Expelled for Committing a Violent Act: Framing the Risk of a Violent Student on Campus

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Abstract:

Risk is often communicated with numbers. Science, including medicine and technology, is inherently numerical. However, we cannot put all numbers and statistics in the same box and assume that they function in the same way. There are various formats that quantitative information can take including frequencies, probabilities, and percentages. These forms of numerical information are mathematically equivalent, but in each form, the risk information has been framed for the message receiver. These frames are not psychologically equivalent in regard to how people process and evaluate the numbers. This project explored the effects of numerical framing on perceived message clarity, affect, vividness, and risk perception.