation of the conflict, however strong the temptation/compulsion.

8 Line of Control was the agreed upon, actual-existing, border positions held by the opposing forces in the disputed State of Kashmir between India and Pakistan, following the 1971 Indo-Pak war.
(d) Strict observance of “no first use” with regard to nuclear capability.

(e) Exploring a speedy end to the conflict/crisis, by keeping all options open for
   consideration, even in face of strong internal opposition from some quarters.

Kandahar

(a) Ensuring safety of hostages hijacked on board IC-814.

(b) An honourable way out of the crisis, without seemingly compromising national
    interests.

By keeping some latitude in their options within these parameters, the decision makers
exhibited greater flexibility in their approach to crisis resolution. There were significant
pressures on the P.M., both from the domestic stakeholder environment and his own party’s
political doctrine and lineage, which he was required to either manage or ignore. By retaining a
flexible approach, the P.M. managed to avoid escalation of the conflict to other areas and from
spiralling uncontrollably into a conventional or, worse, a nuclear war during the Kargil crisis.
This would have neutered the gains made in the domain of international diplomacy, which, as per
a number of accounts, was very helpful in bringing the conflict to a speedier end. In fact, the
anticipated advantages of opening another front during the crisis remain suspect and the strategy
controvertible, as Singh (1999: 228) opined: “…given the availability of nuclear weapons with
both sides, this would have had to remain limited and close to the border and hence may not have
achieved the desired effect.”

Similarly, after the initial confusion and mistakes made in the Kandahar crisis, that
effectively closed the possible “window of opportunity” there, the decision making group tried to
project a semblance of having exhausted all feasible practical options available to its decision
making process. It was important for the decision makers to exhibit adoption of a more flexible
decision making approach, in order to satisfy the aggrieved stakeholders, even though the
government’s hands were clearly tied by this stage and it had limited options for forcing the
crisis to a satisfactory resolution. In the Sri Lankan Jaffna crisis, the government’s cautious
approach to gauging public opinion before even considering taking a more proactive stance in
the developing crisis, that it seemingly wanted to, is itself an indicator of the more flexible
approach the government was considering already, so as to incorporate stakeholder opinions and
expectations more proactively. In the process, it did not take a proactive stance, eventually;
reflecting the influence of these opinions.

There appears greater likelihood for a more flexible decision making process during
crises in the emerging ICT environment due to the increased coverage by the emerging media
and the increased interactions between the stakeholders and the government decision makers, as
also from the numerous options thrown up during such a process by stakeholders, each coming
with their different perspective, which are likely to be given more serious consideration by
government decision makers.

Consensus seeking during the decision making process. The process of arriving at
“discovered goals” (Anderson, 1983), i.e., goals largely acceptable to the stakeholders, was noted
particularly during the first two crises, which played out fully from an operational perspective.
Though decision makers, in general, may look towards doing so, it appears here that uncertain
decision makers, in particular, appear to exhibit a greater tendency to work towards crafting a
broad consensus on essential goals to be met during crisis resolution, in order to generate wider
stakeholder support for their crisis decision making and management. A caveat is in order here:
this uncertainty would not necessarily be due to a lack of decisiveness, but more from the
inherent complexity of the situation. This tendency appears to come partly from their basic
instinct for “self-preservation”, if crisis management was to go awry for some reason.

There was evidence of emergence of a consensus on the broad objectives to be sought in
the two crises, as evidenced by repeated assertions to the effect, in that, (1) in Kargil intrusions,
the intrusions must be unequivocally vacated and status quo ante restored along the LoC; and, (2)
in Kandahar hijacking, the lives of the hostages must be secured, without compromising the
interests of the nation. Such consensus generation on issues of a nation’s territorial integrity is to
be expected. The interactions over the emerging ICT environment put pressure on the decision
makers to the extent of eliciting assurances from them to the stakeholders and pursuing all
measures to restore the status quo, in keeping with national interests. The decision makers in this
process found the support or consensus they needed to get on with their essential task at hand,
which, in turn, emboldened them subsequently to ignore the demand of a large number of the
opposition parties to convene the Parliament to discuss the border issue (during Kargil crisis), in
order to deny accrual of political advantage from the developing situation to the opposition
parties. In this case, once a broad consensus was seemingly secured from the primary
constituencies, the decision makers brushed aside minor opposition or criticism by ignoring it
altogether or taking resort, yet again, to appeal to the stakeholders’ deeper nationalist instincts.
Similarly, in the Kandahar crisis, the decision makers went ahead with their plan to resolve the
crisis in accordance with the broad consensually-arrived-at-goals, without finally taking the
opposition into close confidence as far as the specifics of the resolution efforts went, for much
the same reasons.

The relationship between greater crisis related interaction over the emerging ICT
environment and a more consensual approach towards crisis decision making is thus found to be
well supported, in terms of the primary inclination amongst decision makers to reach for consensually “discovered goals,” possibly resulting from a basic instinct for self-preservation, as well. A slight distinction needs to be made here, though, in the kind of consensus obtained by decision makers in different circumstances, as we see above. A decision maker with high self esteem and displaying heightened mindfulness would be in a better position to acquire, in military strategy terminology, a proactive consensus with operational flexibility (e.g., Kargil crisis), while a decision maker with lower self esteem and displaying lower levels of heightened mindfulness would be forced into a non-functional consensus under duress (e.g., Kandahar crisis).

**Groupthink in decision making.** It also does strongly appear to be the case that greater media vigilance, an increased level of interactions with the stakeholders and the observed flexibility as exhibited by the decision maker’s in crisis resolution, all of these come together to reduce the possibility of occurrence of the “groupthink” phenomenon (Janis, 1972, 1983). This is also because the decision makers would not like to risk being isolated any further than necessary, and thus being held accountable, for taking a decision that did not generate broad acceptance, during its interactions over the emerging ICT environment ab initio. Linstone (1999) finds evidence of “sanitized groupthink” in many top-level corporate and governmental decision making settings, “molded by loyal subordinates anxious to support and enhance their superior’s P (personal) perspective” (p. 46). Our grounded research showed conclusively that the probability of such instances occurring in an isolated, more inward-oriented environment come down sharply because of the increased interactions facilitated by the emerging ICT environment. However, this may not apply in cases where the decision makers exhibit a lack of this heightened mindfulness, quite naturally.
P5a: Higher the level of heightened mindfulness exhibited by the decision makers during a crisis in the emerging ICT environment, higher the probability of adoption of more flexible and consensual problem solving approaches by the decision maker.

P5b: Higher the probability of adoption of more flexible and consensual problem solving approaches by the decision makers during a crisis, lower the probability of groupthink like tendencies in crisis decision making.

P5c: Higher the probability of adoption of more flexible and consensual problem solving approaches by the decision makers during a crisis and lower the probability for groupthink like tendencies in decision making, higher the quality of the crisis decision making process.

**Self-esteem of the Decision Makers**

Self-esteem of the decision makers relates to the level of self-confidence and intrinsic motivations of the decision makers while going about their primary task of satisfactory crisis resolution during a crisis. Psychologists call this “self-efficacy” or “internal control” (Sashkin, 2004: 185). A conscientious and internally-motivated decision maker is expected to exhibit higher levels of self esteem as compared to one with conflicting or clashing selfish interests and motivations (Judge & Bono, 2001; Judge et al. 2002; Robins et al., 2001)). Greater interactions over the emerging ICT environment during a crisis put the spotlight directly on the top government decision makers, bringing all actions of the decision makers under close scrutiny because, during a crisis, “a leader often becomes the organization’s public face, playing a critical role by providing information and explaining the crisis to stakeholders and the larger public” (Seeger et al., 2003: 238). A decision maker, therefore, feels increased stakeholder pressure to secure a satisfactory solution to the crisis, resulting from the heightened mindfulness that occurs.
Over and above this, there also appears to be an increased internal motivation in the decision makers to secure a solution to the crisis, which can be upheld and justified to the primary constituencies, as being the best under the given circumstances. The perspective of “being accountable to history and to the future generations” also shows up.⁹

The self esteem of decision maker comes across to stakeholders in many small ways. One of the ways in which the decision maker’s self esteem may come to be judged by stakeholders is through the quality of their immediate response to the crisis. Across these crisis cases, it was apparent that the immediate response and attitude of the decision makers to a developing crisis was an important determinant of how the public stakeholders came to perceive and repose their confidence in their ability to resolve the crisis: “Did they have a handle on the crisis, or were they merely groping in the dark?” While the decision makers started with knowing very little in all the three crises, as they struggled to make sense of the goings-on, their subsequent actions guided much of the public and media response. This, in turn, had implications about shaping the public’s subsequent actions, in terms of, either supporting the decision makers through the crisis or taking a more confrontationist stand, demanding greater accountability. During the Kandahar crisis, there was high level of uncertainty, hesitation and conflict in the government’s response all through the course of the crisis, which led to increasing deterioration of people’s confidence in the ability of the government to resolve the crisis satisfactorily. During Kargil, in contrast, despite the fact that the level of surprise displayed and initial ill-preparedness of the military for the crisis was equally high, as compared to the Kandahar crisis, the institutional response, and by extension, the perceived government’s conduct, at all subsequent stages of crisis was far more confident and firm, comparatively. Since the news of the government’s performance (or non-

⁹ Similar feelings were expressed by both the opposing protagonists in the Cuban missile crisis, Kennedy and Krushchev (Allison, 1971: 211-214).
performance) and the actions of the pressure groups/networks get magnified when broadcast endlessly over the emerging media and the interactive information environment, it begins to acquire momentum and life of its own and tends to influence the government’s functioning in turn, in many ways, particularly: lobbying by some of its own leaders who may begin to feel the public pressure; conflicting statements and views expressed by different ministers to the media and public, leading to its own aggravating dynamics; increasing concerns of perceived accountability by the government towards its domestic constituency’s apprehensions; and the pressing need felt by the government to carry out quick damage control, in light of the extensive media coverage and public pressure.

Consider what Weick (1979) says about what is seen and perceived by stakeholders of organisational decision makers during a crisis: since organisations are accountable to their stockholders, and increasingly stakeholders, they “must continually give the impression that everything is going fine and that the organization knows what it’s doing. These constituencies impose pressures on organizations to credit and to give evidence that their past definitions are accurate, that they do know what is up, and that they do know what it takes to cope with it. Doubts, hesitance, or reevaluation of past enactments are treated by outsiders as evidence that a organization is unsure of itself rather than as evidence that it is reflecting, preserving adaptability, or preparing for an even more diverse set of circumstances” (pp. 225-6).

In the Kargil intrusions and the Sri Lankan Jaffna crises, the primary decision maker (the Indian P.M.) exhibited high levels of self-esteem, as he appeared confident all through on what needed to be done under the given circumstances, which eventually helped generate positive support for the decision making process. On the other hand, low self-esteem in the Kandahar hijacking crisis generally led to a negative influence on the decision making process (see Table
3). The exasperation in the normally affable P.M. during the Kandahar crisis could not be missed. Interestingly, increased interactions over the emerging ICT environment and resulting heightened mindfulness did tend to influence the conscientious lot of decision makers into displaying greater self esteem and accountability towards stakeholders, which came through in their public postures and exhibited decision making.

P6a: Higher the level of heightened mindfulness exhibited by the decision makers during a crisis in the emerging ICT environment, higher the exhibited self esteem of the decision makers. Quite likely that this is a two-way association, with high self-esteem reflecting in higher heightened mindfulness and heightened mindfulness leading to higher self-esteem.

P6b: Higher the exhibited self-esteem of the decision makers during a crisis, higher the quality of the decision making process.

**Influence on Framing of the Crisis Situation by the Decision Makers**

The complex dynamic interactions of images, emotions and social-interpretation of the crisis’ fuzzy understanding set the ground for “framing of the crisis situation” by the decision makers. Framing of the crisis by decision makers is an important aspect which needs to be studied in greater detail, than is known or understood today (Levy, 1994). The importance of framing in how crises come to be eventually handled by decision makers becomes clear from these case studies, as has also been observed in earlier research (Farnham, 1994; Vertzberger, 1998). An important finding from this research is the causal process of influence of the emerging interactive information environment on the framing of the crisis by the decision maker. The interactive environment provides important inputs influencing the decision maker, in that, these inputs may override the initial (instinctive) intrinsic framing of the crisis by the decision maker.
and/or even prevail against those experts’ advice, whom the decision maker would normally value highly. The research highlighted the importance of perceptions of the domestic stakeholder constituency of the decision makers in influencing this framing process. This is not surprising, considering that accountability and need to retain the support of their stakeholder constituencies is important for a political decision maker, whose very survival in office depends on their support. So, initial response to a crisis, symbolic appearances, agenda-setting and ability to arouse confidence in one’s resolve and capabilities become important in this respect. In an extreme contingency, during the Kandahar hijacking, the Indian government was quite literally pushed into giving in to the hijackers’ demands to seek the release of the hostages due to the extreme pressures on it over the interactive environment and directly from the aggrieved stakeholders.

With respect to Kahneman and Tversky’s (1979, 1984) (also Tversky and Kahneman, 1986) work on “Prospect theory” and risk behaviour, certain interesting aspects emerge from these crises. In both Kargil intrusions and Kandahar hijacking crises, for example, the decision maker began in the domain of losses. However, self esteem and intrinsic motivation of the decision maker played an instrumental role in the subsequently “exhibited risk behaviour.” In Kargil intrusions, the principal decision maker overcame tremendous pressure from advisors and from influential sections of stakeholders, seeking to expand the area of conflict, even as it was projected as a crucial necessity to achieve speedy resolution of the crisis. In Kandahar hijacking, the decision maker did not exhibit risky behaviour because of the overwhelming primary need to secure the lives of the hostages, first. In the Sri Lankan Jaffna crisis, as well, the decision maker opted for the safer decision choice, so as to pre-empt worsening agitations by the Tamilian (and, likely pro-LTTE) support groups of various hues. Possibly, future research can explore deeper
into exhibited risk behaviour patterns of decision makers and exceptions thereto in a greater variety of crises situations.

The framing of the situation by decision makers is influenced by the level and quality of interactions over the emerging information environment, depending upon the self esteem of the decision maker. It was seen that uncertain decision makers exhibiting low self-esteem, who are yet trying to make sense of the novel situation themselves, are forced on the back-foot as a result of the outpouring of emotions and heightened interest on account of wide publicity to the grievances of the affected, i.e., crisis’ primary and/or secondary victims.

In these three crises that were studied, due to their sequential occurrence, one after the other, as would be expected, we noted evidence of decision makers being influenced by their personal and institutional experience, in terms of learning from the earlier crises. This was also an important influencing factor in the framing of the subsequent crisis situations by the decision makers. As an example, the experience of Kargil intrusions, where the country’s top political leadership found that it was able to array wide international diplomatic support for its claims, which helped to defuse the crisis and help seek crisis resolution on its own terms (Singh, 2006), also carried over to the Kandahar hijacking crisis. But there, despite appeals to international diplomatic community, the decision makers did not find ready concrete support forthcoming and they found themselves resolving the Kandahar crisis very much on their own. The decision makers were not able to really appreciate the differences in the two contexts and seemed to be influenced by their biases resulting from their interpretations of learning from the earlier experience. As a result, in the Sri Lankan Jaffna crisis, the Indian government tended to play it safe and did not seek to go out on the limb in support of the Sri Lankan government which clearly had a major crisis on its hands and had of its own accord sought assurances from India,
which role the international community too was, by and large, supportive of India coming forth with. In view of the demonstrations and disruptions by minority groups aligned to the LTTE and ongoing media coverage, which reminded it of the earlier disastrous experience during Operation Pawan (i.e., the earlier, by-invitation peacekeeping operations in Sri Lanka) in 1987-90, the government preferred to sit out the crisis.

The distinction between what are genuine, altruistic-oriented, more widely held stakeholder expectations, as against sectional, manipulative, politically-motivated voicing of demands (masquerading sometimes as the voice of the majority and at others as the victims of a crisis), needs to be guarded against by decision makers. This facet emerged during the Sri Lankan Jaffna crisis when the demonstrations by pro-LTTE supporting groups, referred to above and in the crisis brief (see Appendix 1), caused the government to sit out from proceeding with what it considered to be the correct course under the circumstances. Generally, higher this influence resulting from biased coverage and/or sectional manipulations on the “framing of the decision situation” by the decision maker, more adverse the effect on the decision making process.\(^\text{10}\) A challenge for decision makers under the circumstances is being able to discriminate between the genuine concerns of sectional minorities and/or crisis victims vis-à-vis manipulative efforts, and balance the same against majority stakeholder interests, or a more suitable parameter. This is more likely to be facilitated by presence of heightened mindfulness; and not in absence of it. Extreme thresholds, however, as noted above in the case studies, temper exhibited risk behaviour of the decision maker. The following propositions can, therefore, be made:

\(^{10}\) There is need to qualify this observation, however. Above applies to the context wherein the decision makers are forced and subverted from taking of ‘hard’ decisions, which may quite be the need of the hour. In case of decision makers from more autocratic governance environments, who may be wanting to press ahead with unjustified and ‘wrong’ decisions, this may not hold true to that extent—e.g., the Nepal palace killings (2001), or the Russian submarine Kursk’s sinking (2000). This is discussed and qualified in Xyz (2005).
P7a: Higher the level of heightened mindfulness exhibited by the decision makers during a crisis in the emerging ICT environment, lower the influence of extraneous elements, i.e., those resulting from biased coverage and/or sectional manipulations, on framing of the crisis situation by the decision makers.

P7b: Higher the exhibited self-esteem of the decision makers during a crisis, lower the influence of extraneous elements, i.e., those resulting from biased coverage and/or sectional manipulations, on framing of the crisis situation by the decision makers.

P7c: Lower the influence of extraneous elements on framing of the crisis situation by the decision makers, higher the quality of the decision making process.

AN INTEGRATED FRAMEWORK OF HEIGHTENED MINDFULNESS

Identification of Core Category

During data sifting, organising and analysis in our study, we sensed that the causal linkages between the categories and subcategories seemed to gravitate towards the end-effects of these facets of the emerging phenomena, both directly and indirectly, on to the crisis decision making process. Most ongoing dialogue and interactions, crisis reporting and analysis too focused eventually on the end-outcomes, i.e., the expected normative quality of the decision making process and deviations there from. This, incidentally, is also a major underlying concern, so far as the government and stakeholders are concerned. In fact, during the initial model building stage, “effect on quality of decision making process,” as being positive or negative (George, 1980; Raiffa, 1968; Smart and Vertinsky, 1997), appeared to be a likely candidate for selection as core category at that stage, as the end-effects of a number of categories centred upon
this critical aspect of crisis decision making. This was categorised as being "positive" if it facilitated the decision making process to proceed in a normative manner, and "negative," if otherwise. George’s (1980) three process criteria were used to define the quality of the decision making process (as also used by Preston and Hart, 1999):

*Reality-testing:* Does all the information available in the policymaking system reach the key decision makers? Do decision makers consider multiple options at any stage in the decision process?

*Acceptability:* Are the relevant stakeholders represented in the decision making group? Does the decision making group display sensitivity to the ideas and concerns of outgroups and constituencies?

*Efficiency:* What costs does the decision making process entail for decision makers with respect to the amount of time, decision makers’ attention, or expenditure of organizational resources and political capital required to arrive at policy decisions?

However, upon further reflection and analysis of data/events, and taking into account the critical role of primary decision makers in the choices that were made towards crisis resolution, it was increasingly evident that the causal effects really emanated from and through them: most categories either ended at or emerged from the decision makers who were at the heart of crisis decision making. A number of these causal influences could be grouped under socio-cognitive-psychological influences on or attitudes and behaviours consequently displayed by the decision makers, which began to show up as an important facet at the very core of the phenomenon itself that was being played out before us. Viewed in this light, we termed this as “heightened mindfulness” in decision makers that came to the fore, or lacking thereof, for reasons explained
in an earlier section, to best describe it. We, finally, selected this as the core category, and as the principal foci in the emerging interactive environment. The end-effects of all these attitudinal shifts and changes were mediated through crisis decision makers, before they were reflected in the end-output, i.e., quality of the decision making process itself. This also helped to resolve the confusion that normally arises between more visible end-outcomes and the deeper causal influences. So, “heightened mindfulness” in the crisis decision makers was chosen as the primary core category and “quality of the decision making process” as the subsidiary core.

We applied the above findings to the process-outcome relationships in both the Kargil and Kandahar crises, in terms of the Anderson’s (1983: 215-216) four-valued evaluation function to classify decision making alternatives, as can be seen in Figures 6 and 7 respectively. In the Kargil crisis, in face of crisis emergence at the beginning, government’s decision making performance was ‘poor’, with many questions left unanswered. However, it then proceeded to adopt a slightly more proactive stance and graduated to exhibiting a mediocre ‘bland’ performance, to finally culminate in a climax of ‘good performance, which also saw it achieve reasonable crisis resolution. Note also the failed attempt (marked by the broken arrow) by the radical elements to push the government into adopting a more offensive approach in seeking crisis resolution, besides stoking up other unrelated issues at the moment. In the Kandahar crisis, the crisis decision making process moved from the initial ‘poor’ quadrant to ‘bland’, of the possible alternatives. We have earlier seen the reasons behind this. Available options were not pursued earnestly enough because government decision makers seemed to have been nearly paralysed by the impact of the crisis, as well as influenced by the fast unfolding chain of events and increasing public pressure to tilt towards the compromise option, to basically “retrieve the situation” from causing any further harm to their standing. The manner in which the decisions
came to be taken and, more importantly, the public perception about them, would necessarily make all the difference in how the government’s response came to be judged in the final analysis.

Insert Figures 6 to 7 about here

Integration into Conceptual Frameworks

From the above analysis, it is now possible to propose two frameworks of these environmental influences on the decision making process, viewed at two different levels. First, we introduce an overall conceptual framework (Figure 8), which shows the macro-level influence of the emerging interactive information environment on crisis decision making. This macro-level framework is an important contribution in that it shows how the stakeholders are tied in closely to the government decision making process and influence it, mediated by the emerging interactive information environment. Most research has thus far modelled organizational decision making as a dynamic combination of different models, which are concurrently at work (Allison, 1971; Pfeffer and Salancik, 1974); nevertheless, these different models themselves, beginning with Allison’s (1971) research into the Cuban missile crisis, themselves remained quite distinct within the organisational context and unaffected by the external environment, despite hints of overlap with the external environment by researchers (Argyris, 1976; Daft and Weick, 1984). However, this research finds that in the currently changing context, these models are, quite likely, themselves being: (1) influenced overtly by the external interactive-environment, and, that, (2) there is a closer tie-in of relevant external stakeholders with the government/organisational decision making process itself, an aspect that the earlier models tended to somewhat ignore, or not quite adequately highlight.
Reverting to the point just made about the influences of the external interactive information environment on, say, the three models described by Allison (1971), some support was found for the following:

- As a rational actor: positively.
- As an output of organizational processes: negatively.
- As a political resultant: negatively.

These processes are, however, rather complex and it is difficult to comment any more on the inter-se relevance of the different models in the emerging context, other than in only very general terms; however, this aspect needs to be more closely observed and explored further in future research.

Next, is the integrated microlevel framework of heightened mindfulness in decision makers (Figure 9). This microlevel framework of emergence of heightened mindfulness and its end-effects is an important contribution of this research in that it shows how the emerging interactive information environment creates conditions for the rise of heightened mindfulness in crisis decision makers and facilitates a medium whereby the stakeholders become ever more closely tied in to the government decision making process and can thus exercise both direct and more subtle influences on it. This framework displays all the causal relationships discovered during the process of data research and analysis, that are discussed earlier on in this paper.

At this point, we can more clearly visualize the subtle difference between mindfulness in decision makers, as hither-to-fore defined, and heightened mindfulness exhibited by decision makers in the emerging context, from the above frameworks. Presence of mindfulness in decision makers enables them to make useful decisions of good quality were they to simply
operate in the context of the organizational decision making black box (Figure 8). In the changed interactive context, described above, decision makers need to display heightened mindfulness to make contextually more relevant and appropriate decisions during crises; this includes the organizational decision making black-box too (as shown by the dashed circle in Figure 8). The above graphical description spells out the context, reach and complexity associated with crisis decision making in the emerging interactive information environment.

**IMPLICATIONS FOR PUBLIC POLICY**

The research explores an interesting new phenomenon resulting from the interactive nature of the emerging interactive information environment that helps us to understand the potential and limitations of the emerging ICTs in a more holistic sense, particularly, in their mediatory role between stakeholders and publicly accountable decision makers. Though, it sounds somewhat idealistic, occurrence of “heightened mindfulness” in decision makers comes with increased stakeholder pressure on them to measure up to public stakeholders’ expectations. We saw that this can either be a redeeming influence or a paralysing one, depending upon the specific circumstances and related factors as they unfold. However, the meaningful point that emerges from the above discussion is the issue of stakeholder accountability, tempered by an ongoing interactive dialogue to keep them better informed, by way of sharing of information and making them more active participants in the decision making process itself. If public decision makers only react to pressures brought to bear upon them by the emerging ICT environment during each crisis, they will find themselves having a difficult time explaining and getting stakeholders on board at critical moments, when their attention needs to be fully focused on the task at hand, as we saw in some of the above crises. This does not mean that security of
information and planning in sensitive instances is likely to be compromised, as security agencies and experts tend to generally highlight. As long as government decision makers respect the need to maintain their own accountability towards the stakeholders, they need not fear even if they do go ahead and implement decisions in a developing crisis without first securing broader stakeholder support for all their actions; that support can always be obtained subsequently at an early opportunity by sharing necessary information with the stakeholders, as and when it is feasible without compromising national security interests (see discussion of 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks below for more on this).

In the time since these crises, there have arisen contingencies wherein these research findings, as elaborated above, could be put to greater test for their validity. The 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks bear out an eerie repetition of many of the initial mistakes that can also be pinned on to the Kargil and Kandahar crises. Lack of preparedness and an effective immediate response being two concerns at the very top (Badri-Maharaj, 2009; Sanghvi, 2009). The media, as is to be expected, was all over in no time (Mitra, 2009; Oh, Agrawal, & Rao, 2011; Sanghvi, 2009; Usha Rani & Kapur, 2010). However, as the crisis management progressed and the government came up with its stand and response, resolutely at various operational levels, the media and interactive environment provided a supportive backdrop to the ongoing coverage of the crisis (Ibrahim, 2009; Usha Rani & Kapur, 2010). A keen awareness of the importance and implications of its actions, vis-à-vis the stakeholders, was evident in the decision makers’ actions in this case. We label this heightened mindfulness that resulted in a satisfactory crisis resolution process, as per our framework’s influences and end-outcomes. A point to note here is that a resolute decision maker, displaying high self-esteem and control of the situation, does not have to share critical information about intended actions in advance, especially those that could be detrimental to the
higher purpose, even while maintaining a positive stakeholder support environment, as also commented on by the Supreme Court in critiquing the role of the media during the 26/11 siege, while upholding the sentence on the lone surviving Pakistani terrorist (TOI, 2012).

Another implication for public policy from this research is in the domain of transparency towards the stakeholders. Public office holders may need to re-evaluate their current operating procedures to cater for this need. An associated question that was often emotively raised and discussed in the aftermath of these crises was: Does the increasing reach of the media need to be countered, curtailed or negated (as viewed from the government’s perspective)? Primary learning from these crises suggests that it is not advisable to lean towards what is euphemistically termed “media management” by these institutional agencies, but to adopt a more open and informed approach towards stakeholders and media to help create partners-in-progress, as the more sophisticated long term approach. That the effects need not always be negative and to be feared was evident from the media role in the subsequent stages of these three crises themselves and, as an additional example, as seen in the aftermath of the terrible disaster wreaked by the killer tsunami along the Indian shoreline on December 26, 2004, which caught both the government and its administration unawares and the media rose to the occasion to highlight where the relief was most urgently needed, as well as to muster wider public and corporate support and active involvement. How our public policy makers view this emerging phenomenon and the changed rules of the game, to shape their own responses, will eventually help decide whether they make themselves relevant or irrelevant in the long term.
LIMITATIONS OF THE MODEL AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The crisis cases that have been studied in this research are bounded by a regional, i.e., South Asian, context and a particular form of governance, i.e., democratic representation. Hence, there could be some valid concerns with respect to generalisation of these research findings, notwithstanding some supporting evidence in research about the wider nature of the findings. It may not be quite besides the point to mention here that the region where the repercussions of these crises could have been prospectively felt was more than a billion strong, more than a sixth of the world’s population. In addition, as noted in the crises’ brief in Appendix 1, they also had wider implications for security and peace in the rest of the world, exhibiting the increasingly interconnected nature of similar crises.

Then again, this research looks at the interactive information environment phenomenon in the initial stages of its emergence. Things could well develop quite differently over time and as societies and public policy makers mature with greater exposure to it.

Certain other areas that were not explored during this research are: (1) Under what circumstances do decision makers persist with their own biases/beliefs and do not exhibit higher levels of mindfulness? Many would possibly term President Bush’s obduracy in the run-up to Iraq’s invasion, as an apt example of this (Hamilton, 2004; Houghton, 2008; Lieberfeld, 2005). (2) What role do power and past successes play in this? (3) How does this play out when decision makers are confronted with multiple emerging crises? (4) Does this apply equally to natural disasters and other crises which are inherently uncontrollable? (5) Can being in media spotlight and an awareness of being watched by a larger audience actually encourage decision
maker “hype”, which, in turn, leads to competitive arousal and irrational decisions (Malhotra, 2007)?

Future research needs to be undertaken to study this phenomenon in other contexts, including, where the crisis may be the result of proactive initiation by the decision makers themselves, such as, the launch of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom, etc. So, the model needs to be expanded—across international structural dimensions; crises types; as also more “normal” events. There is also need to incorporate philosophical underpinnings in the making of decisions, i.e., considering societal norms as part of the ecological structure. Future research could even look at simulating the model for quantifiable and interacting relationships, using suitable software as may be available.

**CONCLUSION**

This research presents important findings from a grounded study into the influence of the emerging interactive information environment on government decision making during crisis, exploring, specifically, the facet of occurrence of heightened mindfulness in primary decision makers. Significant categories derived from ‘within-case’ grounded research were first modelled using causal associations, and then validated across the crisis cases. Antecedents and consequents of heightened mindfulness in decision makers are identified in the context of crisis decision making. Finally, a macro- and a micro-level framework of the influences of emerging interactive information environment on the quality of crisis decision making process are also proposed.

One of the significant ways of judging the quality of grounded theory research application to a context is to see whether it fits in closely with it and if it gives a better understanding of the phenomenon to individuals who have some familiarity with it (Turner, 1983). In line with this criterion, this research derives closely from actual occurrence of the crisis
events and the reactions and responses of diverse categories of stakeholders to the developing crises. It also builds useful frameworks encompassing causal associations between significant categories identified during the research. The research enables us to gain important insights into the decision maker’s psychological, cognitive and affective senses during crises, which can help throw up prescriptive guidelines for decision makers confronted with similar moments of reckoning going into the future.

REFERENCES


The Times of India (2012). Reckless TV coverage of 26/11 operation put national security in jeopardy: Supreme Court. TNN, 30 August 2012. Downloaded on 26 December 2013 from: articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-08-30/india/33498834_1_security-forces-terrorist-attacks-channels


**APPENDIX 1**
BRIEF OVERVIEW AND FLOW DIAGRAMS OF THE CRISIS CASE STUDIES

Kargil Intrusions 1999 Crisis

Kargil is a border district in the Indian state of Jammu & Kashmir (J&K), along the National Highway (NH) 1A—the lifeline to Ladakh—beyond the ZojiLa pass. In the months preceding May 1999, armed groups, claiming allegiance to Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (PoK) based militant groups fighting for independence/secession of Kashmir, began occupying large unheld tracts across the Line of Control (LoC) overlooking NH 1A. Indian patrols ran into them only in the first week of May, but the magnitude of the incursions remained unclear till quite late. It was a crisis faced by the military and the government, which did not fit into their existing worldview of the ongoing insurgency and terrorist/militant strikes from across the borders in the state of J&K.

Initial attempts to downplay the incident soon gave way to a reluctant acceptance of “intelligence failure,” when the enormity of the task confronted the decision makers. Over the next few weeks, the government launched a military offensive to clear the incursions physically, as also launched a parallel diplomatic offensive to take the truth about the incursion to the international community.

Said to be “India’s first media war,” there was immense interest generated among all sections of society which manifested itself in diverse ways, fuelled by so-called “live coverage” from the frontline and funerals back home of those who died in the fighting. TV-channels, print media, political parties and citizen-groups jumped into the fray—raising issues, debating decisions and strategy, pressuring and showing-the-way-forward to the government.

Simultaneously, neighbouring Pakistan refused to accept its complicity and instead rattled the nuclear spectre if its territorial integrity were to be violated. Thus, the two South Asian nuclear states appeared to be on the brink of a nuclear standoff—the closest that the world possibly came to since the Cuban missile crisis (Hoddbhoy and Mian, 2002; Ramana and Nayyar, 2001; Reidel, 2002).

Finally, following the July 4 Washington declaration, Prime Minister Sharif of Pakistan agreed to effect a withdrawal, in his address to the nation (on July 12). The crisis formally came to an end on July 26 when the Indian government declared that the sanctity of the LoC had once again been restored.

---

Crisis Flow Chart—Kargil Crisis

![Crisis Flow Chart](chart.png)
IC-814 Kandahar Hijacking 1999 Crisis

On December 24, 1999, Indian Airlines flight IC-814 from Kathmandu (Nepal) to New Delhi, with 178 passengers and 11 crew aboard, was hijacked midway by five armed men. While minutes counted, the plane, on being denied permission to land at Lahore, Pakistan, turned and landed at Amritsar. Here, a golden opportunity to resolve the hijacking crisis one way or the other was missed by inept bungling by authorities responsible for taking and implementing counter-hijack actions. In the confusion, the aircraft took off again from there after 48 minutes without refuelling, and this time landed at Lahore, where it was refuelled and allowed to move on. It then tried permission to land at Kabul or Kandahar (in Afghanistan), but wasn’t allowed to for lack of night-landing facilities. It then proceeded to and got permission to land at Dubai. Here, the hijackers released 26 women and children along with one dead, amidst American-backed negotiations, before taking off next morning for Kandahar.

There, for the next seven days, the hijack drama was played out by the hijackers, the Indian government, the Taliban (who then effectively ruled Afghanistan), and the international representatives. In India, the nation’s attention was riveted by the ongoing events, heightened by media reports, the relatives’ actions, and the government’s dithering and confused pronouncements. Finally, the Indian government capitulated and agreed to release three hardcore terrorists in an exchange for the passengers, culminating in the “awkward spectacle” of the Foreign Minister himself escorting the terrorists to their freedom and the agreed exchange.

The three terrorists released in exchange for the hostages disappeared after their release and later surfaced in Pakistan, carrying on activities in line with their avowed mission, detrimental to peace and security of their target countries: (1) Maulana Masood Azhar: founded the militant group Jaish-e-Mohammed after he was released; the group is alleged to have been involved in the December 13, 2001 attack on the Indian Parliament in New Delhi, as also implicated for the kidnapping and murder of American journalist Daniel Pearl; (2) Mushtaq Ahmed Zargar: former head of Al-Umar Mujahideen; the only Indian Kashmiri among the three released; currently active and based in Muzaffarabad, the capital of Pakistan administered Kashmir; and (3) Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh alias Omar Sheikh: A British national and graduate of the London School of Economics; later arrested in Lahore for his alleged role in the kidnapping and murder of Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl in 2002; also alleged to have sent about $100,000 from the United Arab Emirates to Mohammed Atta, who used the money in the weeks before carrying out the 9/11 terror attacks in the U.S.
Crisis Flow Chart—Kandahar Crisis

Crisis Recognition
- Delay in Crisis Recognition
  - Cognitive Deficiencies
  - Learned Helplessness
  - Immediate Response
  - Inadequate Response
  - Organisational Inertia & Panic
  - Worsening of Crisis; Loss of Public Faith in Crisis Management
  - Small Window of Opportunity Missed

Crisis Development
- Pressure from Hostages’ Relatives
  - Media Interest & Coverage
  - Criticism of Decision Making Process
  - Response Options Cut Down; Public Commitment to Restore Situation

Crisis Resolution
- Structural Factors

Diplomatic Strategy
- International Diplomacy for Securing External Intervention
  - Ineffective Approach Towards Crisis Resolution
  - Options Cut Down Due to Public Pressure; Inadequate Consideration

Socio-Psychocognitive Factors
- Other Proactive Measures (Including Use of Force)

Domestic Environment
- Pressure on Government to Save Hostages
  - Adverse Media Coverage; Weakness of Government Exposed
  - Pressure on Government for Early Resolution of Crisis; Surrender to Demands

Individual Decision Maker(s): Cognitive Personality Traits; Framing of the Situation; Self Esteem (Intrinsic Motivation)
Sri Lankan (Jaffna) Crisis May 2000 (from the Indian government’s and public’s perspective)

India and Sri Lanka have had a tenuous relationship in the recent past, beginning in the 1980s, with the rise of the separatist Tamil movement in the North and East of the island nation. Sri Lanka has long accused India (or at least Indian groups and interests) of supporting the ethnic separatist movement. Local domestic support for the Tamil minorities led the Indian government to put overt pressure on the Sri Lankan government in early 1987. This eventually led to an Indian backed tripartite peace accord with the Tamil ethnic groups, with a mandate for positioning of an Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF). However, the accord went awry when one of the groups (LTTE), under their leader V. Prabhakaran, broke away from the accord and took up arms against their former protectors. This led to a bloody conflict between the IPKF and the LTTE, and to an eventual disenchantment with the government’s policy within India, as India and the IPKF kept getting sucked deeper and deeper into, what seemed, a quagmire. A face-saving withdrawal was made only later in 1990, with a change of government in Sri Lanka (where newly elected President Premadasa “made common cause with the LTTE and unceremoniously asked the Indian government to withdraw its troops” [Jayaram and Denish, 2000]), facilitated as well by a change of government in India.

With the possibility of India getting embroiled in the ongoing ethnic strife in northern Sri Lanka again in May 2000 in an intermediary role, the issue came live once over again. Rational political calculations indicated in favour of a positive response by the Indian government to the Sri Lankan government’s requests for mediation in the crisis. There was an outpouring of articles and editorials in the media, both, for a more proactive role in the unfolding crisis, as well as cautioning the government against any hasty intervention. This finally led to the Indian government's guarded response to reports that Sri Lanka may consider requesting it for help in the build-up to the Jaffna crisis (where up to 40,000 Sri Lankan troops were being encircled by the advancing Tamil Tigers of the LTTE). The Indian government was quick to distance itself from an armed intervention (any repeat of 1987 fiasco); only much later did it come out with a statement that it was, though, open to mediation, but only at the invitation of all parties concerned. The dithering response of the government continued, however: affected by the media and vocal stakeholders, the fast changing crisis situation, ongoing international diplomacy dynamics, as well as its own domestic political compulsions and exhibited risk-averse behaviour.

In this sense, this really was only a mini-crisis, which never did become full-blown, as the other two crises. The Indian government’s initial responses to the developing crisis can also be viewed as floating “trial balloons” to check the reactions of the public if the crisis was indeed to aggravate. The actions of the stakeholders and the government decision makers, however, provide adequate data to check out and validate the causal associations between categories identified from the other two crises. The behaviour displayed by temporary “purpose-specific” networks in this instance helped to gain deeper insights into their motivations and influence on the government decision makers, as brought out in the paper.
### TABLE I
Step-wise Operationalisation of Research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Presentation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Open coding</td>
<td>Findings related to crisis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>Axial coding</td>
<td>Discussion related to crisis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>Selective coding</td>
<td>Integration of hypothesised relationships within and across crises</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE II
Summary of Institutional Response to the Kargil & Kandahar Crises and the Consequences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crisis Case Study</th>
<th>Initial Institutional Reaction to the Crisis</th>
<th>Govt.’s Decision Making During Subsequent Phase of Crisis</th>
<th>Tenor of Media Coverage</th>
<th>Public and Media Reaction Characterization</th>
<th>Eventual Effect on the Govt. Decision Making Process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kargil</strong></td>
<td>Confused; ill-coordinated; delay in upward reporting due to attempts to control crisis at each successive level of responsibility</td>
<td>Confident and surer (especially as the situation became clearer)</td>
<td>Initially questioning media which soon after became supportive and began to play a constructive role to support govt.’s crisis resolution efforts</td>
<td>Quickly changed from early dissatisfaction to supportive; “rally around the flag” phenomenon observed</td>
<td>Public and media support to government’s efforts towards crisis resolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kandahar</strong></td>
<td>Confused; ill-coordinated; tendency to look over the shoulders for orders—passing the buck (lack of initiative at successive levels of responsibility)</td>
<td>Uncertain and hesitant (no improvement even as the situation became clearer)</td>
<td>Questioning media which continued to hound the government decision making and its inadequacy in crisis resolution</td>
<td>Initial groping for information changed to criticism of the government’s attitude and non-performance; resulting in formation of pressure groups to influence the govt.</td>
<td>Public and media criticism of the govt.’s non-performance; pressure groups influence the govt.’s decision making process—forcing it on the back-foot</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**TABLE III**
Contrast between Institutional Responses to the Kargil & Kandahar Crises

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Kargil</th>
<th>Kandahar</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Detection of crisis</td>
<td>Very late</td>
<td>Early on</td>
<td>Window of opportunity in Kandahar crisis missed due to lack of initiative and institutional accountability culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional accountability</td>
<td>Acute realisation at all levels</td>
<td>“Pass the buck upwards” attitude</td>
<td>Causal influences: Institutional culture; cross-boundary temporary groupings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisational response</td>
<td>Clarity of mission/ objectives to all</td>
<td>Confused—objectives not known/clear to all</td>
<td>Causal influences: Institutional culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental sensitivity</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High/low environmental sensitivity helped create greater/lesser public awareness and support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transparency in handling of crisis</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Institutional response; greater transparency led to broader convergence of goals with the stakeholders</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FIGURE 1**
“Deviation Neutralising Mutual Causal Relationship”—
Kargil Crisis
(Hinging on the Institutional Culture of Professionalism within the Army)
FIGURE 2
“Deviation Amplifying Mutual Causal Relationship”—Kandahar Crisis

FIGURE 3
Sensemaking by the Indian Government during the Sri Lankan Encirclement of Jaffna Crisis, May 2000: Employing Test-balloons to Gauge Public Support
FIGURE 4
Rise of Temporary "Super-Patriot" Networks (Kargil, 1999)

Resulted in positive influence on the decision making process towards crisis resolution (caveat emptor...may not always have a positive effect...e.g., when they subsequently tended to force the hand of decision makers towards more riskier options)
FIGURE 5
Rise of Temporary Aggrieved Pressure-Groups
(Kandahar, 1999)

(in contrast to “Transnational Advocacy Networks”)
...short term & loose; formed around perceived grievances, particularly in
crisis situations; bonded strongly on emotion, rather than reason;
generally attempt to seek relief or redress of grievances...

FIGURE 6
Evaluation of Decision Making Trajectory: Kargil
(In terms of the Anderson’s (1983: 215-216) four-valued evaluation function to classify decision making
alternatives)
FIGURE 7
Evaluation of Decision Making Trajectory: Kandahar
(In terms of the Anderson's (1983: 215-216) four-valued evaluation function to classify decision making alternatives.)

FIGURE 8
Overarching Conceptual Framework
FIGURE 9
An Integrated "Microlevel Framework of Heightened Mindfulness" in Decision Makers

EMERGING INTERACTIVE INFORMATION ENVIRONMENT

CRISIS RELATED EMOTION & DRAMA
LACK OF CREDIBLE INFORMATION
INCREASED STAKEHOLDER INTERACTIONS

INTENSITY OF CRISIS COVERAGE OVER THE EMERGING ICT ENVIRONMENT
ADVERSE BIAS IN CRISIS COVERAGE OVER THE EMERGING ICT ENVIRONMENT

P1a +

P1b +

P2a +

P2b +/-

P2b +/-

P2b +/-

P2b +/-

P7b

P7c -

TEMPORARY PURPOSE-SPECIFIC NETWORKS

FRAISING OF CRISIS SITUATION

(EXTREMEINFLUENCES ON) FRAMING OF CRISIS SITUATION

FACTORS FROM EMERGING INTERACTIVE ENVIRONMENT'S CHARACTERISTICS

FACTORS FROM DECISION MAKERS' CHARACTERISTICS

FACTORS FROM DECISION MAKING PROCESS'S CHARACTERISTICS

HEIGHTENED MINDFULNESS IN DECISION MAKERS

SELF ESTEEM OF THE DECISION MAKERS

RESPONSIVENESS & TRANSPARENCY OF THE DECISION MAKER
FLEXIBLE & CONSENSUAL PROBLEM SOLVING APPROACH
GROUPTHINK-LIKE TENDENCIES

P3a +

P3a +

P3b +

P4a +

P4b -

P4c +

P5a +

P5b

P5c +

P5e -

P6a +

P6b +

P7a

P7b

P2b +/-

P5 +

P6 +

P4 +