

**USE OF IMAGE REPAIR STRATEGIES IN TERROR RELATED POST CRISIS
COMMUNICATION IN KENYA: A CASE STUDY OF THE WEST GATE MALL ATTACK**

^{1*} **Munyi Susan Murugi**
suemunyi1@gmail.com

^{2**} **Hellen Mberia**
hellenmberia@gmail.com

^{1,2} *Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Kenya*

Abstract: *The many terror attacks that have affected many nations end up creating crisis for nations. More often than not, it damages their images thus affecting their prospects since investors, tourists, citizens and other relevant stakeholders change their perception regarding them. Such occurrences demand for crisis communication that employs strategies that help repair the damaged image. The use of some strategies does not always result in effective image repair especially if they are inappropriately used. Evidently, knowledge of the many image repair strategies alone is not enough to ensure effective crisis communication that will repair the image. It is thus important to understand the various factors that should inform choice of particular strategies to ensure effective image repair. This study thus sought to evaluate the various image repair strategies used in terror related post crisis communication in Kenya through a case study of the Westgate Mall terror attack with the view to determine the factors that need be considered when settling on particular strategies. To achieve this, a case study design was adopted with the study population comprising citizens from Westlands Division in Nairobi County and survivors of the Westgate Mall attack. The study found out that denial strategies significantly and negatively relate with terror related post crisis communication in Kenya; evasion strategies significantly and positively and relate with terror related post crisis communication in Kenya; Offensiveness reduction strategies significantly and negatively relate with terror related post crisis communication in Kenya; Corrective action strategies positively and significantly relate with terror related post crisis communication in Kenya; mortification strategies significantly and positively relate with terror related post crisis communication in Kenya. Recommendations were made that crisis communicators in terror related post crisis communication should carefully select strategies that will positively impact on image during terror related post crisis communication.*

Keywords: *image repair, post crisis, terror attack*

Background of The Study

Countries world over are facing multiple crises today. These crises-whether terror attacks, short-term conflicts, or wars-which earn media attention dramatically affect the image of the countries that face them (Evraham, 2013) and as Coombs (2013) puts it, in any crises situations, reputation damage is usually a by- product. The implication is that whenever a crisis occurs, it is one of the greatest assets of an organization- the image, which is affected thus calling for immediate action to repair it. Since the importance of image cannot be overstated in today's society, whenever it is threatened, individuals and organizations are motivated to present an image defense: explanations, justifications, rationalizations, apologies, or excuses for behavior (Holtzhausen & Robert 2009).

According to Zaremba (2010), crisis communication involves identifying internal and external receivers who must receive information during times of crisis and the actual creation and dissemination of messages to them using the most appropriate media while at the same time preparing to receive feedback from them. In fact, crisis communication is necessary to shape the image of the organization in the eyes of its publics thus influencing public perception of the organization (Ray, 1999).

The number of crises incidents and their severity is rising along with the growing complexity of technology and society (Stephens, Malone & Bailey, 1995). Terror related crises have not been an exception as in the recent past there has been an outcry over terrorism world over. According to US state report from the National Counterterrorism center (2012), the world experienced 10,283 terror attacks in the year 2011 which affected nearly 45,000 victims in 70 countries and which resulted in over 12,500 deaths. 978 Of these attacks were experienced in Africa.

East African region has had its share of terror attacks. In 1998, Kenya, along with Tanzania, suffered terrorist attacks that collectively killed over 250 people and injured nearly 5,000 others, mostly Kenyans (Otiso, 2009). The West Gate Mall attack on September 21, 2013 is another such attack in the region. This attack saw masked gunmen attacking and taking people hostage leading to at least 67 people killed and almost 200 others injured in the siege that lasted four days (Blanchard, 2013). According to him, this was the most deadly terror incident in Kenya since the 1998 Al Qaeda bombing of the US embassy in Nairobi.

Such terror attacks greatly impact on the image of Kenya. This makes it to be considered insecure and this largely affects the tourism industry. Oino & Sorre (2014) argue that tourism one of the foundation blocks of Kenya's economy, constitutes 25% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and has been adversely affected by the repercussions of terrorism. For instance, upon receiving the news about the terrorist attacks on Kenya's US Embassy in Nairobi, countries such as USA, Germany, and Great Britain among others immediately issued travel advisories to their citizens and imposed travel bans to refrain travel to Kenya as it was deemed unsafe. This almost paralyzed the tourism industry.

One IBT staff reporter on September 23, 2013, reported that the Westgate mall attack could endanger Kenya's growth by deterring foreign investment inflows of which hit \$382.3 million in the second quarter of that year and discourage tourism, which supports hundreds of thousands of jobs and contributes up to 12 percent of annual GDP. The Global Insights Report on November 5, 2013 also predicted that following the Westgate mall attack, the tourism receipts were expected to fall by US \$160 million in 2013 and would only increase by US \$80 million in 2014 and US \$165 million in 2015. Tourism numbers would decrease by 18% over 2013 and only rise 7% in 2014 before probably rebounding with 25% growth in 2015.

As predicted, the tourism industry was greatly affected by this attack. According to official data from Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) released in 2014, the figures fell from 1.24 million in 2012 to 1.1 million in 2013, a drop of 136,850. The report clearly detailed that In September 2013, when terrorists struck at Westgate Mall in the capital and killed over 68 people, Kenya received only 95, 707 tourists, down from 103,465 during the same period in 2012.

To mitigate such negative impacts of terror attacks on the country, attempts should be made to recreate a new image for the destination. This is possible through post crisis communication which should be well planned and coordinated. A lot has been said about the manner in which post crisis communication after the Westgate mall attack was handled with both commendations and criticism. The communication that followed the attack in an attempt to repair the image had its share of criticism as many people felt that the officials could have done better. One year after the attack, the Interior cabinet secretary Joseph ole Lenku, who was the key

spokesman during the crisis, admitted that some mistakes were made in the communication process. According to The Daily Nation Friday, September 19, 2014, the Interior cabinet secretary agreed that they got it wrong but learnt a lesson from it.

It is with this in mind that this study sought to evaluate the strategies that were used to repair the image during and after the West Gate Mall terror attack with a view to providing a guideline on factors to consider when choosing particular strategies in efforts to repair the image.

Benoit (1997) argues that when a crisis occurs, it is important to clearly understand both the nature of crisis and the relevant audience(s) before settling on particular strategy. Evidently, an assumption that the strategies can work in the same way for all situations may be detrimental which might create another crisis instead of helping solve the existing one. The study is thus important in providing guidelines on choice of image repair strategy for effective crisis communication management in terror related crisis situation.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Image of a country is all about how it is viewed by its stakeholders and this perception can be dented by terror related crises. The association of places with danger or bloodshed is a serious obstacle to their attractiveness and is likely to have a negative effect on tourism and investments (Avraham & Ketter, 2008). Reputation and image erosion, results in declining stakeholder (investor, customer, citizen and donor) confidence in a country (Ferguson et al., 2012). This has been the case with Kenya where the many terror related crises experienced recently have left many doubting its security forces' capabilities and how secure Kenya is.

Countries that employ appropriate image repair strategies after terror crisis end up repairing their images with ease. This is aided by having an organized plan of action in place where appropriate strategies are a component (Sonmez, Apostolopoulos & Tarlow, 1999). For instance, Northern Ireland was able to overcome its terrorist-caused negative image by devising strategies to increase visitation through developing new tourism products/attractions, supported by heavy promotions (Witt and Moore 1992). Saudi Arabia was also able to partially repair its damaged image after it was accused of supporting terrorism and of failing to support a possible U.S. attack on Iraq.

Evidently, the choice of strategies should therefore be carefully done to avoid escalating the crisis or creating a new one. Avraham (2013) points out that the choice of image repair strategies should be carefully done to avoid detrimental outcomes instead of repairing the image. Coombs & Schmidt (2000) advise that crisis managers should have clear guidelines for selecting their image restoration and crisis response strategies.

Avraham (2013) notes that unlike organizations, destinations cannot promise to change overnight, apologize, assign blame, or take responsibility for a problematic image and reality that were created by various factors over the course of years. The argument is that after the crisis is over; restoring a positive place image is a challenging, long-term and resource-demanding task which requires a multi-step approach.

This research focused on addressing image repair strategies used in terror related crisis in Kenya with the aim of evaluating their effectiveness while considering some factors that should be put into consideration when settling on the strategies.

General Objective

The general objective for this study was to evaluate the image repair strategies used in terror related post crisis communication in Kenya.

Specific Objectives

- i) To evaluate the effect of denial strategies on terror related post crisis communication in Kenya.
- ii) To examine the effect of evasion strategies on terror related post crisis communication in Kenya.
- iii) To determine the effect of offensiveness reduction strategies on terror related post crisis communication in Kenya.
- iv) To analyze the effect of corrective action strategies on terror related post crisis communication in Kenya.
- v) To describe the effect of mortification strategies on terror related post crisis communication in Kenya.
- vi) To explain the moderating effect of preliminary analysis of crisis on terror related post crisis communication in Kenya.

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

IMAGE REPAIR STRATEGIES

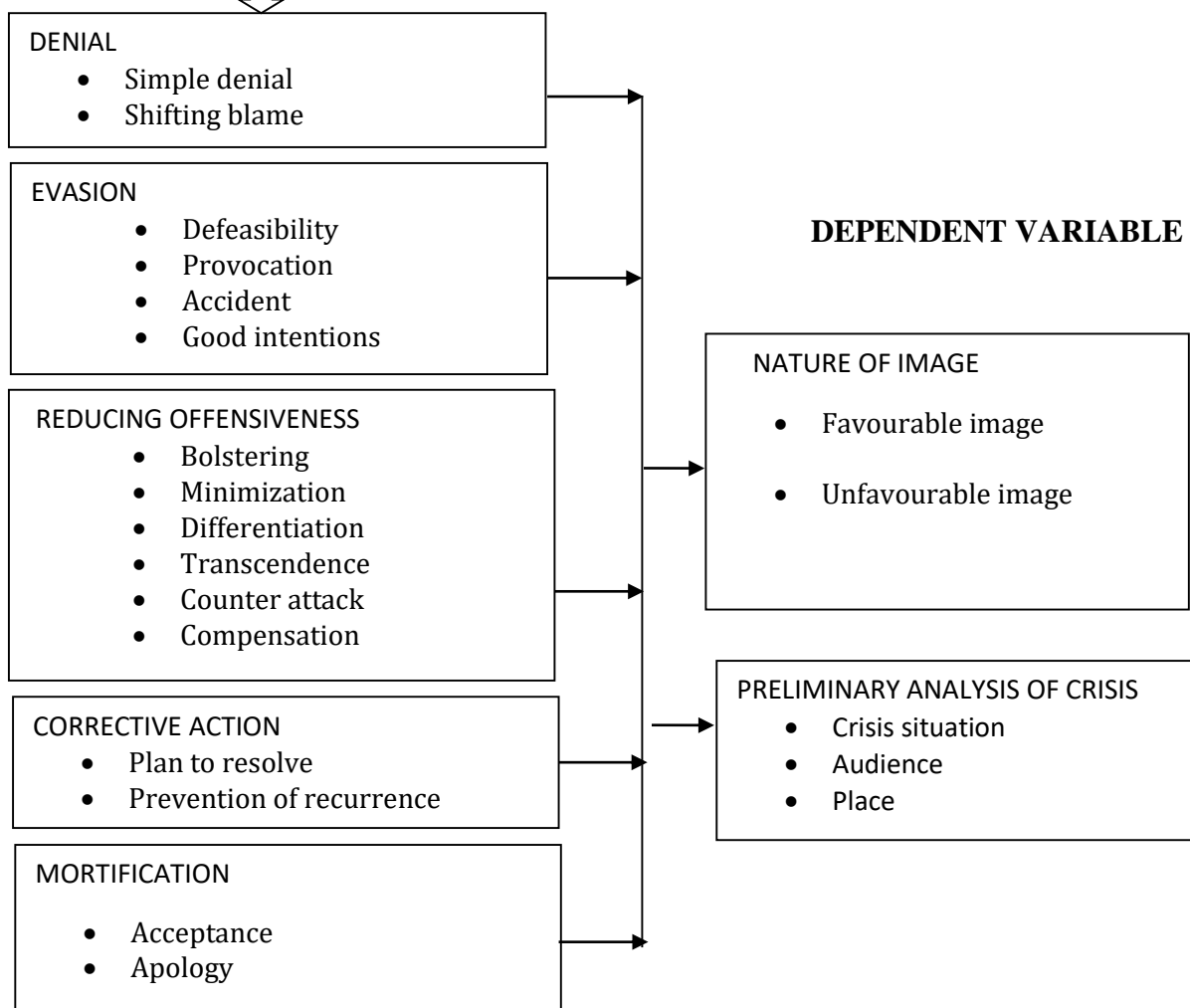


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

The framework in figure 1 illustrates the relationship between the image repair strategies that a crisis communicator settles on and the outcome of the choice. During and after crisis, it is inevitable that the image of the place, individual or organization will be damaged and thus crisis communicators need to select appropriate strategies that will help repair the image.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The target population for this study included: Kenyan citizens living in Westlands Division in Nairobi County and survivors of the West gate mall attack. Out of the 384 respondents, 338 fully completed the questionnaires which formed 88.02% return rate. The study also targeted 20 survivors of the attack where 20 questionnaires were returned forming 100% return rate. They provided information that enabled an evaluation of the appropriateness of the strategies used. The target population was stratified into two groups; citizens from Westlands division and survivors of the attack. Since it was not possible to interview all the people who formed the target population for the study, a few respondents were selected from the various groups of the target population to form the samples. The researcher collected data through questionnaires which were given to samples of the citizens and survivors of the attack.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Descriptive Statistics

In this section the study presents the findings of various questions that aimed to establish the image repair strategies that the government officials used in their attempts to create a positive image. The respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement on the statements using a 5-point Likert scale where: 1-Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Neutral, 4-Agree, 5-Strongly Agree. The study used mean and standard deviation to interpret the findings where a mean values of a mean of 0-1 implied that the respondents strongly disagreed, a mean of 1.1-2 implied they disagreed, 2.1-3 suggest that they were neutral, a mean of 3.1-4 suggest they agreed, and a mean of 4.1-5 implies the respondents strongly agreed.

The findings were presented based on the specific objectives of the study which were: To evaluate the effect of denial strategies use in terror related post crisis communication in Kenya; To examine the effect of evasion strategies use in terror related post crisis communication in Kenya; To determine the effect of offensiveness reduction strategies use in terror related post crisis communication in Kenya; To analyze the effect of corrective action strategies use in terror related post crisis communication in Kenya; To describe the effect of mortification strategies use in terror related post crisis communication in Kenya and To explain the moderating effect of preliminary analysis of crisis on terror related post crisis communication in Kenya.

Denial Strategies

The first objective of the study was to evaluate the effect of denial strategies use in terror related post crisis communication in Kenya. To address this objective, the researcher first sought to establish the extent to which the respondents felt about various statements that relate with the use of denial strategies at West Gate mall attack. The results were as presented in Table 1 next page.

Table 1: Denial Strategies Use in Terror Related Post Crisis Communication

Statement	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	Std. Dev.
The government claimed that it was not responsible for what happened.	40	30	39	134	95	3.633	0.710
The government claimed that it did not do anything wrong during the attack.	35	22	44	154	83	3.675	0.760
The government claimed that all the deaths were caused by the terrorists and not its officers.	33	45	30	160	70	3.559	0.754
The government explained that all the damages and losses were caused by the terrorists.	24	12	12	266	24	3.750	1.343

From the findings, the respondents were in agreement that the government explained that all the damages and losses were caused by the terrorists as shown by a mean of 3.750, the government claimed that it did not do anything wrong during the attack as shown by a mean of 3.675, the government claimed that it was not responsible for what happened as shown by a mean of 3.633 and that the government claimed that all the deaths were caused by the terrorists and not its officers as shown by a mean of 3.559. This is an indication that the respondents observed that the government made use of the denial strategy. The findings are similar to the findings of Zhang and Benoit (2004) who found out that the Saudi Government relied heavily on denial to respond to this criticism after the 9/11 attack. Even though they employed other strategies, they relied more on denial where they denied any connection to terrorism since there was no proof of the same.

However, the findings of Mehta (2012) found that denial was the least used strategy by BP after the oil spill since it was used in only three of the 72 press releases. They only denied having been grossly negligent and engaging in willful misconduct. The same was established by Holtzhausen et al., (2009) since denial was found to be least used at 5%, n=1.

Evasion Strategies

The second objective was to examine the effect of evasion strategies in terror related post crisis communication. The study sought to establish the respondents’ feelings about evasion strategies that were used and the findings were as demonstrated in Table 2.

Table 2: Evasion Strategies Use in Terror Related Post Crisis Communication

Statement	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	StdDev
The government claimed not to have had prior information about the attack	34	30	36	171	67	3.614	0.808
The government explained that its manner of reaction was provoked by the terrorists	30	33	55	145	75	3.598	0.684
The government explained that the attack was accidental	32	44	32	166	64	3.550	0.773
The government explained that they took all possible measures to rescue as many citizens as possible	33	30	36	161	78	3.656	0.780
The government explained that the changeover in security forces to bring in the army was intended to curb the situation.	37	32	42	156	71	3.568	0.733

From the findings, he respondents were in agreement that the government explained that they took all possible measures to rescue as many citizens as possible as shown by a mean of 3.656, the government claimed not to have had prior information about the attack as shown by a mean of 3.614, the government explained that its manner of reaction was provoked by the terrorists as shown by a mean of 3.598, the government explained that

the changeover in security forces to bring in the army was intended to curb the situation as shown by a mean of 3.568, and that the government explained that the attack was accidental as shown by a mean of 3.550. From the findings it is clear that majority of the respondents observed the use of evasion strategies after the Westgate mall attack. This thus confirms that the government used evasion strategies to a great extent in its image repair attempts. The findings of Zhang and Benoit (2004) are in line with these findings since they established that Saudi Arabia used it by claiming good intentions where it's prince said that his comments were well intentioned.

Offensive reduction strategies

The third objective for the study was to determine the effect of offensive reduction strategies use in terror related post crisis communication. To achieve this, the researcher first sought to establish if the respondents saw the use of these strategies after the attack. The findings were as presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Offensive Reduction Strategies Use in Terror Related Post Crisis Communication

Statement	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	Std Dev.
The government reminded the people of other good things it had done in previous terror attacks.	30	32	37	180	59	3.609	0.843
The government claimed that the lives lost were not as many as reported by the media	22	32	32	190	62	3.704	0.905
The government explained that it was not just Kenya that was prone to terror attacks and pointed out other countries that had been attacked by terrorists.	30	25	37	178	68	3.678	0.849
The government kept pointing out other factors such as the number of terrorists who have so far been killed especially after the operation Linda Nchi in Somalia.	20	30	24	190	74	3.793	0.930
The government claimed that the media and other countries that were claiming Kenya is not secure were just tarnishing the image of the country.	22	17	37	178	84	3.843	0.887
The government offered financial support to the victims.	33	25	35	167	78	3.686	0.814
The government organized some counseling for the victims and their relatives.	12	12	24	278	12	3.786	1.415

From the findings, the respondents were in agreement that the government claimed that the media and other countries that were claiming Kenya is not secure were just tarnishing the image of the country as shown by a mean of 3.843, the government kept pointing out other factors such as the number of terrorists who have so far been killed especially after the operation Linda Nchi in Somalia as shown by a mean of 3.793, the government organized some counseling for the victims and their relatives as shown by a mean of 3.786, the government claimed that the lives lost were not as many as reported by the media as shown by a mean of 3.704, the government offered financial support to the victims as shown by a mean of 3.686, the government explained that it was not just Kenya that was prone to terror attacks and pointed out other countries that had been attacked by terrorists as shown by a mean of 3.678, and that the government reminded the people of other good things

it had done in previous terror attacks as shown by a mean of 3.609. This thus supports that majority of the respondents saw the use of offensive reduction strategies.

The findings agree with those of Avraham (2013) who established that Middle Eastern officials used offensive reduction strategies to a great extent. They found out that the ministerial adviser to Iraq’s Ministry of Tourism had claimed that their cities were safe since their security was in good shape. Similarly, Zhang and Benoit (2004) found out that Saudi Arabia used offensive reduction strategies where Saudi Arabia bolstered its image in four ways. First, it expressed shock and concern over the 9/11 tragedy. Second, the country offered aid and support to the victims of the terrorist attacks. Third, the country discussed humanitarian efforts in other countries and lastly, the country quickly retreated from its initial opposition to attacking Iraq after Bush addressed the United Nations.

Corrective Action Strategy

The fourth objective for the study was to analyze the effect of corrective action strategy use in terror related post crisis communication in Kenya. Respondents were asked the extent to which they saw the use of corrective action strategies. The results were as presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Corrective Action Strategy Use in Terror Related Post Crisis Communication

Statement	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	Std Dev.
The government communicated the plans that it had laid in place to prevent such an occurrence in future.	29	34	51	159	65	3.583	0.733
The government communicated its moves such as training of Recce squad that would handle terror related attacks.	20	30	42	174	72	3.734	0.831
The government kept communicating that it had resolved the crisis by claiming that all the terrorists involved had been killed.	12	12	12	241	60	3.964	1.208
The government introduced security measures such as body search of individuals as they get into malls.	22	30	54	144	88	3.728	0.722

From the findings, the respondents were in agreement that the government kept communicating that it had resolved the crisis by claiming that all the terrorists involved had been killed as shown by a mean of 3.964, the government communicated its moves such as training of Recce squad that would handle terror related attacks as shown by a mean of 3.734, the government introduced security measures such as body search of individuals as they get into malls as shown by a mean of 3.728, and that the government communicated the plans that it had laid in place to prevent such an occurrence in future as shown by a mean of 3.583. This is an indication that most of the respondents saw the use of corrective action. The results agree with the findings of Holtzhausen et al., (2009) who established an extensive use of corrective action strategies after sexual assaults at Air force Academy in 2002 since 75%, n=15 of the respondents confirmed the usage. On the contrary Zhang and Benoit (2004) found that Saudi Arabia did not employ these strategies after 9/11.

Mortification strategies

The fifth objective of the study was to describe the effect of mortification strategies use in terror related post crisis communication in Kenya. The respondents were asked to indicate their opinion on various statements that relate with the use of mortification strategies. The results were as presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Mortification Strategies Use in Terror Related Post Crisis Communication

Statement	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	Std. Dev.
The government admitted that it had failed to provide enough security.	27	24	49	154	84	3.722	0.760
The government admitted that it had not responded to the attack as soon as possible.	25	22	54	161	76	3.713	0.773
The government admitted that it had made mistakes in the way it handled the attack.	11	33	50	172	72	3.779	0.817
The government apologized to the victims and those affected by the attack.	23	42	44	151	78	3.648	0.721
The government apologized to the citizens for failing to provide enough security.	12	12	24	266	24	3.821	1.336

From the findings, the respondents were in agreement that the government apologized to the citizens for failing to provide enough security as shown by a mean of 3.821, the government admitted that it had made mistakes in the way it handled the attack as shown by a mean of 3.779, the government admitted that it had failed to provide enough security as shown by a mean of 3.722, the government admitted that it had not responded to the attack as soon as possible as shown by a mean of 3.713, and that the government apologized to the victims and those affected by the attack as shown by a mean of 3.648. This is an indication that the respondents saw the government use mortification strategies. These findings conflict with those of Holtzhausen et al., (2009) who established minimal use of mortification after Air Force Academy’s sexual assault claim where only 20%, n=4 of the respondents agreed to its usage.

Country’s Image

Respondents were asked to indicate the way they rate the country in relation to the attack. The results were as shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Nature of Image

Scenario	Very favorable	Favorable	Undecided	Unfavorable	Very unfavorable	Mean	Std. Dev.
Before the Westgate Mall attack	231	48	23	32	5	4.382	1.434
During and immediately after the attack	26	36	13	191	71	2.266	0.399
After official communication aimed at repairing the image	36	135	64	49	54	3.148	0.567

From the findings, majority of the respondents indicated that before the Westgate Mall attack the country was very favorable as indicated by a mean of 4.382, during and immediately after the attack, the country was unfavorable as shown by a mean value of 2.266 and after the government handled and resolved the matter they were not sure whether the country was favorable or not as indicated by a mean value of 3.148. This is an indication that the Westgate mall terror attack had a negative effect on the image of the country.

Respondents were also asked to indicate their level of confidence in the security of the country is before and after the terror attack. The results were as shown in Table 7.

Table 7: Level of Confidence

	Very high confidence	High Confidence	Undecided	Low confidence	Very low confidence	Mean	Std. Dev.
Before the Westgate Mall attack	206	52	35	31	14	4.198	1.252
During and immediately after the attack	33	41	11	178	75	2.346	0.368
After official communication aimed at repairing the image	46	45	54	144	49	2.689	0.263

From the findings, the respondents indicated that before the Westgate Mall attack, they had very high confidence interval as indicated by a mean value of 4.198, During and immediately after the attack their confidence interval were low as indicated by a mean value of 2.346, After the government handled and resolved the matter they were still having low confidence level as indicated by a mean value of 2.689. This is an indication that the terror attack had significance influence on confidence levels of the citizens.

Respondents were also asked to indicate the extent to which they agree with the following statements in as far as how effective the use of different strategies was in repairing the image of the country. The results were as shown in Table 8.

Table 8: Effective Use of Different Strategies in Repairing the Image of the Country

Statements	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	Std. Dev.
By claiming that the government had not done anything wrong the officials helped to repair the image of the country	95	30	40	134	39	2.976	0.573
By arguing that the terrorist were solely to be blamed for the attack, the officials were able to repair the country’s image.	83	154	35	22	44	2.379	0.295
Blaming the media for spreading false information about the attack helped the officials in repairing the image of the country.	30	45	33	160	70	3.577	0.752
By claiming not to have had prior information about the attack, the officials were able to repair the image.	12	12	24	266	24	3.822	1.338
By claiming that whatever the government did was in efforts to counter the attack, the officials repaired the image of the country.	67	171	34	30	36	2.399	0.321
By arguing that the government had tight security measures in place, the officials were able to repair the image of the country.	75	145	30	33	55	2.550	0.304
Claiming that the government rescued many Kenyans during the attack helped the officials in repairing the country’s image.	64	166	32	44	32	2.450	0.307

Claiming that the actual number of lives lost was far below what the media was spreading helped in repairing the country's image.	78	161	33	30	36	2.364	0.291
By reminding people of other worse cases of terror attacks before this, the officials helped in repairing the damaged image.	71	156	37	32	42	2.462	0.284
By pointing out that the countries that were attacking Kenya and issuing travel advisory against it were victims of terror attacks too, the officials helped repair the image of the country.	59	180	30	32	37	2.432	0.352
Accepting that the government had failed by not tightening security loopholes and offering an apology for the same helped repair the image.	32	32	22	190	62	3.645	0.911
Offers to compensate the victims financially and giving psychological support to the affected helped repair the damaged image.	68	178	30	25	37	2.364	0.350
By offering to correct the wrong done to avoid such occurrence in future, the officials were able to repair the image	74	190	20	30	24	2.231	0.387

From the findings, the respondents indicated that the denial strategies that were used by the government were not effective in repairing the image of the country this is because the respondents disagreed that by claiming that the government had not done anything wrong the officials helped to repair the image of the country as shown by a mean of 2.976 and that by arguing that the terrorist were solely to be blamed for the attack, the officials were able to repair the country's image as shown by a mean of 2.379. This agrees with the findings of Benoit and Shirley (1997) who rated denial strategies among the least effective image repair strategies with a mean of 2.14.

The findings also showed that evasion strategies that were used were effective in repairing the image of the country because the respondents were in agreement that blaming the media for spreading false information about the attack helped the officials in repairing the image of the country as shown by a mean of 3.577 and that by claiming not to have had prior information about the attack, the officials were able to repair the image as shown by a mean of 3.822. The findings do not agree with those of Benoit and Shirley (1997) who rated evasive strategies as being among the three least effective image repair strategies with an average mean of 2.43.

Further, the findings established that the offensive reduction strategies that were used were not effective in repairing the image of the country, this is because the respondents were in disagreement that: by claiming that whatever the government did was in efforts to counter the attack, the officials repaired the image of the country as shown by a mean of 2.399; by arguing that the government had tight security measures in place, the officials were able to repair the image of the country as shown by a mean of 2.550; claiming that the government rescued many Kenyans during the attack helped the officials in repairing the country's image as shown by a mean of 2.450; claiming that the actual number of lives lost was far below what the media was spreading helped in repairing the country's image as shown by a mean of 2.364; by reminding people of other worse cases of terror attacks before this, the officials helped in repairing the damaged image as shown by a mean of 2.462 and that by pointing out that the countries that were attacking Kenya and issuing travel advisory against it were victims of terror attacks too, the officials helped repair the image of the country as shown by a mean of 2.432.

The findings further showed that mortification strategies were effectively used in repairing the image of the country since the respondents were in agreement that accepting that the government had failed by not tightening

security loopholes and offering an apology for the same helped repair the image as shown by a mean of 3.645. These findings correlate with those of Benoit and Shirley (1997) who rated mortification as one of the highly effective image repair strategies. Mortification was rated as having a mean of 4.24, their argument is that is a person is responsible for an offensive act, we expect that person to apologize and we are often willing to forgive them when the apology seems sincere. These findings are similar to those of Avraham (2013) who found out that accepting the mistake and apologizing coupled with a promise to repair damages and prevent the recurrence of the same works best with victims who are directly affected by the crisis.

Furthermore, corrective action strategies were not effectively used in repairing the image of the country since the respondents did not agree that by offering to correct the wrong done to avoid such occurrence in future; the officials were able to repair the image as shown by a mean of 2.231. This contradicts the findings of other scholars who rank corrective action as being among the most effective image repair strategies. Benoit and Shirley (1997) ranked it as having a mean of 4.10 thus concluding that it was effective in image repair attempts. Similarly, Avraham (2013) found out that a promise to repair damages and prevent a recurrence of the same works well in image repair attempts.

Correlation Analysis

Linear relationship between two variables is referred to as correlation coefficient. The study conducted Pearson moment correlation analysis. Using the correlation coefficient, the study tested whether interdependency existed between the independent variables and also whether there was any relationship between the dependent variable (Nature of image) and independent variables.

The value of the correlation coefficient lies between -1 and 1 where values of 1 indicate a perfect positive/negative relationship between the variables. If the correlation coefficient value is 0 it implies that there is no relationship existing between variables under consideration. A correlation coefficient of between 0.0 and 0.39 is considered to be “weak”, between 0.40 and 0.59 is considered to be “moderate”, 0.6 and above is considered to be “strong”.

Table 9: Correlation

		Nature of image	Denial strategies	Evasion strategies	Offensiveness reduction strategies	Corrective action strategies	Mortification strategies
Nature of image	Pearson Correlation	1					
	Sig. (2-tailed)						
Denial strategies	N	338					
	Pearson Correlation	-.788**	1				
Evasion strategies	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001					
	N	338	338				
Offensiveness reduction strategies	Pearson Correlation	.813**	.359	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)						
Corrective action strategies	N						
	Pearson Correlation						
Mortification strategies	Sig. (2-tailed)						
	N						

		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.062			
		N	338	338	338		
Offensiveness reduction strategies	Pearson		-.775**	.516	.538	1	
	Correlation						
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.058	.079		
		N	338	338	338	338	
Corrective action strategies	Pearson		-.807**	.293	.454	.264	1
	Correlation						
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.083	.064	.179	
		N	338	338	338	338	338
Mortification strategies	Pearson		.861**	.235	.311	.214	.221
	Correlation						
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.083	.064	.179	.097
		N	338	338	338	338	338

The results reveal that Denial strategies and Nature of image in Kenya were significantly and negatively associated ($r=-0.788$, $p\text{-value}=0.001$). This shows that denial strategies did not help in image repair which agrees with the findings of Benoit and Shirley (1997) who rated denial as being among the least effective strategies. This is contrary to the findings of Zhang and Benoit (2004) who found the use of denial strategies after 9/11 as being persuasive in image repair attempts after the country was accused of supporting terrorism. The difference may be attributed to the fact that unlike in the case of Saudi Arabia, Kenya was not accused of supporting but rather was seen as being unable to control terror attacks considering the many attacks that had hit it.

Evasion strategies and Nature of image in Kenya were found to be significantly and positively associated ($r=0.813$, $p\text{-value}=0.000$). These findings are consistent with those of Holtezhause et al., (2009) who found that there was a statistically significant correlation between story balance and the use of defeasibility (lack of information or ability) as an image repair strategy (χ^2 $df=2 =6.974$, $p<.031$). Similarly, Zhang and Benoit (2004) established that a claim of good intentions and defeasibility which are evasive strategies were effective in Saudi Arabia's image repair efforts. Considering that terror attacks occur when least expected, they are considered accidental. This explains why the claim of the attack being accidental and other evasive strategies worked positively in image repair attempts.

The findings also established that Offensiveness reduction strategies and Nature of image in Kenya were negatively and significantly associated ($r=-0.775$, $p\text{-value}=0.001$). The findings agree with those of other researchers such as Benoit and Shirley (2009) who rated offensive reduction strategies such as bolstering, minimization counter attack and differentiation as the least effective strategies in image repair. Zhang & Benoit (2004) found these strategies to be partially effective in Saudi Arabia's image repair attempts.

The study findings further established that Corrective action strategies and post crisis communication in Kenya were negatively and significantly associated ($r=-0.807$, $p\text{-value}=0.000$). These findings correspond to those of Zhang (2004) who established that corrective action did not facilitate image repair in Saudi Arabia. However, Benoit and Shirley (2013) rank the use of corrective action as the second best strategy in image repair efforts. The difference may be due to the fact that unlike organizations that can promise to correct a mistake done, destinations cannot simply promise to change overnight. In addition, for terror related crisis, the damage caused mainly involves loss of lives which cannot be corrected.

Lastly, the study established that Mortification strategies and post crisis communication in Kenya are positively and significantly associated ($r=0.861$, $p\text{-value}=0.000$). The findings are in line with those of Avraham (2013) who established that acknowledging the negative image directly, accepting fault and apologizing and is the most effective even if not the most convenient course of action. Similarly, Benoit and Shirley (2009) rated mortification as the most effective image repair strategy. However, Holtzhausen et al., (2009) had contrary results where mortification (take responsibility and apologize) yielded a statistically significant relationship (χ^2 $df=2$ $=9.107$, $p<.05$). In this instance, mortification produced 25.0% ($n=6$) of positive stories and 58.3% ($n=14$) of negative stories. When mortification was not used, it produced a balanced story in 48.4% ($n=89$) of cases. This indicates that mortification was not a good image repair strategy for the Air Force.

Multiple Regression Analysis

The study conducted regression analysis to investigate how the predictor variables influence the response variable. The study aimed to evaluate the image repair strategies used Nature of image in Kenya. The results of the multiple regression analysis were presented in three tables in the subsections below.

Model Summary

The study used model summary in analyzing the variation of the dependent variable due to changes in the independent variables. The study analyzed the variation in Nature of image as a result of change in denial strategies, evasion strategies, offensiveness reduction strategies, corrective action strategies and mortification strategies.

Table 10: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.751 ^a	.564	.543	.35487

a. Predictors: (Constant), denial strategies, evasion strategies, offensiveness reduction strategies, corrective action strategies, mortification strategies

From the findings presented in table 10, the value of adjusted R^2 was found to be 0.543 which implies that 54.3% variation in Nature of image can be attributed to changes in change in denial strategies, evasion strategies, offensiveness reduction strategies, corrective action strategies and mortification strategies. The remaining 45.7% suggests that there are other factors that affect image repair that were not included in the model. The relationship between the variables under investigation is shown by correlation coefficient which is denoted by R. From the results presented in Table 10, the variables were strongly and positively related as indicated by correlation coefficient value of 0.751.

Analysis of Variance

The study conducted analysis of variance with the aim of establishing whether that data used in the study was significant. The selected level of significance was 0.05 and the data was concluded to be suitable for analysis if the p-value was less than the selected significance level. The results were as presented in Table 11.

Table 11: ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	44.404	5	8.881	50.591	.000 ^b
Residual	58.28	332	0.176		
Total	102.684	337			

a. Dependent Variable: Nature of image

b. Predictors: (Constant), denial strategies, evasion strategies, offensiveness reduction strategies, corrective action strategies, mortification strategies

The study found a significance value of 0.000 which was less than 0.05 at 95% confidence interval; which is an indication that the data is ideal for making conclusion. The F-critical value, obtained from the F-distribution tables, was less than F-calculated (2.241<50.591). This shows that denial strategies, evasion strategies, offensiveness reduction strategies, corrective action strategies and mortification strategies significantly influence Nature of image in Kenya. The findings agree with the findings of Bloenhauer et al., (2014) where a one-way ANOVA showed a significant difference in feelings of respondents who were exposed to mortification and corrective action.

Coefficients of the Study Variables

The beta coefficients were used to illustrate the association between the variables using a model of the structure: $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \beta_5X_5 + \epsilon$

Where Y = Nature of image; β_0 = regression constant; $\beta_1, -\beta_4$ = Coefficients; X_1 is denial strategies; X_2 is evasion strategies; X_3 is offensiveness reduction strategies; X_4 is corrective action strategies and X_5 is mortification strategies.

Table 12: Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients			t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	0.547	0.079		6.924	0.001
Denial strategies	-0.298	0.071	-0.282	-4.197	0.029
Evasion strategies	0.358	0.073	0.149	3.507	0.003
Offensiveness reduction strategies	-0.301	0.077	-0.303	-4.377	0.020
Corrective action strategies	-0.256	0.092	-0.312	-3.891	0.031
Mortification strategies	0.337	0.075	0.274	4.013	0.009

In view of the results in Table 12 above, regression equation extracted was as presented below.

$$Y = 0.547 - 0.298 X_1 + 0.358 X_2 - 0.301 X_3 - 0.256 X_4 + 0.337 X_5 + \epsilon$$

The equation above reveals that holding the variables, denial strategies, evasion strategies, offensiveness reduction strategies, corrective action strategies and mortification strategies, to a constant zero, they will significantly influence Nature of image in Kenya as shown by constant = 0.547.

Denial strategies are statistically significant in explaining Nature of image in Kenya as shown by ($\beta = -0.298$, $P = 0.029$). This indicates that denial strategies negatively and significantly relate with Nature of image in Kenya. Therefore, increasing denial strategies by a single unit will lead to a decrease in Nature of image by 0.298 units. This is in line with findings of Benoit and Drew (1997) found in their study of interpersonal image repair strategies, this study of professionals revealed that denial was perceived to be the least effective organizational crisis response whereby the use of denial strategies led to negative impact on image.

Evasion strategies are statistically significant in explaining Nature of image in Kenya as shown by ($\beta = 0.358$, $P = 0.003$). This indicates that Evasion strategies positively and significantly relate with Nature of image in Kenya. Therefore, increasing Evasion strategies by a single unit will lead to an increase in image repair by

0.358 units. These findings agree with those of Benoit and Zhang (2004) who established positive relation between evasion strategies and nature of image during Saudi Arabia’s image repair attempts.

Offensiveness reduction strategies are statistically significant in explaining Nature of image in Kenya as shown by ($\beta = -0.301, P = 0.020$). This indicates that Offensiveness reduction strategies negatively and significantly relate with Nature of image in Kenya. Therefore, increasing Offensiveness reduction strategies by a single unit will lead to a decrease in image repair by 0.301 units. The findings are contrary to those of Ferguson (2012) who established that offensive reduction strategies, especially bolstering and compensation positively related to nature of image ($\beta = 0.361, P = 0.004$).

Corrective action strategies are statistically significant in explaining Nature of image in Kenya as shown by ($\beta = -0.256, P = 0.031$). This indicates that Corrective action strategies negatively and significantly relate with Nature of image in Kenya. Therefore, increasing Corrective action strategies by a single unit will lead to a decrease in image repair by 0.256 units. The analysis of Bloenhauer et al., (2014) which showed that participants exposed to corrective action had more positive feelings ($M = 2.66, SD = .61$) are contrary to the findings of this study.

Mortification strategies are statistically significant in explaining Nature of image in Kenya as shown by ($\beta = 0.337, P = 0.009$). This indicates that Mortification strategies positively and significantly relate with image repair in Kenya. Therefore, increasing Mortification strategies by a single unit will lead to an increase in image repair by 0.337 units. Similarly, Bloenhauer et al., (2014) found out that participants exposed to mortification strategies had more positive feelings in relation to image ($M = 2.66, SD = .61$).

Moderating Effect of Preliminary Analysis of Crisis

The study sought to determine the moderating effect of preliminary analysis of crisis on terror related post crisis communication in Kenya. The study measured preliminary analysis of crisis using place and audience. A comparison was made regarding the effect of different image repair strategies in relation to different kinds of audience and the place where the audience were during the attack. Two categories of audiences were considered; victims and general audience. In relation to place, four places were identified; in the mall, near the mall (Westlands Division), within Nairobi and not within Nairobi. The results are shown in Table 13.

Table 13: Perception of audience about effectiveness of image repair strategies based on their location during the attack

Where you were during the Westgate Terror attack		Status	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
In the mall (20)	Denial perceived effect	Image repaired	not 14	3.8389	1.06798
		Image repaired	6	2.6458	1.35821
	Evasion perceived effect	Image repaired	not 7	2.7333	.79772
		Image repaired	13	3.5000	1.18187
	Offensive perceived effect	Image repaired	not 12	3.4833	.86164
		Image repaired	8	2.6562	.96304
	Corrective action perceived effect	Image repaired	not 11	3.3833	1.66969

		Image repaired	9	3.5250	1.68502
	Mortification perceived effect	Image not repaired	5	2.2917	1.11719
		Image repaired	15	3.9750	1.15728
Near the mall (42)	Denial perceived effect	Image not repaired	24	3.6322	.77840
		Image repaired	18	3.0259	.99691
	Evasion perceived effect	Image not repaired	8	2.8851	.86500
		Image repaired	34	3.3370	.93459
	Offensive perceived effect	Image not repaired	29	3.9425	.63781
		Image repaired	13	2.7944	.81756
	Corrective action perceived effect	Image not repaired	20	3.1286	1.23013
		Image repaired	22	3.3300	1.41421
	Mortification perceived effect	Image not repaired	15	2.9483	1.19032
		Image repaired	27	3.3556	1.15770
Within Nairobi (150)	Denial perceived effect	Image not repaired	79	2.9929	.89534
		Image repaired	71	2.8733	1.17780
	Evasion perceived effect	Image not repaired	84	3.2529	.77006
		Image repaired	66	2.6533	.92636
	Offensive perceived effect	Image not repaired	99	3.4808	.71264
		Image repaired	51	2.2733	1.02269
	Corrective action perceived effect	Image not repaired	72	3.6133	1.20945
		Image repaired	78	3.6750	1.31256
	Mortification perceived effect	Image not repaired	69	3.3586	1.06914
		Image repaired	81	3.6000	1.10868
Not within Nairobi (126)	Denial perceived effect	Image not repaired	30	2.9455	1.08515
		Image repaired	96	3.3167	1.12644
	Evasion perceived effect	Image not repaired	32	2.9874	.83435
		Image repaired	94	3.3000	.80872
	Offensive perceived effect	Image not repaired	24	2.5646	.86595

		Image repaired	102	3.4000	1.00344
Corrective action perceived effect		Image repaired	72	3.5566	1.23505
		Image not repaired			
Mortification perceived effect		Image repaired	54	3.0110	1.34933
		Image not repair	61	3.4670	.98142

From the findings, it is clear that there was some disparity regarding the effectiveness of different image repair strategies based on who the respondents were and where they were during the attack. Mortification was ranked as the most effective strategy by those who were within the mall during the attack. 15 out of the 20 survivors felt that these strategies helped repair the image and only 5 out of 20 felt they were ineffective. Denial strategies were considered least effective with only 6 of the 20 survivors claiming that they helped repair the image. Evasion strategies were also considered effective with 13 of the 20 respondents agreeing that they helped repair the image. Offensive reduction strategies and corrective action were found to be ineffective since 12 of the 20 and 11 of the 20 respondents respectively claimed they did not help in image repair.

Of the 42 respondents who were near the mall during the attack, 24 found denial strategies ineffective and 18 of the 42 found them effective. In relation to evasive strategies, 34 respondents found them effective and only 8 respondents claimed they were ineffective. 29 of the respondents found offensive reduction strategies as not being effective while 13 respondents found them effective. In relation to corrective action strategies, 20 respondents found them ineffective while 22 found them effective. Mortification strategies were found as being effective by 27 respondents while 15 others found them ineffective. This shows that evasion strategies were considered most effective followed by mortification strategies. Denial strategies and offensive reduction were found to be ineffective. Corrective action strategies were found to be effective but the difference between those who found them effective and ineffective was minor.

The findings of the 150 respondents who were within Nairobi during the attack showed that 79 respondents found denial strategies ineffective while 71 found them effective. Evasion strategies were found not to be effective by 84 respondents while 66 found them effective.

99 of these respondents found offensive reduction strategies to be ineffective while only 51 respondents found them effective. Corrective action strategies were found ineffective by 72 of the respondents while 78 others found them effective. Lastly, 69 respondents found mortification strategies as ineffective while 81 others found them effective. This implies that for these respondents, corrective action and mortification strategies were effective in image repair efforts.

For the 126 respondents who were not within Nairobi during the attack, 30 felt that denial strategies were not effective while 96 felt that they were effective. 32 of the respondents found evasion strategies to be ineffective while 94 found them effective. 24 of the respondents found offensive reduction strategies not effective while 102 found them effective. In relation to corrective action strategies, 72 of the respondents found them not to be effective while 54 found them effective. Lastly, 61 of the respondents found mortification strategies ineffective while 65 found them effective. This implies that for this category of respondents, all the strategies except corrective action were ranked as quite effective.

These findings show that most of the respondents who were far away from the attack were positively affected by almost all the strategies while most of those who were in the mall were positively affected by two strategies; mortification and evasion. The findings agree with those of Cooper (2015) who established that the attitude

and perception of audience have a direct impact on how effective image repair strategies turn out to be. Similarly, Gribas et al., (2018) found that preliminary analysis of crisis has implications on crisis response strategy effectiveness.

Moderated regression equation showed the effect place and audience had on the post crisis communication in Kenya.

Table 14: Moderated Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.751 ^a	.564	.543	.35487
2	.779 ^b	.607	.587	.18999

a. Predictors: (Constant), denial strategies, evasion strategies, offensiveness reduction strategies, corrective action strategies, mortification strategies

b. Predictors: (Constant), denial strategies, evasion strategies, offensiveness reduction strategies, corrective action strategies, mortification strategies, Preliminary Analysis Of Crisis

From the findings, the value of adjusted R² for the second model was 0.587 which increased from 0.543 in the first model. The findings therefore suggest that introduction of moderating variable results to more variation in Nature of image due to changes in denial strategies, evasion strategies, offensiveness reduction strategies, corrective action strategies and mortification strategies. Introduction of moderating variable caused 4.4% increase in explanation of variation in Nature of image.

Table 15: Moderated ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	44.404	5	8.881	50.591	.000 ^b
1 Residual	58.28	332	0.176		
Total	102.684	337			
Regression	14.267	6	2.378	66.052	.000 ^c
2 Residual	11.916	331	0.036		
Total	26.183	337			

a. Dependent Variable: Nature of image

b. Predictors: (Constant), denial strategies, evasion strategies, offensiveness reduction strategies, corrective action strategies, mortification strategies

c. Predictors: (Constant), denial strategies, evasion strategies, offensiveness reduction strategies, corrective action strategies, mortification strategies, Preliminary Analysis Of Crisis

From the findings, after the introduction of moderating variable in the second regression equation, the level of significant was 0.000, an indication that the model was significant in explaining nature of country’s image. The F-critical value, obtained from the F-distribution tables, was less than F-calculated (2.126<66.052). This shows that introduction of moderating variable (preliminary analysis of crisis) on terror related post crisis communication in Kenya significantly influence Nature of Kenyan image.

Table 16: Moderated Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Coefficients Beta		
(Constant)	0.547	0.079		6.924	0.001
Denial strategies	-0.298	0.071	-0.282	-4.197	0.029
Evasion strategies	0.358	0.073	0.149	3.507	0.003
1 Offensiveness reduction strategies	-0.301	0.077	-0.303	-4.377	0.020
Corrective action strategies	-0.256	0.092	-0.312	-3.891	0.031
Mortification strategies	0.337	0.075	0.274	4.013	0.009
(Constant)	0.634	0.137		4.628	.000
Denial strategies	-0.376	0.084	.871	-4.476	.013
Evasion strategies	0.369	0.065	.307	5.677	.001
2 Offensiveness reduction strategies	-0.427	0.062	.032	-6.887	.008
Corrective action strategies	-0.275	0.067	-.203	-4.104	.018
Mortification strategies	0.381	0.045	0.366	8.467	.005
Preliminary Analysis Of Crisis	0.474	0.068	.068	6.971	.011

a. Dependent Variable: Nature of image

In view of the results in Table 16 above, the moderated regression equation extracted (model 2) was as presented below.

$$Y = 0.634 - 0.376 X_1 + 0.369 X_2 - 0.427 X_3 - 0.275 X_4 + 0.381 X_5 + 0.474 (\text{Moderating variable}) + \epsilon$$

The equation above reveals that holding the variables, denial strategies, evasion strategies, offensiveness reduction strategies, corrective action strategies, mortification strategies and the moderating variable to a constant zero, they will significantly influence Nature of image in Kenya as shown by constant = 0.634.

Denial strategies are statistically significant in explaining Nature of image in Kenya as shown by ($\beta = -0.376$, $P = 0.013$); this was an increase from $\beta = -0.298$ in the first model. Therefore introduction of preliminary analysis of crisis as moderating variable results to an increase in the level to which denial strategies explain Nature of image in Kenya (i.e. from -0.298 to -0.376).

From the second regression model, evasion strategies are statistically significant in explaining Nature of image in Kenya as shown by ($\beta = 0.369$, $P = 0.001$). This is an indication that the introduction of preliminary analysis of crisis as moderating variable positively influences the level to which evasion strategies can explain the nature of image in Kenya. Beta coefficient value increased from 0.358 to 0.369.

The findings also established that offensiveness reduction strategies are statistically significant in explaining nature of image in Kenya after being moderated by preliminary analysis of crisis as shown by ($\beta = -0.427$, $P = 0.008$). The findings therefore show that introduction of the moderating variable positively influences the extent in which offensiveness reduction strategies can explain nature of image in Kenya. The findings show that after moderating variable was introduced, the value of beta coefficient increased from (0.301 to 0.427).

In the second model after the introduction of moderating variable, corrective action strategies are statistically significant in explaining nature of image in Kenya as shown by ($\beta = -0.275$, $P = 0.018$). From the findings, the beta coefficients for corrective action strategies increased from 0.256 to 0.275. Therefore preliminary analysis

of crisis positively increases the level to which corrective action strategies can be used to explain the nature of image in Kenya.

The findings also showed that after the introduction of moderating variable in model two, mortification strategies are statistically significant in explaining nature of image in Kenya as shown by ($\beta = 0.381$, $P = 0.005$). The value of beta coefficient increased in the second model to 0.381 from 0.337; this therefore suggests that preliminary analysis of crisis increases the level in which mortification strategies can be applied in explaining nature of image in Kenya.

The findings further established that the moderating variable (preliminary analysis of crisis) is statistically significant in explaining Nature of image in Kenya as shown by ($\beta = 0.471$, $P = 0.011$). This indicates that preliminary analysis of crisis positively and significantly relate with image repair in Kenya. Therefore, increasing preliminary analysis of crisis by a single unit will lead to an increase in image repair by 0.471 units.

From these finding, it is evident that preliminary analysis of crisis is significant moderating variable in evaluating the image repair strategies used in terror related post crisis communication in Kenya. The findings are in line with those of Coombs (2006) who established that there is need to match the crisis response strategy to the demands of the crisis situation. In his research, he established that the perception of different audiences regarding the crisis had a direct impact on their view about the effect of different image repair strategies used. Similarly, Avraham (2013) established the need to communicate different messages to different audiences, depending on the selected targets.

SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

Communication is a strong tool that is used to help repair the image after crisis. Whatever crisis communicators choose to say in image repair attempts has an effect in that it may or may not help to repair the image. Benoit (1997) proposes different strategies that may be employed in image repair attempts. Guided by this information, the study sought to evaluate the image repair strategies used in terror related post crisis communication in Kenya through a case study of the West Gate Mall attack.

Denial Strategies Use in Terror Related Post Crisis Communication

The first objective of the study was to evaluate the effect of denial strategies use in terror related post crisis communication in Kenya. The study found that the government explained that all the damages and losses were caused by the terrorists, the government claimed that it did not do anything wrong during the attack, the government claimed that it was not responsible for what happened and that the government claimed that all the deaths were caused by the terrorists and not its officers. This is an indication that the respondents observed that the government made use of the denial strategy. The findings are similar to the findings of Zhang and Benoit (2004) who found out that the Saudi Government relied heavily on denial to respond to this criticism after the 9/11 attack. These strategies were seen to have a negative effect in image repair attempts which is similar to the findings of Benoit (1997) who ranked denial strategies as the least effective in image repair efforts especially if the truth is established to be contrary to what is said.

Evasion Strategies Use in Terror Related Post Crisis Communication

The second objective of the study was to examine the effect of evasion strategies used in terror related post crisis communication in Kenya. The study revealed that the government explained that they took all possible measures to rescue as many citizens as possible, the government claimed not to have had prior information about the attack, the government explained that its manner of reaction was provoked by the terrorists, the

government explained that the changeover in security forces to bring in the army was intended to curb the situation, and that the government explained that the attack was accidental. This showed that majority of the respondents observed the use of evasion strategies after the Westgate mall attack. It therefore confirms that the government used evasion strategies to a great extent in its image repair attempts.

Evasion strategies were established to have had a significant and positive relation with terror related post crisis communication. These findings are consistent with those of Zhang & Benoit (2004) who established that a claim of good intentions and good intentions which are evasive strategies were effective in Saudi Arabia's image repair efforts. Considering that terror attacks occur when least expected, they are considered accidental. This explains why the claim of the attack being accidental and other evasive strategies worked positively in image repair attempts.

Offensive Reduction Strategies Use in Terror Related Post Crisis Communication

The study established that the government claimed that the media and other countries that were claiming Kenya is not secure were just tarnishing the image of the country, the government kept pointing out other factors such as the number of terrorists who have so far been killed especially after the operation Linda Nchi in Somalia, the government organized some counseling for the victims and their relatives, the government claimed that the lives lost were not as many as reported by the media, the government offered financial support to the victims, the government explained that it was not just Kenya that was prone to terror attacks and pointed out other countries that had been attacked by terrorists, and that the government reminded the people of other good things it had done in previous terror attacks. This showed that the government used offensive reduction strategies to improve the image of the country.

The strategies were found to have a significant and negative relation with terror related post crisis communication which implies that they did not aid in image repair. The findings agree with those of other researchers such as Benoit & Sheirly (2009) who rated offensive reduction strategies such as bolstering, minimization counter attack and differentiation as the least effective strategies in image repair. Zhang & Benoit (2004) found these strategies to be partially effective in Saudi Arabia's image repair attempts.

However, Avraham (2013) established that reducing the scale of crisis or minimization is an easy solution that helps destinations to repair image after crisis which is contrary to the findings of this study

Corrective Action Strategies Use in Terror Related Post Crisis Communication

The study found that the government kept communicating that it had resolved the crisis by claiming that all the terrorists involved had been killed, the government communicated its moves such as training of Recce squad that would handle terror related attacks, the government introduced security measures such as body search of individuals as they get into malls, and that the government communicated the plans that it had laid in place to prevent such an occurrence in future. This showed that the government used corrective action strategies in repairing the image of the country.

Corrective action strategies impacted on the image negatively since they were found to have had a significant and negative relation with terror related post crisis communication. These findings are correspond to those of Zhang(2004) who established that corrective action did not facilitate image repair in Saudi Arabia. However, Benoit & Sheirly (2013) rank the use of corrective action as the second best strategy in image repair efforts. The difference may be due to the fact that unlike organizations that can promise to correct a mistake done, destinations can not simply promise to change overnight. In addition, for terror related crisis, the damage caused mainly involves loss of lives which can not be corrected.

Mortification Strategies Use in Terror Related Post Crisis Communication

The study revealed that the government apologized to the citizens for failing to provide enough security, the government admitted that it had made mistakes in the way it handled the attack, the government admitted that it had failed to provide enough security, the government admitted that it had not responded to the attack as soon as possible, and that the government apologized to the victims and those affected by the attack. This is an indication that the respondents saw the government use mortification strategies. It was also evident that mortification strategies had a positive effect on image since they were established as having had a significant and positive relation with terror related post crisis communication. This relation can be attributed to the fact that the harm caused by the attack could not be denied or corrected immediately. The only way to make it less painful and less harmful was by accepting the fault and apologizing to those affected. The findings are in line with those of Avraham (2013) who established that acknowledging the negative image directly, accepting fault and apologizing and is the most effective—even if not the most convenient—course of action. Similarly, Benoit & Sheirly (2009) rated mortification as the most effective image repair strategy.

Moderating Effect of Preliminary Analysis of Crisis in Terror Related Post Crisis Communication

The study established that preliminary analysis of crisis had a direct effect on the effects of different image repair strategies used in terror related crisis communication in Kenya. A statistically significant effect was established on the effectiveness of all the image repair strategies after introduction of the moderating variable. This is similar to findings of Avraham (2013) who established that different target audiences are motivated by different needs, have different perceptions of places and are differently affected by the occurrence of a crisis event. In addition he found out that the level of proximity or distance of an individual affects the knowledge, perceptions and attitudes towards the place and also influences their interest and the relevance of what happened there.

Conclusion

The study found that denial strategies are statistically significant in explaining terror related post crisis communication in Kenya. The study also established that denial strategies negatively and significantly relate with terror related post crisis communication in Kenya. From the findings, the study concluded that increasing denial strategies by a single unit will lead to a decrease in image repair.

Further, the study found that evasion strategies are statistically significant in explaining image repair in Kenya. The study found that evasion strategies negatively and significantly relate with image repair in Kenya. From these findings, the study therefore concluded that increasing Evasion strategies by a single unit will lead to a decrease in image repair.

The study revealed that offensiveness reduction strategies are statistically significant in explaining image repair in Kenya. The study also established that Offensiveness reduction strategies negatively and significantly relate with image repair in Kenya. Therefore, it was concluded that increasing Offensiveness reduction strategies by a single unit will lead to a decrease in image repair.

The study found that corrective action strategies are statistically significant in explaining image repair in Kenya. This indicates that Corrective action strategies negatively and significantly relate with image repair in Kenya. It was therefore concluded that increasing Corrective action strategies by a single unit will lead to a decrease in image repair.

Finally, mortification strategies are statistically significant in explaining image repair in Kenya. The study also established that mortification strategies positively and significantly relate with image repair in Kenya. The study concluded that increasing Mortification strategies by a single unit will lead to an increase in image repair.

Recommendations of the Study

Crisis communicators are advised to choose the image repair strategies based on the kind of crisis. It is wrong to assume that the image repair strategies will work in a similar manner for all the crises.

The study found that mortification and evasion strategies have positive effect on image. The study therefore recommends in terror related post crisis mortification, offensive reduction and evasion strategies should be used since they positively affect the image. Denial strategies should be avoided in terror related post crisis communication as they do not aid in image repair.

Crisis communicators should carry out preliminary analysis of crisis before settling on particular crisis. They should put into consideration the target audiences and the place where the crisis occurred.

Recommendations for Further Research

The main objective of this study was to evaluate the image repair strategies used in terror related post crisis communication in Kenya. The study explained only 54.3% variation in terror related post crisis communication using the denial strategies, evasion strategies, offensiveness reduction strategies, corrective action strategies and mortification strategies; therefore, image repair strategies in terror related post crisis communication cannot be said to have been exhaustively researched on. Hence, what this research has achieved should be supplemented by further research work.

The study recommends further research to be carried out on the effect of use of other strategies such as silence which have not been covered in this study. The study also recommends further research on effects of a combination of a number of image repair strategies that does not consider each strategy individual and finally a comparative study that compares the effects of image repair strategies in different cases of terror crisis should be carried out.

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