VR & Transformative Consumer Research

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Psychological distance impacts relief efforts.

### Immediate Response
Supplies delivered nine days after each storm

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Storm</th>
<th>Meals</th>
<th>Water (liters)</th>
<th>Tarps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Harvey (TX)</td>
<td>5.1 MILLION</td>
<td>4.5 MILLION</td>
<td>20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irma (FL)</td>
<td>10.9 MILLION</td>
<td>7 MILLION</td>
<td>98,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maria (PR)</td>
<td>1.6 MILLION</td>
<td>2.8 MILLION</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: FEMA
Guiding Theory and Insights

• Psychological distance impacts how we construe others, i.e., as close to or distant from the self (Grau & Folse 2013).

• Consumers are more likely to give funds to an identifiable victim (Gerri & Loewenstein 1997).

• Does VR attenuate the negative effect of psychological distance on donation behavior to outgroup members?
Experiment

• Design: 3 (physical proximity: VR vs. imagined proximity vs. control) x 2 (psychological distance: high vs. low)

• Physical proximity manipulation:
  • VR: Oculus-based immersion in hurricane impact
  • Imagined: asked to think about hurricane impact
  • Control: asked to read an article about hurricane impact

• Psychological distance: is the victim of the natural disaster the US or Puerto Rico?