

# The Relationship Between Crisis Response Strategies and Behavioral Intentions: A Systematic Literature Review

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## ABSTRACT

Crisis response strategy is a pivotal concept for organizations in crisis communication, serving as a valuable framework for examining public behavioral intentions. Few systematic reviews have examined the impact of crisis response strategies on organizations. This paper aims to investigate the relationship between crisis response strategies and behavioral intentions within organizations. Adhering to PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines, this systematic literature review involved a comprehensive analysis of the Scopus and Web of Science databases, yielding 33 relevant studies. These studies, which utilized crisis response strategies as independent, moderating, or mediating variables, were classified into different research domains, including business and management, and communication. Analysis of the literature identified sixteen main themes of crisis response strategies: (1) accommodation-related, (2) bolstering, (3) coping strategies, (4) corporate social responsibility (CSR), (5) corrective action, (6) courtesy, (7) defensive, (8) denial, (9) diminish, (10) evasion of responsibility-related, (11) information strategy, (12) intimidation, (13) rebuild strategies-related, (14) reduction of offensiveness-related, (15) speed, and (16) sympathy, encompassing 28 sub-themes. Quantitative and qualitative analyses provided substantial empirical support for a significant relationship between crisis response strategies and behavioral intentions, including supportive behaviors, purchase intentions, secondary crisis communication, and word of mouth. The paper concludes with a presentation of the results and suggestions for future research directions and organizations.

**Keywords:** Crisis Response Strategies, Behavioral Intentions, Management, Crisis Communication, PRISMA.

## INTRODUCTION

The concept of crisis response strategy has been explored across various scientific fields, such as business and management, public relations, corporate communication, crisis communication (Alves, Lok, Luo, & Hao, 2020; Pedersen, Ritter, & Di Benedetto, 2020) over recent decades. Originally central to the research domain of crisis and disaster management (Ritchie & Jiang, 2019), this concept has since been adopted in other areas like crisis management (Zhong, Sun, Law, & Li, 2021), business and management (Kang, Diao, & Zanini, 2020), risk communication (D. K. D. Kim & Kreps, 2020), and crisis communication (Christensen & Lægred, 2020). Coombs and Holladay (2012) note that terms such as crisis communication strategies, response strategies, image repair strategies, and image restoration strategies are employed to describe crisis response strategies.

Despite this, definitions are common in that they all pertain to actions undertaken following a crisis (Coombs, Holladay, & White, 2020). The term "crisis response strategies" is mainly used within the realm of crisis communication. Research in this area examines how organizational strategies in response to crises affect corporate reputation and behavioral intentions (Coombs, 2007). Recognized as a fundamental concept for reputation or image repair, it is instrumental in investigating public behavior intentions (Honisch & Manchon, 2020). Thus, it is beneficial for researchers to track the evolution of this field of crisis communication to glean new insights into its influence on behavioral intentions.

Since existing research frequently utilizes the communication concept of crisis response strategies to elucidate individuals' behavioral intentions or to detail the development of crisis response strategies driven by specific behavioral intentions (Triantafillidou & Yannas, 2020), this paper investigates these associations. Behavioral intention is defined by Ajzen (2020) as a sign of an individual's readiness to perform a specific behavior. This review employs terms such as behavioral intention, word of mouth, supportive behavioral intention, purchase intentions, and secondary crisis communication interchangeably (Ham & Kim, 2019; Hämpke, Röseler, & Thielsch, 2022; Mohammed, Goodman, & Yfantidou, 2022). Given that studies measuring crisis response strategies and behavioral intentions provide more precise data for a comprehensive overview, we focus on including quantitative studies exploring the relationship between crisis response strategies and behavioral intention.

This article aims to address this gap by identifying and characterizing the relationship between crisis response strategies and behavioral intentions during a crisis. This work fills a critical void in the literature, which has predominantly focused on systematic reviews examining specific crisis response strategies, manipulation, or the relationship between crisis response strategies and reputation (Bundy, Iqbal, & Pfarrer, 2021; Othman & Yusoff, 2020). This systematic review is driven by the main research question: How do crisis response strategies impact behavioral intentions during a crisis? It particularly examines the relationship between crisis response strategies and behavioral intentions.

## METHODOLOGY

### Review Protocol: PRISMA

The PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guideline for performing an SLR focuses on reviews that analyze randomized trials, which can also be utilized as primary data to publish systematic reviews for other forms of research (Page et al., 2021). According to Sierra-Correa and Cantera Kintz (2015), it has three distinct advantages: 1) defining straightforward research questions that allow for systematic research, 2) identifying inclusion and exclusion criteria, and 3) attempting to examine an extensive database of scientific literature in a specified time.

### Formulation of the Research Question

The research question was developed using ideas from previous research on behavior intentions and crisis response strategies (Leung, Wu, & Sun, 2023). All articles pertaining to how crisis response strategies influence behavioral intentions. They were using the mnemonic of PICO, which signifies 'P' (Population or Problem), 'I' (Interest), and 'Co' (Context) (Lockwood, Munn, & Porritt, 2015). The authors incorporated three primary elements into the review, including the global community (population), crisis response strategies and behavioral intentions (interest), and the crisis (context), based on these principles. This made it possible for the writers to develop the study's primary research question: How do crisis response strategies impact behavioral intentions?

Systematic Searching Strategies

Identification

Three main keywords were selected based on the research questions: crisis response strategy, behavioral intention, and crisis. To widen and enrich these keywords, the writers undertook a thorough search for synonyms, related terms, and variations using web resources such as thesaurus.com. In addition, they referenced the terms used in earlier studies, consulted the keyword ideas offered by Scopus, and solicited expert opinions to create a comprehensive and relevant keyword collection. Several keywords associated with a crisis response strategy, behavioral intentions, and crisis were identified as a result of this process, including crisis response, response strategy, crisis communication, crisis communication strategy, image restoration strategies, reputation repair strategies, crisis outcome, engagement, WOM, word of mouth, supportive behavioral intention, paracrisis, scandals, and emergency. The combinations of these terms were reviewed in two databases: Scopus and Web of Science, using search capabilities such as field code functions, phrase search, wildcards, truncation, and boolean operators (Table 1). The search tactics generated 958 potential SLR articles, including 405 from WOS and 553 from Scopus.

**Table 1.** Search String Used in the Selected Database

Database	Search String
Scopus	TITLE-ABS-KEY (("crisis response strategy*" OR "crisis response" OR "response strategy*" OR "crisis communication strategy*" OR "communication strategy*" OR "crisis communication*" OR "image restoration strategy*" OR "reputation repair strategy*") AND ("crisis outcome*" OR "engagement*" OR "behavi* intention*" OR "supportive behavi*" OR "WOM" OR "Word of Mouth*")) AND (crisis* OR paracrisis* OR scandal* OR emergency*)
Web of Science	TS= (("crisis response strategy*" OR "crisis response" OR "response strategy*" OR "crisis communication strategy*" OR "communication strategy*" OR "crisis communication*" OR "image restoration strategy*" OR "reputation repair strategy*") AND ("crisis outcome*" OR "engagement*" OR "behavi* intention*" OR "supportive behavi*" OR "WOM" OR "Word of Mouth*")) AND (crisis* OR paracrisis* OR scandal* OR emergency*)

Source(s): Authors' own work.

Screening

The second procedure was screening, which involved selecting publications for inclusion or exclusion from the research based on criteria (Table 2). Considering the concept of 'maturity of the research field' stressed by Kraus, Breier, and Dasí-Rodríguez (2020), this evaluation limited the screening process to publications published between 2019 and 2024. Because there were enough published papers over this period to allow for a representative review, it was decided to use it. Because empirical research publications include primary data, the writers decided to review them. Only those written in Chinese and English were taken into consideration to prevent confusion. Since the aim of the SLR was related to crisis response strategies and behavioral intentions, it was assumed that choosing communication and social science research studies as criteria would increase the possibility of finding more articles related to crisis response strategies and behavioral intentions. In this phase, 535 articles were excluded from the review as they did not meet the inclusion criteria. This left 333 articles (WOS 155, Scopus 178) analyzed in the next phase.

**Table 2.** Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Criterion	Inclusion	Exclusion
Timeline	2019–2024	2018 and earlier
Document Type	Empirical data articles	Conference papers, conference reviews, book chapters, reviews, notes, etc.
Language	English, Chinese	Non-English and non-Chinese
Subject area	Communication, Social sciences	Computer science, behavioral sciences, business economics, psychology and health care science services, medicine, mathematics, other non-communication and social science studies
Source type	Journal	Conference proceedings, book series, books

Source(s): Authors' own work.

Eligibility

The authors manually screened the remaining articles (either by reading the title, abstract, or the entire article) to determine whether the articles met the defined inclusion criteria. The title screening excluded 200 articles, and the abstract screening removed 80 articles. A further 11 articles were excluded after the authors had read the content of the selected articles. 291 articles were removed at this stage because they did not focus on the crisis, did not address crisis response strategies and behavioral intentions, or were in the form of a review. The final number of articles for the quality assessment phase was 33 (Figure 1).

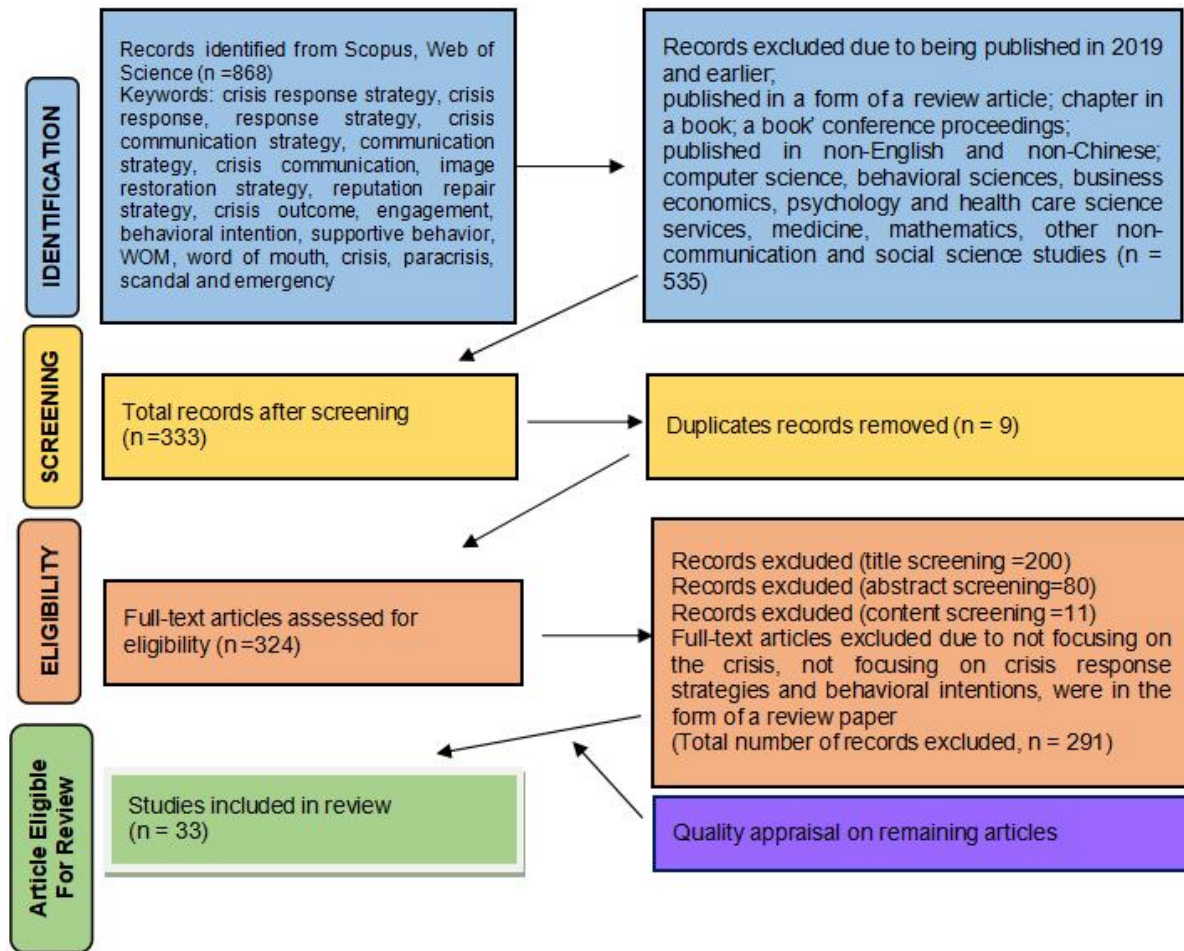


Figure 1. Flow Diagram of the Searching Process

Quality Appraisal

The quality assessment phase was conducted to ensure that the methodology and analysis of the selected studies were carried out successfully. The Mixed-Method Appraisal Tool (MMAT) allows researchers to assess a systematic review of mixed-method studies and applies to five types of studies: qualitative research, randomized controlled trials, non-randomized trials, quantitative descriptive studies, and mixed-method studies (Hong et al., 2018). Before proceeding with the quality assessment, each selected study underwent two screening stages. The selected publications were evaluated using five primary criteria established by the research design. The MMAT led the review of the articles, which focused on the consistency of samples and analyses (Table 3).

Table 3. The Criteria Used to Determine the Rigor of the Methodology and Analysis Used in the Selected Articles

Research design	Assessment criteria
Qualitative	QA1: Is the qualitative approach suitable for answering the research question?
	QA2: Are qualitative data collection methods suitable for answering the research question?
	QA3: Do the findings adequately reflect the data?
	QA4: Does the interpretation of the results have adequate support from the data?
	QA5: Does coherence exist among the qualitative data sources, as well as their collection,

Research design	Assessment criteria
	analysis, and interpretation?
Quantitative (descriptive)	QA1: Does the sampling strategy effectively address the research question?
	QA2: Does the sample adequately represent the target population?
	QA3: Do the measurements used in the study seem appropriate?
	QA4: Does the risk of nonresponse bias appear to be low?
	QA5: Does the statistical analysis effectively answer the research question?
Mixed methods	QA1: Is there an appropriate basis for using a mixed methods strategy to answer the research question?
	QA2: Do the various components of the study integrate adequately to answer the research question effectively?
	QA3: Are the results of integrating qualitative and quantitative components interpreted appropriately?
	QA4: Are the differences and discrepancies between quantitative and qualitative results dealt with effectively?
	QA5: Do the various components of the study meet the quality criteria of the respective tradition of the methods used?

Source: Hong et al.(2018).

Papers were assessed using the five types of studies listed above, with the following responses possible: "yes," "no", and "do not know or cannot tell" (Kamarudin, Tang, Bolong, & Adzharuddin, 2023). Articles were reviewed after meeting at least three criteria for methodology and analysis. All assessment conclusions were reached by mutual agreement. In total, 24 papers met all requirements; seven met at least four, and two met at least three (Table 4).

**Table 4.** Results of the Quality Assessment

Study	Research Design	QA1	QA2	QA3	QA4	QA5	Number of criteria fulfilled	Inclusion in the review
Mohammed et al. (2022)	MX	√	√	√	√	√	5/5	√
Y. Kim, Kang, Lee, and Yang (2019)	QN (DC)	√	√	√	√	√	5/5	√
Y. Kim and Chon (2022)	QN (DC)	√	√	√	√	√	5/5	√
Y. Kim and Lim (2020)	QN (DC)	√	√	√	√	√	5/5	√
Gesser-Edelsburg and Hijazi (2020)	QL	√	√	X	√	√	4/5	√
Su, Pan, and Huang (2023)	QN (DC)	√	√	√	√	√	5/5	√
Stadler Blank, Loveland, Cheng, Beck, and Rundus (2024)	QN (DC)	C	√	√	√	√	4/5	√
Zhang and Song (2023)	QN (DC)	C	C	√	√	√	3/5	√
M. Yu, Cheng, Yang, and Yu (2022)	MX	√	C	√	√	√	4/5	√
Xiao and Yu (2022)	QN (DC)	√	C	√	√	√	4/5	√
Wu and Zhu (2021)	QN (DC)	√	√	√	√	√	5/5	√
Z. Wang, X. Liu, Zhang, Wang, and Liu (2022)	QN (DC)	√	√	√	√	√	5/5	√
Y. Wang, Zhang, Li, McLeay, and Gupta (2021)	MX	√	√	X	√	√	4/5	√
Triantafillidou and Yannas (2020)	QN (DC)	√	√	√	√	√	5/5	√
Thelen and Robinson (2019)	QL	√	√	√	√	√	5/5	√
Noh and Liu (2024)	QN (DC)	X	√	√	√	√	4/5	√
Ham and Kim (2019)	QN (DC)	√	√	√	√	√	5/5	√
Oh, Kim, and Ham (2022)	QN (DC)	√	√	√	√	√	5/5	√

Study	Research Design	QA1	QA2	QA3	QA4	QA5	Number of criteria fulfilled	Inclusion in the review
Y. Kim, Basnyat, and Meganck (2023)	QN (DC)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	5/5	✓
S. Park and Park (2020)	QL	X	C	✓	✓	✓	3/5	✓
Hämpke et al. (2022)	QN (DC)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	5/5	✓
Masuch, Greve, and Trang (2021)	QN (DC)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	5/5	✓
Chapman et al. (2022)	QN (DC)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	5/5	✓
Schreurs and Hamstra (2020)	QN (DC)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	5/5	✓
Honisch and Manchon (2020)	QN (DC)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	5/5	✓
Masngut and Mohamad (2021)	QL	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	4/5	✓
Paek and Hove (2019)	QN (DC)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	5/5	✓
Hirschfeld and Thielsch (2022)	QN (DC)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	5/5	✓
Langaro, Loureiro, Schivinski, and Neves (2024)	QN (DC)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	5/5	✓
Pang et al. (2022)	QN (DC)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	5/5	✓
Mohamed, Li, Kiani, and Ghani (2024)	QN (DC)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	5/5	✓
Halima, Li, Ghani, Kiani, and Cynthia (2021)	QN (DC)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	5/5	✓
Huang and DiStaso (2020)	QN (DC)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	5/5	✓

Notes: QA Quality assessment, QN (DC) quantitative descriptive, QL qualitative, MX mixed method, C = Can't tell

Source: Kamarudin et al. (2023).

### Data Extraction and Analyses

In order to qualify quantitative data or quantify qualitative data, qualitative analysis was utilized to examine all of the data in this study. Deductive and inductive thematic analysis (TA) were used to generate the relevant themes and subthemes (Kamarudin et al., 2023). Initially, the researchers actively and frequently read over the entire dataset to familiarize themselves with it. This process set the foundation for all other stages and provided crucial context for the raw data. Furthermore, all 33 documents were transferred into the ATLAS.ti data analysis software for further processing. The creation of the first code was the second phase. In this stage, the researchers looked over every paper they had chosen and gathered all the information pertinent to the main study's subject. The researchers looked for links, likenesses, and areas of interest between the coded and retrieved data using an inductive coding methodology.

The synthesis employed an inductive coding approach in which themes were generated from the coded data. The created themes encompassed the full data set and were associated with the source data (Braun & Clarke, 2019). Sixteen main themes were developed during this process. The researchers then repeated the technique for each theme to discover possible sub-themes, resulting in a total of 28 sub-themes.

## RESULTS

### Background of the Selected Studies

Among the 33 articles, which cover 11 countries, the focus is primarily on nations in Asia and the Americas. In terms of methodology, multiple approaches are employed, with a concentration on quantitative analyses. The research subjects are mainly corporations. Regarding the theories involved, a total of 20 theories are referenced, with the Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) being the most prominently used. For specific details, please refer to [Table 5](#).

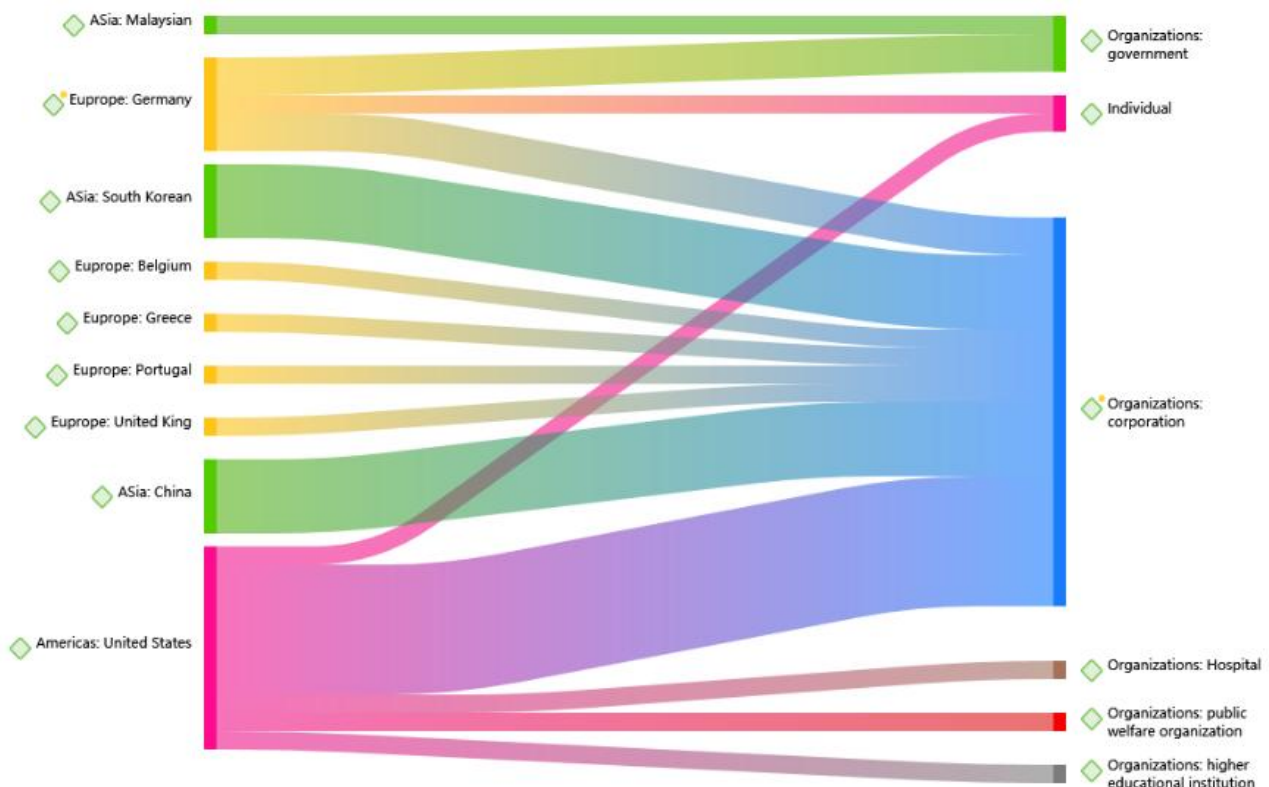
**Table 5.** Research Overview

Category	Details & Region
Country Focus	Asia: China (7 studies), South Korea (4 studies); North America: United States (12 studies); Europe: Germany (4 studies), Greece (2 studies), Portugal (1 study), United Kingdom (1 study), Belgium (1 study); Oceania: Australia (1 study); Asia/SE Asia: Malaysia (1 study); Middle East: Israel (1 study).
Methodology	Quantitative Analysis (majority with 26 studies), Qualitative Analysis (4 studies), Mixed-Method (3 studies).
Research Subject	Corporations (dominant with 26 studies), Governments (3 studies), Individuals (3 studies), Universities (1 study), Hospitals (1 study), Public Welfare (1 study), Social Media (1 study).
Theories Involved	SCCT (prominent with 20 mentions), Social Identity Theory (2 mentions), IRT (2 mentions), Construal Level Theory (2 mentions); Others* (collectively 16 mentions).

Note: "Others" include Attribution Theory, Expectancy Violation Theory, Expectation Confirmation Theory, Framing Theory, Integrated Crisis Mapping (ICM), Internal Crisis Communication Model, Signalling Theory, Social Exchange Theory, Social-Mediated Crisis Communication Theory (SMCC), Stakeholder Theory, Stimulus-Organism-Response Theory (SOR), The Persuasion Knowledge Model, and Theory of Perceived Risk.

Source(s): Authors' own work.

This Sankey diagram (Figure 2) vividly depicts the academic research distribution by geography and organizational focus. The dominant pink flow toward the United States signifies a considerable volume of research directed at or emanating from the Americas, with a significant emphasis on corporations. In Asia, China and South Korea show a green solid stream, also toward corporate research. Malaysia's emphasis on public sector research. European countries display diverse research trajectories. Notably, Germany exhibits balanced academic interests spread across corporations, hospitals, and public welfare organizations. Portugal, Greece, and Belgium, while contributing less volume compared to the leading nations, show unique patterns of distribution, emphasizing corporations.



**Figure 2.** Distribution of Research Countries and Subjects

**The Developed Themes**

The thematic analysis of the 33 selected articles revealed 16 main themes of crisis response strategies: (1) accommodation-related, (2) bolstering, (3) coping strategies, (4) corporate social responsibility (CSR), (5) corrective action, (6) courtesy, (7) defensive, (8) denial, (9) diminish, (10) evasion of responsibility-related, (11)

information strategy, (12) intimidation, (13) rebuild strategies-related, (14) reduction of offensiveness-related, (15) speed, and (16) sympathy. These 16 themes resulted in 28 subthemes (Figure 3).

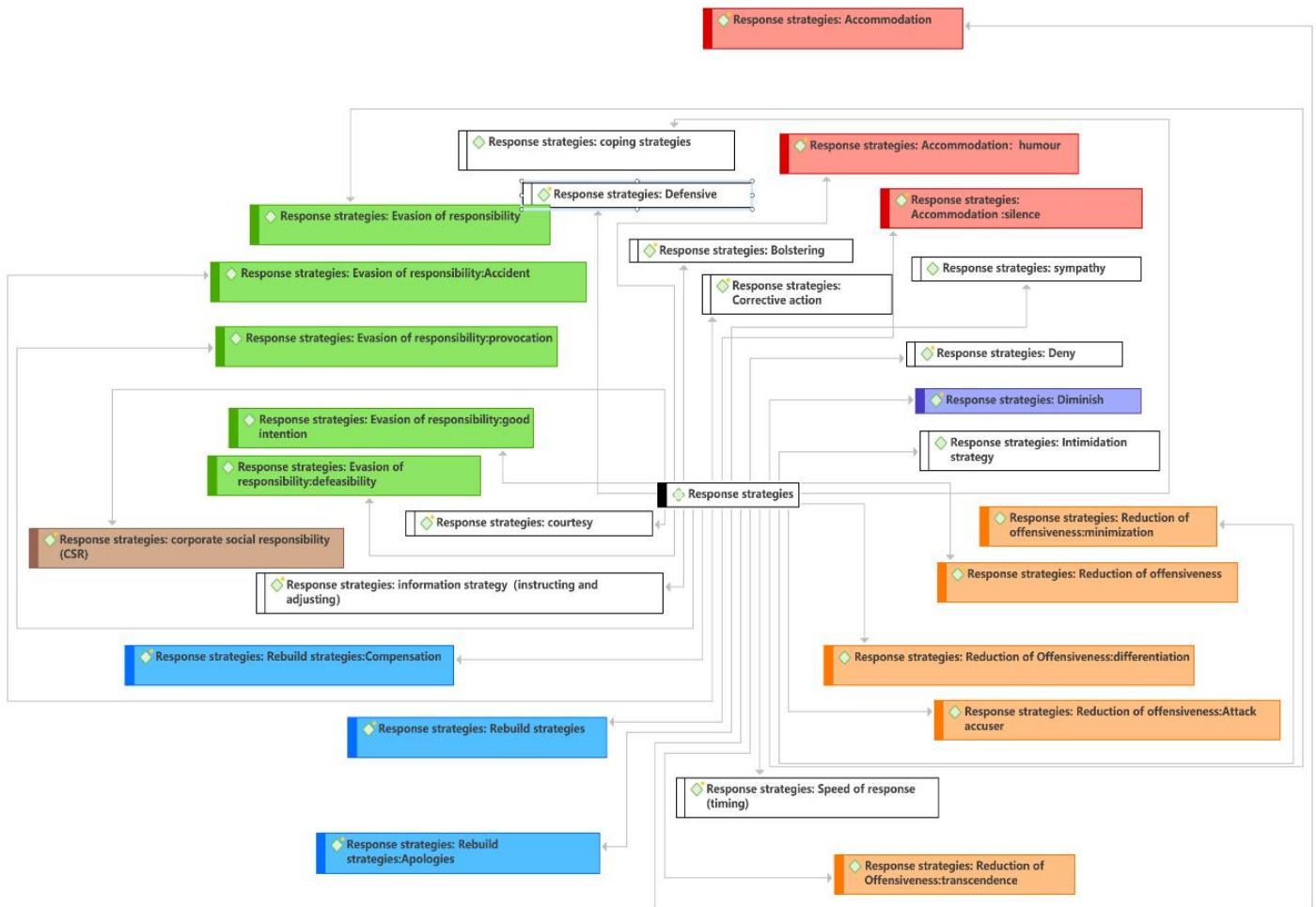


Figure 3. The Theme of Crisis Response Strategy

### Operationalization

There is a lack of a distinct consensus among the existing literature on the methodology for evaluating crisis response strategies (Kozachenko, Anand, & Shirokova, 2022). Therefore, this literature review offers a comprehensive overview of how crisis response strategies have been operationalized in the studies examined (Table 6). Table 6 shows that crisis response strategy is primarily measured unidimensionally (33 studies), with specific strategies including silence, humor, CSR, corrective action, courtesy, information strategy, intimidation, apology, compensation, timing, and sympathy. Multidimensional measurements (33 studies) of crisis response strategies are based in particular on the following strategies: accommodation, bolstering, coping strategies, defensive, denial, diminish, evasion of responsibility, and rebuild strategies. These strategies all comprise several dimensions and sub-strategies.

Table 6. Operationalization of Crisis Response Strategies in the Included Studies (n = 33)

Operationalization		Authors
Accommodation	Accommodation	(Y. Kim et al., 2019; Y. Kim & Lim, 2020; Oh et al., 2022)
	Silence	(Hirschfeld & Thielsch, 2022; Pang et al., 2022; S. Park & Park, 2020)
	Humour	(Hämpke et al., 2022; Honisch & Manchon, 2020; Xiao & Yu, 2022)
Bolstering	Bolstering	(Hirschfeld & Thielsch, 2022; Masngut & Mohamad, 2021; Thelen & Robinson, 2019)
Coping strategies	Coping strategies	(Zhang & Song, 2023)
Corporate Social Responsibility	CSR	(Ham & Kim, 2019; Y. Kim & Chon, 2022; Noh & Liu, 2024; Z. Wang et al., 2022; Wu & Zhu, 2021; Yu et al., 2022)





### Crisis Response Strategies as an Independent Variable

Most of the studies included in this review focus primarily on the use of crisis response strategies to explain specific behavioral intentions ( $n = 31$ ), rather than considering crisis response strategies as moderating ( $n = 3$ ) or mediating variables ( $n = 1$ ). In order to obtain a comprehensive overview, the studies were first categorized by the two co-authors according to their research disciplines. This categorization made it possible to identify two main areas: business and management, and communication. These topics were identified by classifying the included studies according to the keywords in their titles and abstracts. The research findings and their implications are presented below.

*Business and management.* In the field of business and management, research often examines how companies manage various aspects to improve employee, consumer, and customer support behaviors, purchase actions, and the spread of word of mouth (WOM) (Table 7). Studies illustrate the impact of crisis response strategies on organizational outcomes. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the importance of crisis response strategies became particularly clear. The research findings highlight the critical role of crisis response strategies in shaping employee and consumer behavior in different contexts, especially in times of crisis, such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Table 7.** Impact of Crisis Response Strategies on Business and Management Outcomes

Author(s)	Year(s)	Focus Area	Findings
Y. Kim and Lim	2020	Employee Behavior	Crisis response strategies positively influence employees' voice behavior.
Y. Kim et al.	2019	Employee Support	Crisis response strategies positively affect employees' supportive behavioral intentions.
Y. Kim et al. Y. Kim and Chon	2019 2022	Organizational Management	Crisis response strategies improve and enhance organizational management and decision-making capabilities.
Y. Kim and Chon Stadler Blank et al.	2022 2024	Consumer Behavior	Crisis response strategies promote supportive behaviors and purchase intentions among consumers.
Mohammed et al.	2022	Consumer Behavior (Airlines)	Inappropriate crisis response strategies negatively impact passengers' purchase intentions.
Wu and Zhu	2021	Consumer Behavior (eWOM)	Crisis response strategies positively affect customers' purchase intentions and electronic word of mouth (EWOM).
Zhang and Song	2023	Tourism	Crisis response strategies create positive expectations influencing tourists' behavioral intentions.
Yu et al.	2022	Customer Satisfaction	Crisis response strategies have a direct positive impact on customer satisfaction.
Noh and Liu Mohamed et al.	2024	Consumer Behavior (COVID-19)	During COVID-19, crisis response strategies positively influenced purchase intentions and promoted positive EWOM.
Oh et al.	2022	Crisis Management (COVID-19)	Crisis response strategies influenced public word of mouth (WOM) during COVID-19-related crises.
Masuch et al. Z. Wang et al.	2021 2022	Healthcare and Consumer Perspective (COVID-19)	Crisis response strategies significantly impacted customers' WOM, including boycotts and potential negative WOM during COVID-19.

*Communication.* In communication research, the dissemination of information during different types of crises—whether in corporations, academia, or government—is studied for its impact on users, customers, and consumers, including the intention to restore the organization's reputation. This underscores the importance of crisis response strategies as an important means of disseminating information. In the fields of crisis communication and health communication, outcomes such as secondary crisis communication, purchase intentions, word-of-mouth (WOM), and supportive behavioral intentions are considered key crisis outcomes, also known as behavioral intentions (Table 8).

Within the realm of crisis communication, crisis response strategies influence secondary crisis communication across corporations, universities, and governments. Furthermore, these crisis response strategies significantly influence public or employee-supportive behavioral intentions in corporate and governmental settings. These impacts can vary from interactive to primary or even nonexistent. In the context of corporate

communication, crisis response strategies profoundly impact consumer purchase intentions and word of mouth (WOM). In the domain of health communication, crisis response strategies play a central role in coping with health crises, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. These strategies significantly influence public supportive intentions, purchase intentions, and secondary crisis communication. Taken together, these studies emphasize the importance of well-crafted crisis response strategies in managing health crises and promoting positive outcomes.

**Table 8.** Impact of Crisis Response Strategies on Communication Outcomes

Focus Area	Author(s)	Year(s)	Findings
Crisis communication	Triantafyllidou and Yannas	2020	Crisis response strategies positively influence secondary crisis communication on social media and offline purchase intentions in corporate racial discrimination crises.
	Thelen and Robinson	2019	University presidents' crisis response strategies influence secondary crisis communication, including shares, comments, and likes.
	Hämpke et al.	2022	Specific government crisis response strategies, such as humor, did not influence public supportive intentions, emphasizing the need to align strategies with the crisis context.
	Paek and Hove	2019	Discussed the impact of government crisis response strategies on secondary crisis communication.
	Gesser-Edelsburg and Hijazi	2020	Noted the impact of government crisis response strategies on public political supportive intentions.
Corporate communication	Y. Kim et al.	2023	Crisis response strategies effectively boosted supportive behaviors among employees during the COVID-19 crisis.
	Hirschfeld and Thielsch	2022	Observed no effect of corporate crisis response strategies on supportive intentions.
	Ham and Kim	2019	Crisis response strategies shape consumers' word of mouth (WOM) and purchase decisions.
	S. Park and Park	2020	Different crises affect electronic word of mouth (EWOM) and willingness to forgive differently.
	Chapman et al.	2022	Examined how crisis response strategies facilitate damage repair in for-profit and nonprofit organizations, using WOM as a measure of strategy effectiveness.
	Schreurs and Hamstra	2020	Strategies based on apologies effectively neutralize negative WOM and mitigate negative purchase intentions during corporate crises.
	Honisch and Manchon	2020	Examined the effects of crisis response strategies on purchase intentions and WOM in detail.
	Langaro et al.	2022	Effective crisis response strategies generate positive EWOM among consumers.
Health communication	Y. Wang et al.	2021	Effective crisis response strategies generate positive EWOM among consumers.
	Masngut and Mohamad	2021	Observed the influence of government crisis response strategies on promoting public supportive intentions during the COVID-19 outbreak.
	Halima et al.	2021	Examined how corporate crisis strategies influence online purchase intentions through attitudes.
	Xiao & Yu	2022	Emphasized the positive effect of crisis response strategies on improving public secondary crisis communication during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Crisis Response Strategies as a Moderator

We found that three articles examined the moderating role of crisis response strategies. Oh et al. (2022) examined the combined influence of social distance and crisis response strategies on word-of-mouth (WOM) in corporate crisis management. Yu et al. (2022) emphasized the positive effect of crisis response strategies, especially rebuild strategies, on customer satisfaction in the tourism sector during the COVID-19 crisis. In addition, the study showed that hotels' crisis response strategies moderated the influence of affective evaluation and cognitive effort on customer satisfaction. Masuch et al. (2021) showed that crisis response strategies such as

apologies and compensation positively influenced customers' WOM behavior in a corporate context. In addition, humor as a crisis response strategy was identified as a moderator in the relationship between crisis response strategies and WOM. All three studies focused on corporations as research subjects, with WOM and satisfaction serving as dependent variables and crisis response strategies as the moderating variables.

### **Crisis Response Strategies as a Mediator**

In this systematic literature review, Su et al. (2023) emphasize the crucial role of crisis.

Response strategies that incorporate tourists' sympathy as a mediating factor between crisis events and tourists' forgiveness in tourism destinations. This finding provides valuable insights for the tourism industry in developing effective crisis management strategies. It emphasizes the need to consider tourists' psychological reactions, promote forgiveness through sympathetic approaches, and prioritize post-crisis restoration efforts to maintain tourist satisfaction and loyalty.

## **DISCUSSION**

The review of 33 studies on crisis response strategies shows that the United States and China are the leaders in the number of studies, ranking first and second, respectively. This is also closely related to the fact that two renowned scholars in the field of crisis communication in the United States, Timothy Coombs and William Benoit, have made significant contributions to crisis response strategies through their respective frameworks of SCCT and IRT (Kuipers, Perlstein, Wolbers, & Jong, 2023). The theoretical framework most utilized across these studies is Coombs' Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT), a cornerstone in crisis communication research.

The most common design of these studies is quantitative, balancing mixed methods and qualitative approaches. Studies on corporations have consistently been the main focus and hotspot. Another notable point is that research in the Americas, primarily in the United States, encompasses a wide range of entities, including corporations, governments, hospitals, higher educational institutions, and individuals. However, research on other countries in the Americas is relatively limited worldwide. In contrast, Chinese research is heavily concentrated on corporations, with only one study in the United States focusing on universities. Thus, research in China should explore and investigate non-profit organizations (Bozkurt et al., 2020).

Crisis response strategies are predominantly derived from Situational Crisis Communication Theory (Coombs, 2007) and Image Repair Theory (Benoit, 2013), encompassing 15 and 16 sub-strategies, respectively. Both theories have common strategies, such as apology, compensation, denial, bolstering, and attacking the accuser. Apology is considered the most studied and most effective strategy in crisis communication research (Li & Xu, 2023), whereas denial is also frequently examined but regarded as ineffective (Marsen, 2020). A significant highlight is the incorporation of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as a critical crisis response strategy, which is not derived from the theories above but is a significant point of study in corporate communication (Wu & Zhu 2021). Additionally, new crisis response strategies such as humor, silence, courtesy, sympathy, and intimidation have been introduced, though their effectiveness is still under investigation (Hämpke et al., 2022; H. R. Kim & Yoon, 2020; Pang et al., 2022).

In the relationship between crisis response strategies and behavioral intentions, various direct and indirect connections emerge, encompassing positive, significant effects as well as weaker or even negligible impacts (Y. Kim et al., 2023; Yu et al., 2022). These strategies primarily serve as independent variables, with secondary roles as moderating and mediating variables. This highlights the significance of crisis response strategies in predicting public behavioral intentions (Ham & Kim, 2019; Iwai & Carvalho, 2022). This systematic literature review underlines that crisis response strategies are a particularly relevant construct through which behavioral intentions can be examined, capturing a broad spectrum of influences from strongly positive to non-existent (Hämpke et al., 2022; Hirschfeld & Thielsch, 2022). This diversity in effects reflects the complex nature of how crisis response strategies can shape public behavior in different contexts and scenarios.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study utilized a systematic literature review (SLR) approach, assessing the quality of 33 articles. In view of the diversity of research designs among the selected articles, a thematic analysis was undertaken, uncovering sixteen main themes pertaining to crisis response strategies. These themes encompass *accommodation-related*, *bolstering*, *coping strategies*, *corporate social responsibility*, *corrective action*, *courtesy*, *defensive*, *deny*,

*diminish, evasion of responsibility-related, information strategy, intimidation, rebuild strategies-related, reduction of offensiveness-related, speed, and sympathy.* These themes were further decomposed into 28 sub-themes. The review highlighted the significance of exploring the relationship between crisis response strategies and behavioral intentions, with implications spanning diverse cultural contexts and sectors, particularly within Asia.

This study's qualitative and quantitative analysis provided empirical evidence of a noteworthy linkage between crisis response strategies and behavioral intentions, operationalized as *supportive behavioral intentions, satisfaction, purchase intentions, word-of-mouth (WOM), and secondary crisis communication.* These relationships were either direct or indirect, mediated by various variables. In numerous studies, crisis response strategy emerged as a prominent predictor of behavioral intentions. In sum, this systematic literature review (SLR) underscores the significance of crisis response strategy as a pertinent construct for investigating behavioral intentions.

Based on the systematic literature review (SLR), several research gaps emerge. Firstly, more attention should be paid to pivotal crisis response strategies, such as sympathy and information strategies, necessitating a deeper exploration of their correlation with behavioral intentions. Secondly, the homogeneity of research subjects demands expanded exploration in Asian contexts, particularly regarding the linkage between crisis response strategies and behavioral intentions in non-profit sectors like universities, governments, and individuals. Lastly, examining the efficacy of crisis response strategies across diverse cultural landscapes in the Americas can enhance and broaden the research scope and geographical reach.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No conflict of interest was declared by the authors.

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