



Offensiveness and virtuousness of a sports crisis: Identity, SCCT, and social assessment

Tyler G. Page^{a,*}, Anita Atwell Seate^b, Allison P. Chatham^b, Jungkyu Rhys Lim^{c,1}, Duli Shi^d, Lingyan Ma^e, Romy RW^f

^a University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT, USA

^b University of Maryland, College Park, MD, USA

^c University of Maryland, World Bank, College Park, MD, USA

^d New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, NM, USA

^e Minzu University of China, China

^f Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles, CA, USA

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Virtuousness
Offensiveness
Social assessment
Social identity
REMREP

ABSTRACT

Offensiveness and virtuousness have been identified as strong predictors of post-crisis reputation in an experiment regarding a fictional organization. This study identifies how these variables reflect the types of information processing identified in the social assessment literature. Further, this study assesses the influence of virtuousness and offensiveness in a crisis facing real-world organizations with which participants have pre-existing connections. Using an experiment with 574 participants recruited from Amazon's Mechanical Turk, the experiment examines a cheating crisis engulfing an NFL team. Utilizing the sports crisis communication literature, this research assesses the effects of SCCT's prescribed responses and identity on reputation. Results show that identity directly influences offensiveness, virtuousness, and reputation, and has indirect effects on post-crisis reputation via the intervening variables, as proposed by REMREP. Connections between REMREP and the social assessment literature are identified and discussed.

In September of 2007, an employee of the New England Patriots was caught breaking National Football League (NFL) rules by taping hand signals used by the New York Jets during a game from an unauthorized location. Knowing the Jets' hand signals would give the Patriots an unfair advantage, because they would know the plays the Jets were calling during their upcoming game. Indeed, the NFL's rules deemed this action as an unfair advantage, and the league heavily sanctioned the New England Patriots and their coach Bill Belichick, who ordered the taping (McNear, 2018). This story, termed Spygate, made national headlines (Bishop & Thamel, 2008). Stakeholders' reactions to the story were mixed. To New England Patriots fans, "Spygate was an injustice, a witch hunt fueled by jealousy" (McNear, 2018, para. 3) of the team's success. To non-Patriots fans the episode illustrates that "the Patriots are dirty, lying cheaters" (McNear, 2018, para. 3) and casts doubt on their organization's history of success. In other words, variations in the fan-ship of the New England Patriots organization influenced how people understood, and ultimately reacted, to Spygate. Indeed, a burgeoning

area of study, sports crisis communication, has shown that sports fans identify with the team/sport individually (i.e., fanship) and other fans socially (i.e., fandom) and these relationships influence how fans respond to sports crises (Harker & Coombs, 2022).

The current study draws from the crisis communication literature broadly, and the sports crisis communication literature specifically, to examine the process of how identity connected with fanship and situational crisis communication theory's (SCCT) prescribed responses influence social assessment of an organization in crisis. We manipulate fanship by assigning participants to read a news story about illegal use of performance enhancing drugs by their favorite team or their favorite team's rival to examine how identity influences perceptions of crisis and social assessments of the organization in crisis. In so doing, this study seeks to replicate and extend upon a recently proposed theoretical model called the revised model of reputation repair (REMREP, Page, 2022) in its ability to explain the effects of identity on elements of social assessment of a crisis.

* Correspondence to: 1 University Pl. Stamford, CT 06901.

E-mail address: tyler.page@uconn.edu (T.G. Page).

¹ Lim was a Ph.D. student when data collection and analysis were conducted. Lim is a digital media behavioral scientist at the World Bank.

1. Literature review

An organizational crisis “is the perception of an unpredictable event that threatens important expectancies of stakeholders related to health, safety, environmental, and economic issues, and can seriously impact an organization’s performance and generate negative outcomes” (Coombs, 2015, p. 3). Two major theories, image repair theory (IRT) and SCCT, examine crisis response strategies can influence organizational reputations in the aftermath of crisis (e.g., Benoit, 1995; Coombs, 2015; Ma & Zhan, 2016; Page et al., 2023). A recently developed theoretical model (REMREP) seeks to expand upon these theories (Page, 2022); however, a distinct line of research has suggested additional organizational outcomes beyond reputation that assess the social assessment of an organization (e.g., Bundy & Pfarrer, 2015; Iqbal et al., 2024; Lange & Washburn, 2012). In this research, we highlight how REMREP can assist in social assessment of a crisis and utilize REMREP to assess the influence of identity and SCCT’s prescribed response strategies on reputation in a sports crisis. We begin with a review of the development of REMREP, starting with conceptualizations of crisis emerging from IRT and SCCT.

2. Situational crisis communication theory

SCCT was proposed to help organizations effectively respond to crises that they face by proposing situational-specific crisis response strategies. First, SCCT indicates that crisis communicators should communicate the ethical base of crisis response (instructing and adjusting information, Coombs, 2015).

Next, SCCT suggests that crisis messaging should be crafted based on the level of responsibility stakeholders attribute to the organization in prompting the crisis. SCCT is grounded in attribution theory, which explains that people attribute causal responsibility for bad things that happen around them, with these causal attributions guiding subsequent judgment (Weiner, 1985). The theory prescribes a number of suitable response options for the organization to use in response to a crisis based on the level of attributed responsibility (Coombs, 2007a). SCCT proposes three categories of crises based on attributed responsibility: victim (i.e., little to no attributed responsibility), accident (i.e., moderate level of attributed responsibility), and preventable (i.e., high level of attributed responsibility). Similarly, SCCT initially proposed three response strategies based on attributed responsibility: deny (i.e., takes no responsibility), diminish (i.e., takes some responsibility), and deal (i.e., takes full responsibility). Thus, deny strategies were suggested for victim crises, diminish strategies were suggested for accident crises, and deal strategies were suggested for preventable crises (Coombs, 2006, 2007b). The system of prescribing responses has become more complex over time, but the core idea of matching attributed responsibility has remained at its center (Coombs, 2015). However, a meta-analysis found that using a matched response only has a small overall effect on reputation compared with a mismatched response, which disappeared outside student samples (Ma & Zhan, 2016).

This meta-analysis spawned a variety of responses that seek to understand why SCCT’s matching construct had small or nonexistent effects in the aggregate of found empirical research. Ultimately, Coombs & Tachkova, (2019, 2023, 2024) have a different answer than Page, (2019, 2022). For the sake of clarity, we will call Coombs and Tachkova’s approach the SCCT approach and Page’s approach the REMREP approach.

In a reflection on the SCCT meta-analysis, Coombs (2016) noted that every theory has limits and that are circumstances in which theories may not work. He also noted, “There is solid evidence that immediate effects of crisis response strategies account for a small amount of variance. I doubt crisis response strategies will ever move beyond this limited reputational effect.” (p. 120) Instead, he suggested that “future research must accept the small effect of crisis response strategies and seek to understand the other variables that shape effective crisis

communication.” (p. 120) Both the SCCT and REMREP approaches seem to agree with these statements; however, they build upon these findings in different directions.

In the years since this reflection, Coombs has continued to refine the SCCT approach, proposing two separate boundary conditions that may influence the effectiveness of SCCT’s response strategies. First, Coombs argues that experimenters should pre-test stimuli for account acceptance to ensure that a variation in the believability of a crisis response does not influence the results of a study (Coombs, 2022). Second, Coombs has argued that moral outrage cases are a boundary condition where SCCT’s prescribed response strategies do not work (Coombs and Tachkova, 2023, 2024). Specifically, Coombs and Tachkova (2019) used two experiments to demonstrate that a scansis, a crisis combined with a scandal, is different from a typical crisis because of moral outrage, occurring when a perception of injustice and greed are undergirding a crisis. These authors argue that SCCT does not apply when a moral outrage occurs and instead have begun to offer revisions to SCCT based upon moral outrage (Coombs & Tachkova, 2024). Further, they have proposed initial steps for how this theorizing might influence a sticky crisis (Coombs and Tachkova, 2023).

Before Coombs and colleagues began conceptualizing moral outrage, Page, (2019, 2022) had already published how perceptions of morality of actions could influence perceptions and consequences of a crisis. The REMREP approach takes diverging perspectives of the morality of actions into account, which allows researchers to parcel out its effects and explain all crisis situations, rather than treating them as boundary conditions.

3. The revised model of reputation repair (REMREP)

Page (2022) proposed and tested REMREP as an open model explaining the effects of a variety of factors on perceptions of crisis (Page, 2019). The model de-centers crisis response strategies in crisis communication scholarship and instead prioritizes moral evaluations of actions involved in a crisis situation. Specifically, REMREP proposes that stakeholder perceptions of organizational behaviors that cause or respond to a crisis will influence post-crisis reputation. Inspired by IRT’s conceptualization of crisis as requiring both negative moral assessment and attributed responsibility (Benoit, 1995), Page (2019) turned to moral foundations theory (MFT) to conceptualize perceived morality of actions in a crisis. MFT suggests that there are several moral foundations that explain why people take offense at certain actions (Graham et al., 2013). These moral foundations include several factors with a positive pole and a negative pole: care/harm, fairness/cheating, authority/subversion, loyalty/betrayal, and sanctity/degradation. REMREP work finds that these five foundations represent two dimensions in crisis contexts—virtuousness and offensiveness (Page, 2019, 2022). In REMREP, offensiveness and virtuousness measure perceptions of a crisis and predict post-crisis reputation, while virtuousness also predicts a decrease in offensiveness.

Offensiveness measures responsibility for negative acts that cause or are involved in a crisis situation (Page, 2019). Thus, offensiveness incorporates attributed responsibility for the act as well as belief about the moral dimension of the act, as outlined by Benoit (1995). In this way, offensiveness gives more information than attributed responsibility because it can distinguish between crises based upon the degree to which an act is perceived to be offensive, while attributed responsibility does not do so. For example, attributed responsibility treats someone who is caught speeding and someone who commits murder as equally responsible while offensiveness also captures the different degree of harm implicated by these two different criminal activities. For this reason, offensiveness has been shown to explain post-crisis reputation significantly better than attributed responsibility alone (Page, 2019, 2022).

Offensiveness could be seen as similar to incorporating attributed responsibility with crisis severity, similar to early conceptions of SCCT

(Coombs & Holladay, 2002). However, the REMREP approach has two distinct advantages over using attributed responsibility and crisis severity separately. First, as Benoit (1995) notes, the reputation threat posed by the crisis has two separate necessary, but insufficient conditions. That is, the absence of either moral offensiveness or attributed responsibility extinguishes the reputation threat from a crisis entirely. This implies a moderation effect that may be different in degree depending upon the participant. If the goal is to predict post-crisis reputation from a variable, utilizing responsibility and severity together will require the researcher to choose how these concepts relate (i.e., should the terms be multiplied, if so is one weighted more than the other?), while offensiveness can predict the effects in a single variable without scholars attempting to imperfectly intervene. REMREP provides a validated tool to do just that (Page, 2019). Second, REMREP also has a second factor that gives very important information about perceptions of a crisis that would not be covered by attributed responsibility or crisis severity. Namely, REMREP also measures virtuousness, which reflects the positive perceptions of an organization related to the crisis.

Virtuousness measures responsibility for positive acts that cause or are involved in a crisis situation (Page, 2019). As with offensiveness, this variable combines responsibility for an act with that act's perceived moral dimension. Virtuousness can come from perceived actions to protect others during a crisis, such as giving instructing information and adjusting information (e.g., Coombs, 2015; Kim & Sung, 2014; Page, 2020; Sturges, 1994). It can also reflect a belief that a crisis is caused by disinformation or bad faith actors attacking a righteous organization or cause. For example, organizations and activist movements frequently face crises that are caused by hostile actors who oppose them. Facing down these hostile actors may increase perceived virtuousness within the movement or organization. Measuring virtuousness allows researchers studying crises to identify how perception of the organization's favored actions influences post-crisis reputation. For this reason, it is not surprising that virtuousness individually, and especially in tandem with offensiveness, has been shown to predict post-crisis reputation better than attributed responsibility alone (Page, 2019, 2022).

Implicit in offensiveness and virtuousness is the notion that different people perceive crises differently based upon factors other than the crisis response strategies that are employed. For instance, if a public figure makes a statement that offends one group, the same statement may not offend other groups, and likely will not do so to the same degree (Page, 2019). These differences in perception have important implications for how we seek to explain the effects of a crisis situation. Understanding these nuances opens up several new avenues for scholarship to examine attitudes resulting from crises. It also provides a different framework where scholars can consider new factors that can influence the perceptions and consequences of a crisis.

REMREP provides an open model that gives scholars a tool to understand the unique effects of many attributes of crisis situations and crisis communication on post-crisis reputation and other crisis outcomes (Page, 2019, 2022). This open model presents the opportunity for scholars to add additional factors either upstream from, or downstream to, virtuousness and offensiveness during crisis and crisis response. Upstream factors are factors that can influence perceptions of a crisis (e.g., crisis responses, specific mannerisms of a spokesperson; Page & Clementson, 2023), while downstream factors are consequences of a crisis beyond reputation (e.g., behavioral intentions, Page & Clementson, 2023). In this research, we consider identity and SCCT's matching response strategies as upstream factors that can influence perceptions of a crisis and therefore post-crisis reputation. REMREP's approach of creating a model that can incorporate upstream and downstream factors helps it to fit nicely with the body of scholarship examining social assessment.

4. Social assessment and REMREP

The literature emphasizing social assessment takes its roots from

business literature examining how crises can influence business outcomes (e.g., Ashforth & Gibbs, 1990; Lamin & Zaheer, 2012; Sutton & Callahan, 1987). Research has examined how crisis response strategies can have both a positive and negative effect for organizational legitimacy (Ashforth & Gibbs, 1990), how declaring chapter 11 bankruptcy can harm perceptions of the organization, as well as, individuals in management (Sutton & Callahan, 1987), which with attributes of a CEO successor are most likely to improve perception of a business (Gomulya & Boeker, 2014), and how investors respond differently to attempts to defend legitimacy than the public (Lamin & Zaheer, 2012). Pfarrer et al. (2008) even created a four-stage model for understanding the lifecycle of a crisis and creating the best chance for an organization to restore its legitimacy. The model seeks to answer different stakeholder questions at different phases of a crisis, ranging from discovery where stakeholders want to know what happened to rehabilitation where stakeholders want to know what changes have been made to prevent future incidents.

From this literature, scholars began to focus on social assessments related to a crisis. Broadly, social assessments are various perceptions of the crisis that may influence organizational outcomes (e.g., organizational legitimacy perceptions). For instance, Lange and Washburn (2012) considered the effects of several social assessments that they called corporate irresponsibility, proposing a model oriented around three distinct factors (i.e., undesirability, corporate culpability, and affected party noncomplicity). Further, scholars assessed how social approval consisting of intuitive opinions regarding an organization, as distinguished from deliberative ones, influence perceptions of a crisis (Bundy & Pfarrer, 2015).

A recent contribution to this line of scholarship highlights and categorizes elements of social assessment (Iqbal et al., 2024). Rooted in stakeholder theory, this approach notes that stakeholder concerns are processed in rational, emotional, and moral types. Rational information processing is largely deliberative while emotional is more automatic. Moral processing reflects a belief in value incongruence between the organization and the stakeholder and comes in both deliberative and automatic forms. The authors suggest the three information processing types influence four distinct social evaluations that stakeholders can make: reputation, celebrity, legitimacy, and status. The authors then prescribe how different crisis response strategies will be more or less effective at addressing different crisis outcomes with an emphasis on the way that stakeholders receive information.

REMREP offers a useful tool for assisting in this social assessment research. REMREP has already tested one factor, reputation, that is included within social assessment (Page, 2022; Page & Clementson, 2023). The other three factors in social assessment could be potential downstream factors in REMREP. Further, the virtuousness measure highlights the moral information processing type, while offensiveness tracks both the emotional and rational processing types. In this study, we examine how identity and SCCT's prescribed responses can influence the social assessment of a sports team through these processing types to influence reputation.

5. Study context: sports crisis communication

Crisis situations are common in sports (Harker & Coombs, 2022), leading scholars to call for more research centering fans as prominent stakeholders (Harker, 2021). In this area of study, a common issue is accusations of using performance enhancing drugs (e.g., Arritt, 2016; CNN Library, 2018). These types of crises may challenge, or violate, the trust and expectations that fans have with the organization, as they undermine the broader organizational norm of "fair play". Fans frequently respond to these identity threats in two ways. Some fans may attempt to protect the team's reputation and cope with the crisis by using remediation strategies on social media such as victimization and scapegoating (e.g., Brown & Billings, 2013; Brown et al., 2015). Other fans may psychologically distance themselves and begin to disassociate with the team (e.g., Wu et al., 2012). Indeed, these results are consistent

with the larger sport fan literature that indicates fan's sports identity has important cognitive, affective, and behavioral consequences (e.g., Cohen & Bobbitt, in press). Regarding behaviors related to the organization fan identity predicts watching media related to team, purchasing tickets, and wearing team clothing (e.g., Cialdini et al., 1976; Harker & Coombs, 2022; Reyes & Branscombe, 2010). Hence, scholars have suggested that sport represents an important and appropriate context to examine how people's relationship to the organization impacts their understanding of crisis responses (Harker & Coombs, 2022). We examine the influence that fanship has in predicting organizational reputation following a crisis. To do this, we experimentally manipulate whether participants read that their favorite NFL or their favorite team's rival is accused of using performance enhancing drugs.

6. Hypotheses and research questions

We begin by replicating key hypotheses from Page (2022). Hence, we propose the following hypotheses:

H1: Virtuousness will have direct, positive effects on (a) post-crisis reputation, as well as (b) a direct negative effect on offensiveness.

H2: Offensiveness will have direct, negative effects on post-crisis reputation.

We also seek to extend REMREP research by showing how Page's (2022) open model works in practice, integrating ideas from the experimental context (i.e., fanship identity) and SCCT's matching response as upstream factors in the crisis communication process. Importantly, these questions offer an opportunity to test the effects of SCCT's matching response on perceived virtuousness and offensiveness. Hence, the following hypotheses:

H3: Fanship identity will have direct, positive effects on (a) post-crisis reputation, and (b) virtuousness, as well as (c) a direct, negative effect on crisis offensiveness.

H4: SCCT's matching response strategies will have direct positive effects on (a) post-crisis reputation, and (b) virtuousness, as well as (c) a direct, negative effect on crisis offensiveness. Fig. 1

Finally, we conclude with one broad research question. It asks how much fanship identity and SCCT's matching strategies influence post-crisis reputation.

RQ1: What, if any, are the indirect (a) and total effects (b) of fanship identity and SCCT's matching response strategies in predicting post-crisis organizational reputation?

7. Method

This study used an experimental design with participants recruited from Amazon's Mechanical Turk (mTurk). This section reviews the sample of participants, procedure, measures, pilot test, and attention checks in turn.

8. Participants and design

A total of 1041 participants recruited from mTurk completed the experiment. Following a series of attention checks (described later), the data from 574 participants were used. Participants in the final sample ranged in age from 18 to 71 ($M = 33.7$, $SD = 9.8$) and were mostly male (i.e., 66.0 %). Participants identified themselves as White or Caucasian (65.7 %), Asian or Pacific Islander (14.3 %), African American or Black (10.1 %), Latino or Hispanic (4.7 %), Native American (3.5 %),

Multiracial (1.4 %), and Other or prefer not to answer (.4 %).

Participants were randomly assigned to a 2 (identity: favorite team, rival team) x 2 (matched response: yes, no) between-subjects experimental design.² The study concerned NFL teams, so fanship identity (e.g., Harker & Coombs, 2022; Sanderson, 2013) was assigned as each participant's favorite NFL team or their favorite team's rival. The crisis was an allegation of using performance enhancing drugs in violation of league rules, which was either false (rumor) or true (organizational misdeed). As noted previously, performance enhancing drug use is a common sports communication crisis (Harker & Coombs, 2022). The team then responded with either a denial (denial posture) or an apology (rebuilding posture). The study proceeded as follows.

9. Procedure

Following an IRB approved protocol, participants agreed to participate in the study on mTurk for a small amount of money. They then provided informed consent. Participants were first asked who their favorite NFL team was and then they answered a sports-fanship specific scale of seven questions developed by Wann and Branscombe (1993) (e.g., "I am a fan of the TEAM", where TEAM is replaced with the team selected at the study outset). Participants then read a series of stories that appeared to be screenshots taken from www.nfl.com that explained the crisis. The template of www.nfl.com was used because the league would likely be considered an authoritative source on the issue. Participants were randomly assigned to read the same crisis about either their favorite NFL team or their favorite team's rival. NFL rivals were chosen as an in-division opponent based upon articles listing all rivalries from sports blogs at Bleacher Report (Ferrari-King, 2014) and USA Today (Chase, 2015, rivals available upon request). Participants then were randomly assigned to read either a crisis where the allegation of cheating with performance enhancing drugs was identified as true (organizational malfeasance) or false (rumor). Next, participants were randomly assigned to read the crisis response of either a denial (denial) or an apology (rebuilding) from their team. Participants then answered a series of questions as described below.

10. Measures

All measure items were presented in a random order to control for ordering effects. Descriptive statistics, scale reliabilities, and correlations between variables are in Table 1.

After reading the vignettes, participants rated the team they read about on attributed responsibility, post-crisis reputation, offensiveness, and virtuousness. In these questions, the TEAM was replaced with the name of the team identified in the crisis (i.e., favorite team, rival team). In other words, study materials were tailored to each participant based on their team preference and random assignment. Additional measures were collected for another project after the aforementioned measures. These latter measures are not described in this report.

10.1. Attributed responsibility

Attributed responsibility was measured using a four-item scale adapted from Griffin et al. (1992) that had also been used by Coombs and Holladay (2002). Participants rated questions such as "How responsible were the TEAM?" on a scale of 0–10 ($M = 5.6$, $SD = 2.5$, range: 0–10). The scale was found to be reliable ($\alpha = .752$) so it was

² The matching manipulation was created by randomly assigning each participant to one of two crises (rumor or organizational malfeasance) and one of two responses (denial or apology). Following SCCT's guidance (Coombs, 2015), rumor with denial and organizational malfeasance with apology were identified as matched, while the other combinations were identified as mismatched.

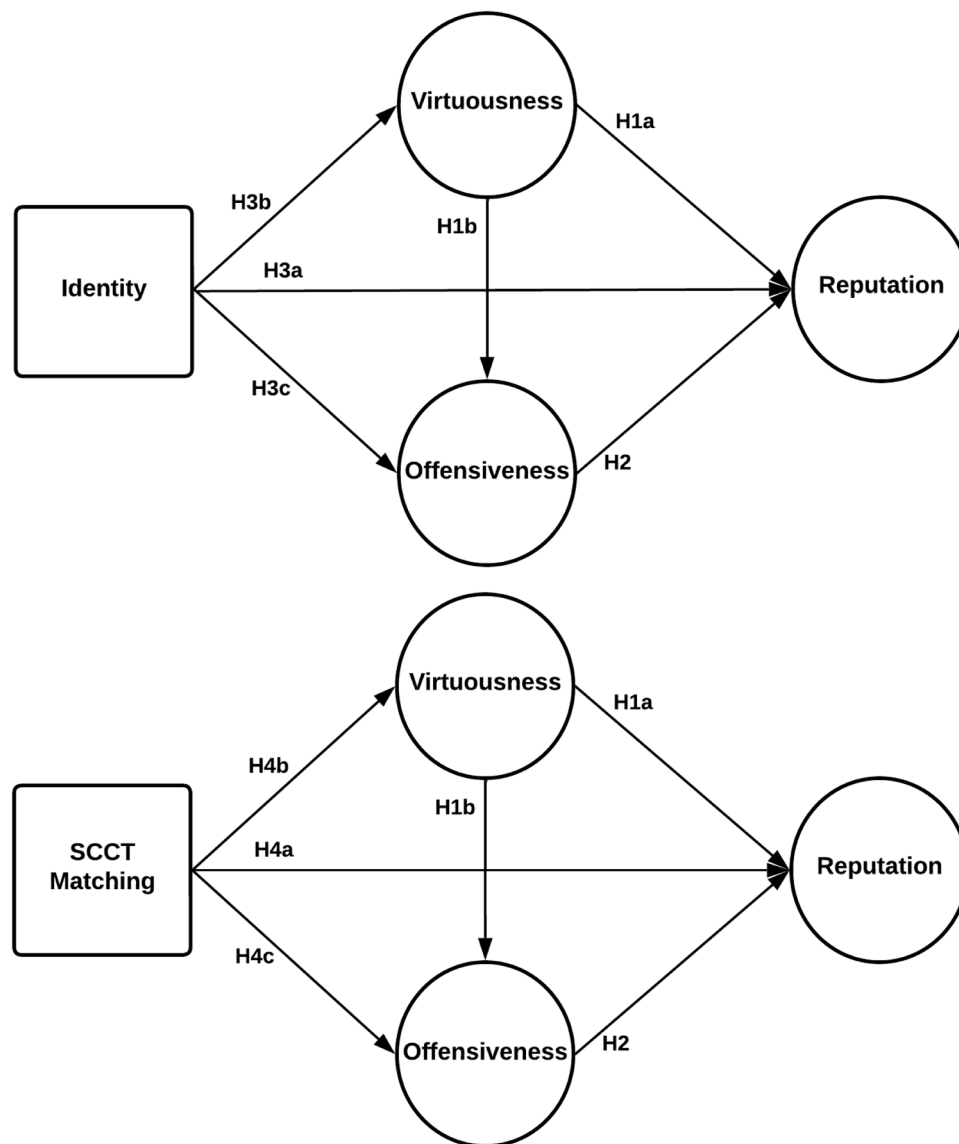


Fig. 1. Proposed mod.

Table 1
Descriptive statistics of variables.

Variable	α	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Sk</i>	<i>K</i>	1	2	3
1. Attributed Responsibility	.752	5.63	2.51	-.101	-.286	1		
2. Virtuousness	.956	4.63	2.85	-.022	-1.090	-.616	1	
3. Offensiveness	.954	4.51	2.84	-.049	-1.011	.455	-.204	1
4. Reputation	.849	5.66	2.53	-.153	-.542	-.531	.515	-.649

averaged.

10.2. Organizational reputation

Reputation was measured using the five-item organization reputation scale (e.g., “The TEAM is basically dishonest.”) developed by Coombs and Holladay (2002) and used repeatedly in SCCT studies (Coombs, 2016; Ma & Zhan, 2016). Participants answered each item on a scale from 0 to 10 ($M = 5.7$, $SD = 2.5$, range: 0–10). The scale was found to be reliable ($\alpha = .849$) so it was averaged.

10.3. Perceived crisis offensiveness

Perceived crisis offensiveness was measured using the 10 item-scale (e.g., “The TEAM was cruel.”) developed by Page (2019). Participants answered each item on a scale from 0 to 10 ($M = 4.5$, $SD = 2.8$, range: 0–10). The scale was found to be reliable ($\alpha = .954$), so it was averaged.

10.4. Perceived organizational virtuousness

Perceived organizational virtuousness was measured using the nine-item scale (e.g., “The TEAM made others safer.”) developed by Page (2019). Participants answered each item on a scale from 0 to 10 ($M = 4.6$, $SD = 2.9$, range: 0–10). The scale was found to be reliable ($\alpha = .956$),

so it was averaged.

11. Pilot test and manipulation checks

A pilot test was conducted to test the experimental manipulations. A sample of 110 college students was compensated with a small amount of extra credit for participating in the pilot test based on our IRB approved protocol. Participants were randomly assigned to read one of the conditions and then asked to answer questions regarding attributed responsibility. A generalized linear model with the scenario (rumor, organizational malfeasance) and response (denial, apology) as factors found that participants who were assigned to the rumor condition attributed significantly less responsibility to the organization than participants assigned to the organizational malfeasance condition, $F(1,109) = 3.953$, $p = .049$. In addition, participants who were assigned to the denial condition attributed significantly less responsibility to the organization than participants assigned to the apology condition, $F(1,109) = 26.722$, $p < .001$. Finally, no statistically significant interaction was detected between the scenario and the response, $F(1,109) = .381$, $p = .539$. Therefore, both manipulations were accepted.

12. Attention checks

Participants were given three attention checks to ensure that they were paying attention during the study. In the first two attention check questions, participants were directed to answer in a specific way (e.g., “Select strongly agree to prove you are reading.”). The third attention check came during the final demographics questions after dependent variable answers had been collected. This check asked participants to choose what the team was accused of from a list of eight options (including “None of the Above” and “More than 1 of these”). Any participant who missed a single attention check had their response rejected and their work was discarded. In total, 574 participants passed these checks.

13. Results

To test our hypotheses and answer our research question we used multiple regression and PROCESS within SPSS (Hayes, 2022). To test the direct and indirect effects proposed in H1-H4 and answer RQ1 we used PROCESS macro for SPSS which employs the bootstrapping method with 5000 iterations and 95 % bias correction (Hayes, 2022, Model 6).

We utilized multiple regression to test whether there was any moderation effect between identity and SCCT’s prescribed responses. Three multiple regressions were run assessing the effect of identity, SCCT’s prescribed responses, and the interaction between these two variables on virtuousness, offensiveness, and reputation. In each case, the interaction variable did not have a statistically significant effect above and beyond the other two variables. Therefore, we used PROCESS model 6 twice, once for each independent variable.

14. Revised model of reputation repair (REMREP)

To test the direct and indirect effects proposed by REMREP (i.e., H1-H4) and answer RQ1, we used the PROCESS macro for SPSS which employs the bootstrapping method with 5000 iterations and 95 % bias correction (Hayes, 2022, Model 6). Specifically, we ran the model twice, once for each of the experimental variables. Our first experimental variable, fanclub identity, was coded 0 = rival team and 1 = favorite team. Our second experimental variable, SCCT’s matching prescribed responses, was coded 0 = not prescribed and 1 = prescribed. REMREP’s two intervening variables, virtuousness and offensiveness, were entered into the models as M1 and M2 simultaneously and respectively. See Tables 2 and 3 for all direct and indirect effect estimates, as well as model statistics. For H2-H3, we report the results from the PROCESS test with fanclub identity; however, the results of these paths were similar

Table 2

PROCESS direct effects and model statistics.

	Virtuousness		Offensiveness		Post-crisis reputation	
Model 1	F (1, 572) = 42.92, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .07$		F (2, 571) = 20.58, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .07$		F (3, 570) = 289.23, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .60$	
	B	BC 95 % CI	B	BC 95 % CI	B	BC 95 % CI
Constant	3.92	3.61, 4.23	5.69	5.25, 6.14	5.94	5.56, 6.32
Experimental condition: Pre-crisis reputation	1.51	1.06, 1.96	−0.94	−1.41, −.47	0.92	0.65, 1.20
Virtuousness	–	–	−0.16	−0.24, −0.08	0.32	0.27, 0.37
Offensiveness	–	–	–	–	−0.48	−0.53, −0.43
Model 2	F (1, 572) = 0.05, $p = .83$, $R^2 = .00$		F (2, 571) = 15.11, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .05$		F (3, 570) = 255.69, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .57$	
	B	95 % CI	B	95 % CI	B	95 % CI
Constant	4.60	4.27, 4.93	5.72	5.23, 6.21	6.29	5.89, 6.70
Experimental condition: Prescriptive strategy	0.05	−0.42, 0.52	−0.52	−0.98, −0.07	0.03	−0.24, 0.31
Virtuousness	–	–	−0.20	−0.28, −0.12	0.35	0.31, 0.40
Offensiveness	–	–	–	–	−0.51	−0.56, −0.46

Note. Pre-existing reputation was coded 0 = rival team/negative and 1 = favorite team/positive. Prescriptive strategy was coded 0 = not prescribed and 1 = prescribed.

Table 3

PROCESS indirect effects.

	Point Estimate	SE	BC 95 % CI	
Model 1				
Identity -> Virtuousness -> Reputation	0.48	0.09	0.32	0.67
Identity -> Offensiveness -> Reputation	0.45	0.12	0.23	0.68
Identity -> Virtuousness -> Offensiveness -> Reputation	0.12	0.04	0.04	0.21
Model 2				
SCCT -> Virtuousness -> Reputation	0.02	0.03	−0.06	0.08
SCCT -> Offensiveness -> Reputation	0.27	0.05	0.04	0.50
SCCT -> Virtuousness -> Offensiveness -> Reputation	0.01	0.03	−0.04	0.06

Note. Identity was coded 0 = rival team/negative and 1 = favorite team/positive. SCCT strategy was coded 0 = not prescribed and 1 = prescribed.

for both models.

15. Predictive power of virtuousness and offensiveness

H1 predicts that virtuousness has a direct, positive effect on (a) post-crisis reputation, as well as (b) a direct negative effect on offensiveness. Supporting these hypotheses, results indicate that virtuousness has a direct, positive effect on reputation ($B = .32$, 95 % bias-corrected 5000 bootstrap CI [.27, .37]) and a direct, negative effect on offensiveness ($B = −0.16$, 95 % bias-corrected 5000 bootstrap CI [−0.24, −0.08]). H2 predicts that offensiveness will have a direct, negative effect on post-crisis reputation. Results support this hypothesis ($B = −0.48$, 95 % bias-corrected 5000 bootstrap CI [−0.53, −0.43]).

16. Predictive power of pre-existing reputation

H3 predicts that the experimental condition, fan identity, will have direct, positive effects on (a) post-crisis reputation, and (b) virtuousness, as well as (c) a direct, negative effect on crisis offensiveness. Results show that fan identity has direct, positive effects on (a) post-crisis reputation ($B = 0.92$, 95 % bias-corrected 5000 bootstrap CI [0.65, 1.20]) and (b) virtuousness, ($B = 1.51$, 95 % bias-corrected 5000 bootstrap CI [1.06, 1.96]). Fan identity also has a direct, negative effect on crisis offensiveness (c), ($B = -0.94$, 95 % bias-corrected 5000 bootstrap CI [-1.41, -0.47]). Together, these results support H3 (a-c).

17. Predictive power of SCCT's prescriptive strategies

H4 predicts that the experimental condition, SCCT's prescriptive strategies (i.e., matching), will have direct, positive effects on (a) post-crisis reputation, and (b) virtuousness, as well as (c) a direct, negative effect on crisis offensiveness. Results show that using SCCT's prescriptive strategies has no effect on (a) post-crisis reputation as the 95 % confidence interval contains zero ($B = 0.03$, 95 % bias-corrected 5000 bootstrap CI [-0.24, 0.31]) or (b) virtuousness, ($B = 0.05$, 95 % bias-corrected 5000 bootstrap CI [-0.42, 0.52]). However, using SCCT's prescribed strategies has a direct, negative effect on crisis offensiveness (c), ($B = -0.52$, 95 % bias-corrected 5000 bootstrap CI [-0.98, -0.07]). Together, these results support H4 (c), but not H4 (a & b).

18. Indirect and total effects of experimental conditions

RQ1 asks about the indirect (a) and total (b) effects of the experimental conditions via virtuousness and offensiveness. In terms of the indirect effects of fan identity, results show that it had a positive indirect effect via virtuousness ($B = 0.48$, 95 % bias-corrected 5000 bootstrap CI [0.32, 0.67]), offensiveness ($B = 0.45$, 95 % bias-corrected 5000 bootstrap CI [0.23, 0.68]), and via both virtuousness and offensiveness ($B = 0.12$, 95 % bias-corrected 5000 bootstrap CI [0.04, 0.21]). In terms of the indirect effect of the second experimental condition, SCCT's prescriptive strategies (i.e., matching), results show that there is an indirect effect of experimental condition via offensiveness ($B = 0.27$, 95 % bias-corrected 5000 bootstrap CI [0.04, 0.50]). The other 95 % confidence intervals contained zero, meaning that they were not statistically significant. See Table 3 for all indirect estimates for both models.

In terms of the total effect of fan identity, results show that fan identity had a positive total effect on post-crisis reputation ($B = 1.97$, 95 % bias-corrected 5000 bootstrap CI [1.59, 2.36]). In terms of the total effect of SCCT's prescriptive strategies, results show that the total effect is not statistically significant, given that the 95 % confidence interval contains zero ($B = 0.32$, 95 % bias-corrected 5000 bootstrap CI [-0.09, 0.74]).

19. Discussion

REMREP provides an open model for research into the effects of crisis communication by articulating the nuance inherent in perceptions of organizational virtuousness, crisis offensiveness, and post-crisis reputation. Organizational virtuousness highlights the moral information processing within social assessment while crisis offensiveness assesses the rational and emotional elements of social assessment. The model allows researchers to consider the effect of additional upstream and downstream factors related to crisis communication, including the factors outlined in the social assessment literature. These factors can be upstream factors influencing perceptions of a crisis or downstream factors that are consequences of these crisis perceptions.

In this study, we replicated REMREP itself and then used the model to consider the experimental effects of two upstream variables that are well documented within the crisis communication literature: fan identity

and SCCT's prescribed matching strategies. To that end, this study incorporated insights from the literature surrounding the experimental context to consider how individual identification with a sports team (i.e., fan identity) influenced reputational processes. We unpack these findings in more detail below.

20. SCCT's prescriptive strategies

A primary prediction from SCCT is that crisis messages that match the attributed responsibility of the crisis are more effective than messages that do not match based on attributed responsibility. However, the SCCT meta-analysis shows the mixed record of support of this proposition in experimental tests (Ma & Zhan, 2016). In response to these findings, the founder of SCCT suggests that crisis scholars "move beyond this limited reputational effect" and indicated that "future research must accept the small effect of crisis response strategies and seek to understand the other variables that shape effective crisis communication" (Coombs, 2016, p. 120). Our work answers this scholarly call, using REMREP. Specifically, we took Coombs' (2016) advice and incorporated new variables that have been shown to have a large effect on post-crisis reputation, namely offensiveness and virtuousness. In so doing, we were able to find a small but significant effect of using the matching response strategies on perceived offensiveness of a crisis, but not other important crisis outcomes, like post-crisis reputation. Indeed, the total effect of the matching experimental condition on reputation in the model was zero. REMREP's propositions enabled us to capture this small effect, while still being able to predict medium to large amounts of variability in post-crisis reputation by including virtuousness and offensiveness. In terms of social assessment, this finding suggests that the rational and emotional information processing were influenced by using prescribed SCCT strategies, while moral information processing was not.

This may indicate that public relations professionals can try to use the matching response to contain crises, despite the limited impacts, but our results indicate that these messages are likely not influencing post-crisis reputation in the ways professional communicators would expect. Hence, we extend a call for future research to examine other message strategies outside of SCCT's prescriptive strategies can improve reputation, while still adhering to our ethical base as crisis communicators. Further, this research has only assessed one of the downstream factors identified in the social assessment literature. That literature identifies three other potential outcomes of crisis, celebrity, legitimacy, and status. Future research should consider how the prescribed response strategies influence these other crisis outcomes.

21. Extending REMREP: fan identity in a sports crisis

Based on the literature in the experimental context, sports crisis communication (e.g., Harker, 2019; Harker & Coombs, 2022), we considered individual sport identification (i.e., fan identity) as an important predictor in the reputational process, given that previous research indicates the identities related to sports (e.g., fan identity) are a driving force in people's behaviors, including those related to the sports organization (e.g., Cohen & Babbitt, in press). Our findings confirm previous work showing individual identification with a sports team termed fan identity was an influential predictor of crisis perceptions (Harker, 2019). We experimentally manipulated fan identity by randomly assigning participants to their favorite NFL team or their rival. Consistent with work by Harker (e.g., 2019) our results show that fan identity was an important predictor in this process, as fan identity significantly predicts perceived crisis offensiveness, perceived organizational virtuousness, and post-crisis reputation. In other words, fan identity reduced perceived crisis offensiveness and increased perceived virtuousness and post-crisis reputation. Indeed, and unlike the other experimental condition, this experimental manipulation had a total positive effect on the outcome with the measured variables in the model. These findings are consistent with decades of theory and research in sports psychology and communication (e.g., Cialdini

et al., 1976; Sanderson, 2013). Practically, these findings suggest that public relations professionals may need to proactively invest in developing and maintaining reputation and relationships using cultivation strategies (e.g., Huang et al., 2021; Lim & Lee, 2022; Zhan & Zhao, 2023) in advance of crises to build these positive relationships. Also, while additional research is needed, it might be more important for public relations professionals to communicate and reinforce organizational virtuousness cultivated in advance of a crisis.

22. Summary of theoretical and practical implications

Our study makes several important contributions to public relations and crisis communication theory and practice. First, we replicated and extended Page’s (2022) previous work showing the REMREP’s ideas of virtuousness and offensiveness predict post-crisis reputation. Second, and relatedly, we do so in the context of sports crisis communication, which scholars have called for more scholarship centering fans (e.g., Harker, 2019). Third, our findings show that fanship identity is important to consider in sports crises. Importantly, this experimental variable had the largest effect of the two experimental variables considered here. Moreover, this manipulation predicted the outcome indirectly via the intervening variables. This is important theoretically because it suggests that fanship is important to consider when segmenting stakeholders, as messages will be received differently based on their fanship identity. Fourth, we showed how Page’s (2022) flexible open model with significant predictors (virtuousness and offensiveness) for post-crisis reputation works in practice with a real-world organization. Lastly, our results suggest that public relations professionals may need to emphasize their organization’s virtuousness and minimize crisis offensiveness in their communication before, during, and following a crisis. Of course, simply arguing something that offends someone is not really offensive is unlikely to work. However, this research finds that the matching response strategies identified by Coombs (2007b) may help to reduce offensiveness, while other communication can emphasize virtuous actions of the organization.

23. Limitations

Like all research, this study has a few limitations that should be

noted. First, it is an experiment, so participants were aware they were being studied. This awareness could influence results. Additionally, we did not control for account acceptance, which Coombs (2022) claims is an important factor that can explain differences in the outcome. While we respectfully disagree with this view, this manuscript is not the place to litigate that issue. Further, the nature of the experiment is that participants might have suspected the story they were reading was fictional. Again, this awareness might have influenced the results. Finally, this is one study of one specific crisis among one sample. Therefore, attempts to generalize to other crisis contexts and other populations solely based upon this study would be unwise. Rather, given research indicates that there are different crisis response patterns across various cultures (Barkley, 2020; Lim, 2020) in contrast to the universality of moral foundations theory across WEIRD and non-WEIRD societies (Doğruyol et al., 2019), scholars should continue to replicate studies like this to examine if and how the findings of this study might be applicable in other contexts.

24. Conclusion

This study found that fanship identity influences perceptions of crisis situations. By doing so, this study has replicated findings that REMREP, which explains how attributes of crisis, such as fanship identity, crisis response, crisis offensiveness, and virtuousness, impact post-crisis reputation. REMREP offers a flexible model that scholars can use to study this important subject through organizational virtuousness and crisis offensiveness that align with the literature on social assessment. We showed that one way to use the REMREP’s flexibility is to examine the crisis context to see what context-based predictors should be added in the model, in this case fanship identity. Our results show that fanship identity is an important predictor, showing the utility of considering identities related to the organization when communicating with stakeholders during crises.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors have no conflict of interest to disclose regarding this work.

Appendix. : Scale Items & Example Stimuli

Scale Items

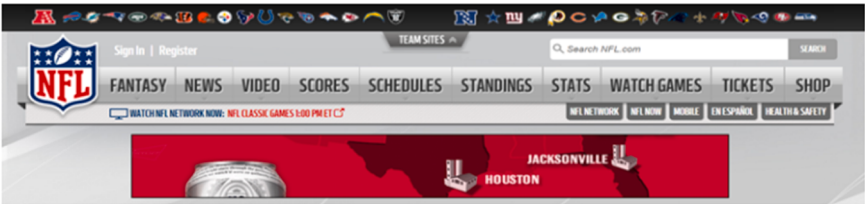
Label	Scale Item
Attribution 1	How responsible were the TEAM?
Attribution 2	How responsible are outside circumstances not in the TEAM’s control?
Attribution 3	How much do you blame the TEAM?
Attribution 4	How much do you blame outside circumstances not in the TEAM’s control?
Offensiveness 1	The TEAM caused someone to suffer emotionally.
Offensiveness 2	The TEAM hurt someone’s health.
Offensiveness 3	The TEAM was cruel.
Offensiveness 4	The TEAM took advantage of someone.
Offensiveness 5	The TEAM cheated someone.
Offensiveness 6	The TEAM did something to betray its people.
Offensiveness 7	The TEAM mistreated its people.
Offensiveness 8	The TEAM’s actions caused chaos or disorder.
Offensiveness 9	The TEAM broke the law.
Offensiveness 10	The TEAM did something disgusting.
Virtuousness 1	The TEAM made others safer.
Virtuousness 2	The TEAM was honest.
Virtuousness 3	The TEAM acted fairly.
Virtuousness 4	The TEAM showed love for its country.
Virtuousness 5	The TEAM was loyal.
Virtuousness 6	The TEAM was trustworthy.
Virtuousness 7	The TEAM respected authority.

(continued on next page)

(continued)

Label	Scale Item
Virtuousness 8	The TEAM acted in a way that God would approve of.
Virtuousness 9	The TEAM acted in a pure and decent way.
Reputation 1	The TEAM are concerned with the well-being of its publics.
Reputation 2	The TEAM are basically dishonest.
Reputation 3	I do not trust the TEAM organization to tell the truth about the incident.
Reputation 4	Under most circumstances, I would be likely to believe what the TEAM say.
Reputation 5	The TEAM are not concerned with the well-being of its publics.

Example Stimuli



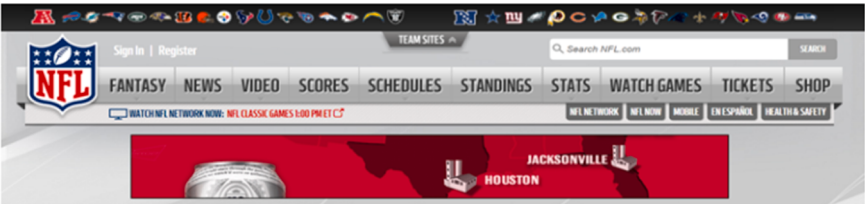
Email Shows San Francisco 49ers Deliberately Cheated By Giving Players Banned Substances

By: NFL Staff

The NFL has released a statement indicating that they have authenticated a leaked email from the San Francisco 49ers medical staff that shows it was cheating by giving its players a banned performance enhancing substance.

“We have authenticated the email, and we have very serious concerns about San Francisco 49ers conduct,” said Troy Vincent, NFL Vice President of Operations. “We are especially concerned that the team appeared to be helping its players cheat our drug tests by using diuretics. The deliberate effort to break league rules is completely unacceptable.”

On Thursday, anonymous sources submitted the email to the NFL that the San Francisco 49ers were using Gantriphine, a performance enhancing substance. Gantriphine is currently available over-the-counter, but contains ingredients that were recently placed on the NFL’s banned substance list. Performance enhancing drugs and substance abuse have plagued the NFL for decades.

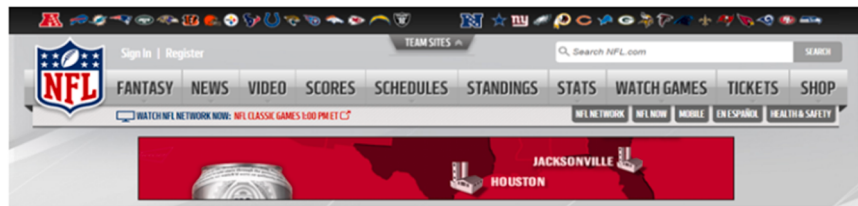


Baltimore Ravens Respond

By: NFL Staff

Baltimore Ravens issued the following statement in response to the allegations:

“Words cannot express how truly sorry we are. Our medical staff made an inexcusable mistake to use products that were recently banned by the league for players to use. This was a huge mistake for which we are deeply ashamed.”



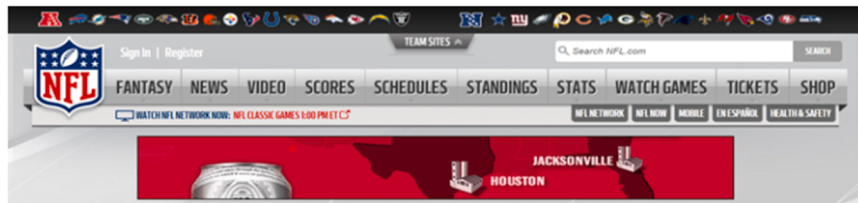
NFL Discredits Rumor That Chicago Bears Cheated By Giving Players Banned Substances

By: NFL Staff

The NFL released a statement indicating they had investigated the story and found it to be false, following rumors last week that Chicago Bears medical staff gave players a banned substance.

"We have investigated this allegation thoroughly and are sure it is untrue," said Troy Vincent, NFL Vice President of Operations. "Our investigation was thorough and it involved third-party witness interviews, a review of relevant records, electronic research, and independent laboratory analysis and review."

On Thursday, anonymous sources reported to the NFL that the Chicago Bears were using Gantriphine, a performance enhancing substance. Gantriphine is currently available over-the-counter, but contains ingredients that were recently placed on the NFL's banned substance list. Performance enhancing drugs and substance abuse have plagued the NFL for decades.



New England Patriots Respond

By: NFL Staff

New England Patriots issued the following statement in response to the allegations:

"The allegations are absolutely untrue. In the last year, our players have been tested more than 200 times and there has not been a single positive test. We're sick and tired of these allegations and we're going to do everything we can to fight them."

References

- Arritt, D. (2016). Lying, hacking, attacking: 10 infamous cheating scandals. ESPN. http://www.espn.com/olympics/story/_id/17141273/from-doping-hacking-attacking-here-10-cheating-scandals-rocked-world-sports.
- Ashforth, B. E., & Gibbs, B. W. (1990). The double-edge of organizational legitimization. *Organization Science*, 1, 177–194. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1.2.177>
- Barkley, K. (2020). Does one size fit all? The applicability of situational crisis communication theory in the Japanese context. *Public Relations Review*, 46(3), 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2020.101911>
- Benoit, W. L. (1995). *Accounts, excuses, and apologies: A theory of image restoration strategies*. State University of New York Press.
- Bishop, G., & Thamel, P. (2008). Senator wants N.F.L. spying case explained. New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/2008/02/01/sports/football/01nfl.html>.
- Brown, N. A., & Billings, A. C. (2013). Sports fans as crisis communicators on social media websites. *Public Relations Review*, 39(1), 74–81. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2012.09.012>
- Brown, N. A., Brown, K. A., & Billings, A. C. (2015). May no act of ours bring shame" fan-enacted crisis communication surrounding the Penn State sex abuse scandal. *Communication Sport*, 3(3), 288–311. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2167479513514387>
- Bundy, J., & Pfarrer, M. D. (2015). A burden of responsibility: The role of social approval at the onset of a crisis. *Academy of Management Review*, 40, 345–369. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2013.0027>
- Chase, C. (2015). Naming the no. 1 rival for all 32 NFL teams. USA Today. <https://ftw.usatoday.com/2015/09/nfl-rivals-for-each-team-best-nfl-rivalries-redskins-cowboys-bears-packers-patriots-colts>.
- Cialdini, R. B., Borden, R. J., Thorne, A., Walker, M. R., Freeman, S., & Sloan, L. R. (1976). Basking in reflected glory: Three (football) field studies. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 34(3), 366–375. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.34.3.366>
- CNN Library. (2018, May 7). *Performance enhancing drugs in sports fast facts*. CNN. (www.cnn.com).

- Cohen, E.L., & Bobbitt, T.D. (In Press). A social identity approach to popular media fandom. In L. Barbati-Dajches & J. Stevens Aubrey (Eds.), *Fandom in Marginalized Communities: Rethinking "Media Effects" and Fans* (pp. XXX – XXX). Routledge.
- Coombs, W. T. (2006). The protective powers of crisis response strategies: Managing reputational assets during a crisis. *Journal of Promotion Management*, 12(3–4), 241–260. https://doi.org/10.1300/J057v12n03_13
- Coombs, W. T. (2007a). Attribution theory as a guide for post-crisis communication research. *Public Relations Review*, 33(2), 135–139. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2006.11.016>
- Coombs, W. T. (2007b). Protecting organization reputations during a crisis: The development and application of situational crisis communication theory. *Corporate Reputation Review*, 10(3), 163–176. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2006.11.016>
- Coombs, W. T. (2015). *Ongoing crisis communication: Planning, managing, and responding*. Sage Publications.
- Coombs, W. T. (2016). Reflections on a meta-analysis: Crystallizing thinking about SCCT. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 28(2), 120–122. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1062726X.2016.1167479>
- Coombs, W. T. (2022). Situational crisis communication theory: Refining and clarifying a cognitive-based theory of crisis communication. In W. T. Coombs, & S. J. Holladay (Eds.), *The handbook of crisis communication* (pp. 193–204). Wiley.
- Coombs, W. T., & Holladay, S. J. (2002). Helping crisis managers protect reputational assets initial tests of the situational crisis communication theory. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 16(2), 165–186. <https://doi.org/10.1177/089331802237233>
- Coombs, W. T., & Tachkova, E. R. (2019). Scansis as a unique crisis type: Theoretical and practical implications. *Journal of Communication Management*, 23(1), 72–88. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JCOM-08-2018-0078>
- Coombs, W. T., & Tachkova, E. R. (2024). Integrating moral outrage in situational crisis communication theory: A triadic appraisal model for crises. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 37(4). <https://doi.org/10.1177/08933189221151177>
- Coombs, W. T., & Tachkova, E. R. (2023). How emotions can enhance crisis communication: Theorizing around moral outrage. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 1–17.
- Doğruyol, B., Alper, S., & Yilmaz, O. (2019). The five-factor model of the moral foundations theory is stable across WEIRD and non-WEIRD cultures. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 151, 1–6. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2019.109547>
- Ferrari-King, G. (2014). Every NFL team's biggest rival. Bleacher Report. <https://bleacherreport.com/articles/2270630-every-nfl-teams-biggest-rival#slide0>
- Gomulya, D., & Boeker, W. (2014). How firms respond to financial restatement: CEO successors and external reactions. *Academy of Management Journal*, 57, 1759–1785. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2012.0491>
- Graham, J., Haidt, J., Koleva, S., Motyl, M., Iyer, R., Wojcik, S. P., & Ditto, P. H. (2013). Moral foundations theory: The pragmatic validity of moral pluralism. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 47, 55–130. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-407236-7.00002-4>
- Griffin, M., Babin, B. J., & Darden, W. R. (1992). Consumer assessments of responsibility for product-related injuries: The impact of regulations, warnings, and promotional policies. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 19, 870–878. (<http://acrwebsite.org/volumes/7404/volumes/v19/NA-19>).
- Harker, J. (2019). Identification and crisis: An exploration into the influence of sports identification on stakeholder perceptions of sports-related crisis. *Journal of Sports Media*, 14(1), 171–199. <https://doi.org/10.1353/jsm.2019.0001>
- Harker, J. L. (2021). Let's talk sports: An egocentric discussion network analysis regarding NFL crisis perceptions. *Communication Sport*, 9(4), 576–602. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2167479519875970>
- Harker, J. L., & Coombs, W. T. (2022). Rallying the fans. In Y. Jin, & L. Austin (Eds.), *Social Media and Crisis communication*. Routledge.
- Hayes, A. F. (2022). *Introduction to mediation, moderation, and conditional process analysis* (3rd Ed.). Guilford Press.
- Huang, Q., Jin, J., Lynn, B. J., & Men, L. R. (2021). Relationship cultivation and public engagement via social media during the covid-19 pandemic in China. *Public Relations Review*, 47(4). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2021.102064>
- Iqbal, F., Pfarrer, M. D., & Bundy, J. (2024). How crisis management strategies address stakeholders' sociocognitive concerns and organizations' social evaluations. *Academy of Management Review*, 49(2), 299–321. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2020.0371>
- Kim, S., & Sung, K. H. (2014). Revisiting the effectiveness of base crisis response strategies in comparison of reputation management crisis responses. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 26(1), 62–78. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1062726X.2013.795867>
- Lamin, A., & Zaheer, S. (2012). Wall street vs. main street: Firm strategies for defending legitimacy and their impact on different stakeholders. *Organization Science*, 23, 47–66. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1100.0631>
- Lange, D., & Washburn, N. T. (2012). Understanding attributions of corporate social irresponsibility. *Academy of Management Review*, 37, 300–326. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2010.0522>
- Lim, J. R. (2020). How organizations in different cultures respond to crises: Content analysis of crisis responses between the United States and South Korea. *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, 14(4), 294–316. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1553118X.2020.1812613>
- Lim, J. R., & Lee, S. Y. (2022). Creating shared value (CSV) and mutually beneficial relationships to address societal issues and develop corporate competitive advantage: A case study of Yuhang-Kimberly and an aging population. *Public Relations Review*, 48(4), Article 102225. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2022.102225>
- Ma, L., & Zhan, M. (2016). Effects of attributed responsibility and response strategies on organizational reputation: A meta-analysis of situational crisis communication theory research. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 28, 102–119. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1062726X.2016.1166367>
- McNear, C. (2018). Spygate: The scandal that meant everyone was right. The Ringer. <https://www.theringer.com/nfl/2017/8/10/16121672/spygate-new-england-patriots-bill-belichick-10-year-anniversary>
- Page, T. G. (2019). Beyond attribution: Building new measures to explain the reputation threat posed by crisis. *Public Relations Review*, 45(1), 138–152. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2018.10.002>
- Page, T. G. (2020). Measuring success: Explications and measurement scales of instructing information and adjusting information. *Public Relations Review*, 46(4), Article 101952. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2020.101952>
- Page, T. G. (2022). The reputational benefits of instructing information: The first test of the revised model of reputation repair. *Public Relations Review*, 48(5), Article 102256. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2022.102256>
- Page, T. G., & Clementson, D. E. (2023). The power of style: Sincerity's effects on reputation. *Journal of International Crisis and Risk Communication Research*, 6(2), 4–29. <https://doi.org/10.56801/jicrcr.V6.i2.2>
- Page, T. G., Zhou, A., & Capizzo, L. (2023). Finding the path beyond reputation repair: A structural topic modeling analysis of the crisis communication paradigm in public relations. *Public Relations Review*, 49(4), 102349. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2023.102349>
- Pfarrer, M. D., DeCelles, K. A., Smith, K. G., & Taylor, M. S. (2008). After the fall: Reintegrating the corrupt organization. *Academy of Management Review*, 33, 730–749. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2008.32465757>
- Reyes, S., & Branscombe, N. R. (2010). Fanship and fandom: Comparisons between sport and non-sport fans. *Journal of Sport Behavior*, 33(2), 176–193.
- Sanderson, J. (2013). From loving the hero to despising the villain: Sports fans, Facebook, and social identity threats. *Mass Communication Society*, 16(4), 487–509. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15205436.2012.730650>
- Sturges, D. L. (1994). Communicating through crisis: A strategy for organizational survival. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 7(3), 297–316. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0893318994007003004>
- Sutton, R. I., & Callahan, A. L. (1987). The stigma of bankruptcy: Spoiled organizational image and its management. *Academy of Management Journal*, 30, 405–436. <https://doi.org/10.5465/256007>
- Wann, D. L., & Branscombe, N. R. (1993). Sports fans: Measuring degree of identification with their team. *International Journal of Sport Psychology*, 24(1), 1–17 (Doi not available).
- Weiner, B. (1985). An attributional theory of achievement motivation and emotion. *Psychological Review*, 92(4), 548–573. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.92.4.548>
- Wu, S. H., Tsai, C. Y. D., & Hung, C. C. (2012). Toward team or player? How trust, vicarious achievement motive, and identification affect fan loyalty. *Journal of Sport Management*, 26(2), 177–191. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.26.2.177>
- Zhan, M. M., & Zhao, X. (2023). Fostering organization-public relationships through openness and engagement: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 1–27. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1062726X.2022.2160335>