The Effect of Image Repair Strategies on Corporate Reputataion, Trust and Behavioral Intentions

İmaj Düzeltme Stratejilerinin Kurumsal İtibar, Güven ve Davranışsal Niyet Üzerindeki Etkisi

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Özet

Örgütlerin içinde bulundukları kriz sürecinde sosyal medya üzerinden paydaşları ile ilişkilerini sürdürmeleri imajlarını düzeltmeleri için çok önemlidir. Bu nedenle bu çalışma Benoit (1995) tarafından geliştirilen krize cevap stratejilerinden sorumluluktan kaçma, olayın büyüklüğünü azaltma, inkar, küçük düşme ve düzeltme eylemi stratejilerinin kurumsal itibar, güven ve davranışsal niyet üzerindeki etkisini ortaya koymayı amaçlamaktadır. Araştırmada veri toplama aracı olarak anket formu kullanılmış, 2016 yılı Nisan ayında uygunluk örneklemi ile Antalya'daki 1800 Facebook kullanıcısı araştırmaya dahil edilmiştir. Araştırmanın sonucunda, inkar ve sorumluluktan kaçma stratejilerinin paydaşların kurumsal itibar ve güven algılarında etkili olduğu; fakat imaj düzeltme satratejilerinin davranışsal niyet üzerinde bir etkisinin olmadığı tespit edilmiştir.

Anahtar kelimeler: İmaj Düzeltme Stratejileri, Kurumsal İtibar, Güven, Davranışsal Niyet, Kriz

Abstract

It is significant for organisations to maintain their relationships with their stakeholders during crisis over social media in order to repair their images. For this reason this paper aims to analyse the role of the crisis responses of evasion of responsibility (ER), denial (D), reducing the offensiveness of the event (ROE), mortification (M) and corrective action (CA), indicated by Benoit (1995) on reputation, trust and behavioural intentions. The data analysed in the study was collected in April 2016 using a questionnaire form with 1800 participants of Facebook users by convenience sampling in Antalya in Turkey. It is found that both denial and evasion of responsibility have effect on the perceptions of stakeholders about corporate reputation and trust; but nonof the crisis response strategies has affect on the behavioural intentions of the stakeholders.

Key Words: *Image Repair Strategies, Corporate Reputataion, Trust, Behavioral Intentions, Crisis*

Introduction

As organisations know the importance of response speed, today they have used social media for crisis communication with their stakeholders. Benoit (1997) has emphasized this situation that an organization's survival in a crisis depends on its speed of response. In order to manage a crisis, an organization should communicate strategically with its stakeholders by relaying information in an effective way at the right time (Ki & Nekmat, 2014). The urgency of providing reliable information for organizations in a crisis situation is related with choosing the appropriate crisis response strategies. Because, an organization's crisis response strategy can be depicted by what the organization states and reacts when a crisis has happened (Coombs, 2004). Furthermore, organizations' developing the effective crisis response strategies from social media affect directly their organizational reputation (Ki & Nekmat, 2014). However, it is difficult to manage reputation because it comprises the perceptions of credibility, reliability, accountability, trustworthiness and competence (Ott & Theunissen, 2015). Furthermore, if the stakeholders consider the organization reputable, they trust on the organization's messages (Blois, 1999). Hence, the stakeholders' behavioural intentions become more favourable for the organitation's activities (Eberle et al., 2016). While using social media, organisations may answer to stakeholders' interests, developing organisational understandings of stakeholders' crisis needs and fostering reputation (Hurk, 2013).

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In that sense it is significant for organisations to maintain their relationships with their stakeholders during crisis over social media in order to repair their images. For this reason this paper aims to analyse the role of the crisis responses of mortification, corrective action, evasion of responsibility, reducing the offensiveness of the event and denial indicated by Benoit (1995) on reputation, trust and behavioural intentions. It is crucial to determine which crisis response strategy over Facebook influence the reputation and trust perceptions of staheholders, and the behavioural intentions of them.

Social Media and Crisis Management

Social media is considered as an important latest addition organisational crisis communication tool. (Roshan, et al., 2016). Hence, social media contribute for organizations not only respond in the fastest and most direct way, but also to spread information to stakeholders globally (González-Herrero & Smith, 2008; Taylor & Perry, 2005). Crisis managers provide information from social media containing the accurate facts from organization and the existing statement ensuring that their response contacts stakeholders (Prentice & Huffman, 2008). The spread of information on social media could be regarded as an advantage to crisis professionals who must reach the stakeholders as quickly as possible (Freberg, 2012). Therefore, it is crucial for companies to use social media's ability of requiring real-time crisis information that the stakeholders' need particularly in crisis situations (Ki & Nekmat, 2014). In that sense, social media allows an active relationship and dialogue between organizations and stakeholders (Floreddu, et al., 2014). Thank to the nature of socail media, organizations change their actions from monologue to dialogue (Mersham, et al., 2009). While social media has provided organisations to have direct communication with stakeholders, it has increased organisations' vulnerability during a crisis as it can allow the spread of it (Ngai, et al., 2015; Roshan, et al., 2016). Therefore; it is important to extent safety messages to affected stakeholders quickly and in a manner that supports legitimation (Freberg, 2012). For creating this safety mesages the organizations must know the whole crisis response strategies and their differences. Benoit (1997) proposes that a quick reply is profitable during a crisis situation.

Crisis response strategies

When a crisis occurs, what the organization says to its stakeholders is important. Crisis response strategies are important symbolic resourse for both crisis managers and the stakeholders (Coombs, 1998). Because of staheholders' seeking the responsibles and the causes of the crisis, it is vital for organizations to bring informations to stakeholders. Therefore, organizations must use crisis response strategies to manage the reputational damage (DiStaso, et al., 2015). Though there have been various reiterations of crisis response strategies, lots of the researches refer to Benoit's (1995; 1997) five distinct communication strategies for repairing one's image in situations of crisis (Dardis & Haigh, 2009). Benoit (1995) suggested a typology of five main communication strategies that can be used to reestablish organizations' image. These five strategies are (Benoit, 1997):

1. Denial

Denial has two alternative forms. First, an organization can deny that the act happened, that the organization performed the act, or that the act was harmful to anyone. Secondly, the organization can deny that it is responsible for the act. In this situation, the organization shifts the blame, debating that another organization or an individual is charge for the offensive act (Benoit, 1997). Coombs (2007) emphasizes that the strategy of denial is only beneficial when the crisis challenge is unjustifiable.

2. Evasion of Responsibility

Evasion of Responsibility has four forms. First, an organization may state its act was just a quick message to another's offensive act. Second form of this strategy is defeasibility. The organization declares a lack of information about or control over important elements of the situation. Third form is to insist on the offensive action occurred by an accident. Fourth, the organization may offer that the offensive behavior was happened with good will (Benoit, 1997). The strategy of evasion of responsibility specifies that the organization has minimal responsibility for the crisis (Coombs and Schmidt, 2000). Brown (2016) has explained this staretegy wtih the concepts of provocation, scapegoating, defeasibility, accident and good intentions.

3. Reducing the Offensiveness of the Event

Reducing the Offensiveness of the Event has six forms. First, an organization may use supporting to strengthen the stakeholder's positive feelings toward itself, in order to compensate the negative feelings connected with the act. In that sense, organizations may use their positive acts they have done in the past. Second, an organization tries to diminish the contrary feelings related to the act. Third, an organization can use differentiation, in which the act is distinguished from other similar but more offensive actions. Fourth form of this strategy is superiority, which tries to place the act in a more positive context and situation. Fifth, the organization can determine to attact and assault to their accusers. Sixth form of reducing offensiveness is compensation. The organization will offer anyone harmed by the behavior compensation in the form of something substantive (Benoit, 1997).

4. Corrective Action

In this strategy, the organization promises to correct the crisis. This action can take the form of restoring the state of affairs existing before the offensive action, and/or promising to prevent the recurrence of the offensive act (Benoit, 1997). Sellnow et al. (1998) propose that corrective action strategy is vitaly important for an organization to regain lost legitimacy in crisis situations. Furthermore, the corrective action strategy is the main strategy to specify changes to prevent a repeat of the

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crisis (Coombs and Schmidt, 2000). If the crisis is acute and the organization has been responsible, the organization may choose corrective action strategy (Haigh and Brubaker, 2010). On the other hand, this strategy can be choosen by an organization even in situations where the organization is not viewed as responsible for the crisis (Sellnow et al., 1998).

5. Mortification

This strategy is a confession and asking for forgiveness. So, the organization begs for forgiveness from the stakeholders (Benoit, 1997). In this strategy the organization admits that the crisis has been the organization's or the individual's mistake (Brown, 2016). In the literature, this mortification strategy can be dealt with both full apology and partial apology. Hearit (2006) states that the strategy of full apology is used when there is no victim, and the strategy of partial apology is used in other circumstances. Kim et al. (2009) proposes that mortification is the most constantly used strategy than any other crisis types although it is never in the victim crisis situations.

Corporate Reputation

To effectively develop these crisis response strategies, an organization should evaluate potential situations beforehand and try to predict levels of reputation threat that represents a primary function of crisis responsibility (Ki & Nekmat, 2014). Because, the organisations have understood the significance of reputation as a strategic asset for managing the organisation's sustainability especially in crisis environment (Gardberg and Fombrun, 2002).

Corporate reputation is considered to send information about organisation's past and future activities that affects how stakeholders regard and behave towards them (Fombrun, 1996). In other words corporate reputation is the stakeholder's overall evaluation of an organization over time (Gotsi and Wilson, 2001). Moreover, Argenti and Druckenmiller (2004) indicate corporate reputation is the result of interactions between stakeholders and the organisation over time. These definitions of corporate reputataion show the importance of stakeholders. Furthermore, stakeholders can affect corporate reputation when they are associated with an organization especially today's interactive environment (Floreddu, et al., 2014).

New interactive media shift power from organizations to stakeholders (Rauschnabal, et al., 2016). Furthermore, with the widespread use of the interactive social media, especially corporate reputation is shaped by the stakeholders (Floreddu, et al., 2014). The stakeholders have the opportunity to share their own experiences with organizations and influence other stakeholders (Zhu and Zhang, 2010). Therefore, organizations should communicate with their stakholders in the most timely, consistent, open, and honest manner possible (Huang, 2008) especially in a crisis situation. Because, corporate reputation is a strategic intangible capital which requires organisations with a sustainable competitive advantage (Smith, 2008; Keh and Xie, 2009; Ponzi et al., 2011; Agarwal et al., 2015) generating stakeholder support (Fombrun and Pan, 2006) especially in a crisis situation.

Trust

Trust is regarded as both a key factor in maintaining stakeholder relationships and an essential aspect of any relationship in which the trustor does not have any direct control over the actions of a trustee, when the decision is crucial, and the environment is uncertain (Jarvenpaa et al., 2000) like crisis environments. Moreover, trust develops relations between stakeholders and organizations, diminishes doubtfulness in bargainings and improves interaction and collaboration among stakeholders (Esen, 2012).

Trust can be considered as the result of reputation (Ingenhoff and Sommer, 2008). A favourable reputation encourages stakeholders to rely on an organization's messages (Blois, 1999). Furthermore, a favourable corporate reputation improves credibility of the organization and reduction in perceived risk in stakeholders' decision making process (Keh and Xie, 2009).

In the context of social media, trust represents a vital issue in building successful relationships (Calefeto et al., 2015).The social relationship of people generated through social media influences the perceived trust of people and provides them to judge the trustworthiness of communication (Pan and Chiou, 2011). While trust is a critical factor in building successful relationships, social media represent a strong means for fostering trust by creating a direct, more personal communication channel with each other (Calefeto et al., 2015). And also, social media automatically combine user-generated information to specify trustworthiness. (Kietzmann, et al., 2011) Because of social media, organizations are able to create and preserve more direct relationships with customers and manage corporate reputation and trust (Floreddu, et al., 2014). DiStaso, et al. (2015) indicates that the social media or new media such as Facebook has offered organizations with new tools for crisis management to control the reputational damage and gain stakeholders' trust.

Behavioral Intentions

Corporate reputation and trust play a significant role in behavioural variables, mostly in stakeholders' tendency to continue and improve interactions with the same organisation, empowering retention (Morgan and Hunt, 1994). However, if the stakeholders trust in an organisation, the more positive are the behavioural intentions of different stakeholder groups with respect to the organisation (Ingenhoff and Sommer, 2008; Eberle et al., 2016).

It has been also highlighted that trust and corporate reputation are crucial concepts particularly for service provider organisations that adopt retention strategies (Milan et al., 2015). Both corporate reputation and trust have strong, positive and statistically significant effect on behavioural intentions. Indeed, in order to support behavioural intentions, firstly stakeholders should trust the organisation as a whole (Karakaya and Gök-Demir; 2016). Also, organizations with favourable reputations benefit from creating trust and identification among stakeholders, which, in turn, positively affect customer royalty that plays a mediating role between the relational constructs and behavioral intentions (Keh & Xie, 2009).

Researches on crisis response strategies and reputation recommend sympathy and highly accommodative crisis repair strategies may be the most essential ways to avoid the negative communication dynamic and have proven to provide limited benefits to organizations. Researchers in psychology have stated that emotion is vital to understanding behavior because of its ability to motivate people and to encourage subsequent behaviors (Coombs & Holladay, 2007). Moreover, White, White and Yu (2005) have suggested that positive emotions caused to be associated with positive outcomes and negative emotions caused to associate with negative outcomes. Additionally, the the effect of the crisis spreads to other stakeholders more quickly with the comments of stakeholders on social media. As Boyd (2000); Tucker & Melewar (2005) and Coombs & Holladay (2007) have emphasized that negative online comments will hurt the organizations' reputations. In this case, it is important for organizations to become quick and to choose the appropriate crisis response strategies.

Method

The aim of this study has to compare the crisis response strategies of Denial, Evasion of Responsibility, Reducing the Offensiveness of the Event, Corrective Action, Mortification in a social media environment with the purpose to specify which strategy affects reputation, trust, and behavioural intentions. In parallel to this purpose, the research questions are;

RQ1: How do the crisis responses of D, ER, ROE, CA, M over Facebook affect the reputation of a hospital in crisis?

RQ2: How do the crisis responses of D, ER, ROE, CA, M over Facebook affect the trust of a hospital in crisis?

RQ3: How do the crisis responses of D, ER, ROE, CA, M over Facebook affect the behavioral intentions of a hospital in crisis?

Respondents

The data analysed in the study was collected in April 2016 using a questionnaire form with 1800 participants of Facebook users by convenience sampling in Antalya in Turkey. Due to missing values, 1750 questionnaires have been analysed.

Data Collection and Measurement

In the questionnare form, a hypothetical scenario has described as "A doctor and three medical personnels have lost their lives because of a contagious virus in a private hospital in Antalya within a week period". For controlling the potential biased responses based on personal past experiences, a fictitious hospital was used in this scenario. DiStaso et al., (2015) indicate that crisis events have been examined in various contexts but there is lack of systematic research at the combination of health-crisis communication and social media above crisis situations. Health care organizations are mainly customer oriented and therefore customer relations are very dense in these organisations (Şatır, 2006). Moreover, when credibility is the major factor in decision making behaviour and patients are in danger of losing their physical and psychological health in a process in which they do not have any control; trust and reputation are therefore more likely to affect service providers like in health care sector (Karakaya and Gök Demir, 2015). For this reason this paper aims to analyse the role of crisis response messages of a fictitious private hospital posted from Facebook.

The hospital share thecrisis response message from its Facebook account.Each participant has been randomly exposed to one of the crisis response strategies D, ER, ROE, CA, M -.

The D read as: *"The situation taken place in our hospital is not related to our hospital. This virus was contaminated to the staff outside from the hospital."*

The ER read as: *"This situation is a calamity for our hospital, however this virus was contaminated to our staff accidentally; the hospital was not in charge of this situation."*

The ROE read as: *"Serving as a pioneer hospital in health care sector in Antalya for a long time, we are ready to compensate all the material loss for the victims' families."*

The CA read as: *"In order to prevent to reoccur the situation, we have taken immediately all the precautions; the staff have beed trained on this issue and the issue of hygiene have been examined."*

The M read as: *"We have been in grief for the loss of our 4 staff. We apologize to the public."*

In order to investigate the effects of these crisis response strategies on the perception of corporate reputation, trust and behavioural intentions, the questionnaire form consists of 24 questions. Five questions were used for demographics; five questions were used to measure corporate reputation based on Ponzi et al., 2011; the six questions were used to measure trust based on the Hon and Grunig (1999); the six questions were used to measure behavioural intentionsbased on the DiStaso, et al. (2015). The items except demographics have been measured using a five-point Likert scale, with the statements being "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree".

Demographics:

Demographics of the 1750 respondents are as follows; 53% of respondents are male (n = 935) and 47% are female (n = 815). The respondents are between 13 and 74 years old and the mean is calculated as 31 years old. A monthly household income of the participants is calculated between 300 TL and 35.000 TL. The mean of the household income is found as 2.493 TL.

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Educational status of the respondents are as follows; 9% of respondents have less than a high school degree (n = 156), 25% of respondents have a high school degree (n = 428), 12% of respondents have college degree (n = 202), 49% of respondents have a bachelor degree (n = 858), and 6% of respondents have a graduate degree (n = 104).

The respondents indicate that they spend at least an hour and at most 22 hours a day on Facebook. The mean of the time spent on Facebook is 3 hours.

Analysis and Findings

Reliability and Validity of Measurement Instrument

In order to test reliability of the scales we have calculated Cronbach's Alpha coefficient; for corporate reputation dimensions Cronbach's Alpha is 0.908, for trust Cronbach's Alpha is 0.871 and for behavioural intentions is 0.687. It can be inferred that all the scales are found reliable.

As corporate reputation, trust and behavioural intentions are one-dimensional wehave not tested the construct validity; we have conducted only KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity in order to measure sampling adequacy. KMO (0.875) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (p<0.05) is calculated for corporate reputation; KMO (0.887) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (p<0.05) is calculated for trust; KMO (0.659) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (p<0.05) is calculated for behavioural intentions.

Testing Research Questions

The first research question examined respondents' reputation evaluations of a hospital in crisis based on the response strategies of D, ER, ROE, CA and M employed over a Facebook page. It is researched whether the crisis reponse strategies - D, ER, ROE, CA, M - effect on corporate reputation by performing one way anova. The results show that there is a significant difference in crisis response strategies on reputation (F, 9.227; p ≤ 0.001) (see Table 1). However, post hoc analysis using Tukey-b revealed the cause of the difference (see Table 2). Accodingly, the means of the strategies of denial and evasion of responsibility are lower thanthe strategies of reducing the offensiveness of the event, corrective action and mortification.

Table 1: The Results of ANOVA for Corporate Reputation

Corporate Reputation	Sum of squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	738,631	4	184,658	9,227	,000
Within groups	34702,303	1734	20,013		
Total	35440,934	1738			

Table 2: Post Hoc Analysis – Tukey B

Strategies		N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
			1	2
Tukey B	ER	349	10,1003	
	D	345	10,7304	
	M	347		11,5937
	CA	350		11,6486
	ROE	348		11,7816

The second research question examined respondents' trust evaluations of a hospital in crisis based on the responsestrategies of D, ER, ROE, CA, M employed over a Facebook page. It is researched whether the crisis reponse strategies - D, ER, ROE, CA, M - effect on trust by performing one way anova. The results show that there is a significant difference in crisis response strategies on trust (F, 11.049; p ≤ 0.001) (see Table 3). However, post hoc analysis using Tukey-b revealed the cause of the difference (see Table 4). Accodingly, the means of the strategies of denial and evasion of responsibility are lower than the strategies of reducing the offensiveness of the event, corrective action and mortification.

Table 3: The Results of ANOVA for Trust

Trust	Sum of squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	922,214	4	248,054	11,049	,000
Within groups	38434,875	1712	22,450		
Total	39427,089	1716			

Table 4: Post Hoc Analysis – Tukey B

Strategies		N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
			1	2
Tukey B	ER	348	13,3822	
	D	339	113,6283	
	M	343		14,7930
	ROE	338		15,0947
	CA	349		15,1834

The third research question examined respondents' behavioural intentions of a hospital in crisis based on the response strategies of D, ER, ROE, CA, M employed over a Facebook page. It is researched whether the crisis reponse strategies - D, ER, ROE, CA, M - effect on trust by performing one way anova. The results show that there is no significant difference in crisis response strategies on behavioural intentions.

Conclusion and Discussion

This study has investigated stakeholder responses after receiving crisis response messages of denial, evasion of responsibility, reducing the offensiveness of the event, corrective action, mortification with a Facebook post for a hospital in crisis situation. It is found that both denial and evasion of responsibility have effect on the perceptions of stakeholders about corporate reputation and trust. This finding is congruent with the recent study which shows that corporate reputation has a strong, positive and statistically significant effect on trust (Karakaya and Gök Demir, 2016). As corporate reputation greatly contributes to the formation of trust and thus trust is considered as the result of reputation, it is predictable that a variable which affects reputation also affects trust. Since the concepts of corporate reputation and trust are closely related to each other, the image repair strategies have the same effect on both concepts. In the study it is suggested that denial and evasion of responsibility have much more negative effect than the other strategies on the perceptions of stakeholders about corporate reputation and trust. It can be concluded that it is not effective to foster the reputation when an organisation prefers denial or evasion of responsibility to repair its image during the crisis times. The results of Kim et al. (2009) study show that the strategy of denial is the least effective strategy among the other strategies. However, they emphasize that despite its ineffectiveness, organizations tend to use the strategy of denial without considering their crisis circumstances. Although most of the organisations prefer denial during crisis times due to the legal issues (Benoit ve Czerwinski, 1997), it can be stated that it is the less effective strategy among the image repair strategy when communicating with the stakeholders. Because denial and evasion of responsibility can be categorised within asymmetrical communication while corrective action and mortification can be included in symmetrical communication. Relationship management with the stakeholders should be maintained from two-way symmetrical communication especially during crisis times. That the organizations strengthen the effective relationships they have with their stakeholders provides a competitive advantage (Bruning et al., 2006) and organizations' these efforts rebuild their legitimacy (Sellnow, et al., 1998). Organizations that have responsibility and legitimacy with their stakeholders have a major chance to keep from a crisis (Sellnow, et al., 1998). Furthermore, a positive organization-stakeholder relationship creates a positive organizational image (Yang, 2007). And also it has been emphasized in the literature that the relationship between organization and its stakeholders has a critical role in conserving the organization's reputation during a crisis (Coombs and Holladay, 2001; Haigh and Brubaker, 2010).

The study has also researched the effect of image repair strategies on behavioural intentions; however it is found that there is not statistically significant difference on behavioural intentions. Though studies indicate that positive emotions caused to be associated with positive outcomes and corporate reputation and trust play significant role on behavioural variables, the messages sent from the organisation during crisis do not have any effect on behavioural intentions. As behavioural intention is a complex construct which affected by attitude and subjective norm, it can be concluded that the image repair strategies cannot alone affect the behaviour of the stakeholders. Rather, it is estimated that image repair strategies firstly influences the perceptions of the stakeholder on corporate reputation and trust, then corporate reputation and trust can

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affect the behavioural intentions. It can be stated that image repair strategies are not expected to have any change on behaviour.

This research has some limitations about the structure of the method. Firstly this research focuses on a fictitious scenario about a private hospital; it is suggested for future studies to research on an organisation which suffers from crisis. Also the future study should be carried out simultaneously with the crisis. Secondly in this study each participant has been randomly exposed to one of the image repair strategies and it is recommended for further studies to expose the participants to all five strategies in order to measure the difference.

Kaynakça

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Genişletilmiş Özet

Örgütlerin içinde bulundukları kriz sürecinde sosyal medya üzerinden paydaşları ile ilişkilerini sürdürmeleri imajlarını düzeltmeleri için çok önemlidir. Çünkü, örgütler kriz iletişim sürecinde paydaşlarına cevap verme hızlarının taşıdığı kritik önemin farkındadırlar. Nitekim, sosyal medya üzerinden bilginin yayılma hızı, paydaşlarla olabildiğince hızlı iletişim kurması gereken kriz yöneticileri için ciddi bir avantajdır. Literatürde de kriz sürecinde bir örgütün hayatta kalabilmesinin doğru zamanda ve doğru yolla paydaşlarına verdiği yanıtlara bağlı olduğu; dolayısıyla, kriz sürecindeki örgütlerin doğru imaj düzeltme stratejilerini kullanmaları gerektiği vurgulanmaktadır. Çünkü seçilen imaj düzeltme stratejisi örgütün kim olduğu ve ne söylediğini paydaşlarına göstermekte ve paydaşlar da bu doğrultuda örgüte yönelik değerlendirme yapabilmektedirler. Ayrıca imaj düzeltme stratejilerini sosyal medya üzerinden geliştiren örgütlerin kurumsal itibarlarının da olumlu olarak etkilendiği ifade edilmektedir. Paydaşlar örgütleri itibarlı olarak algıladıklarında örgüt kaynaklı mesajlara olan güven düzeyleri de artmaktadır. Örgütten gelen mesajı güvenilir olarak algılayan paydaşlar bu güveni örgüte yönelik davranışsal niyetlerine yansıtmakta ve örgütle olumlu ilişkilerini sürdürmektedirler. Dolayısıyla; kriz sürecinde imajlarını düzeltmek için paydaşlarıyla sosyal medya üzerinden ilişki kurmak örgütler için kritik öneme sahiptir. Bu nedenle bu çalışmada Benoit (1995) tarafından geliştirilen krize cevap stratejilerinden inkar, sorumluluktan kaçma, olayın büyüklüğünü azaltma, düzeltme eylemi ve küçük düşme stratejilerinin kurumsal itibar, güven ve davranışsal niyet üzerindeki etkisini ortaya koymak amaçlanmaktadır. İnkar stratejisi krizi ani ve beklenmedik bir olay olarak değerlendiren örgütlerin benimsedikleri; örgütün krizin sorumluluğunu inkâr edebildiği ya da olayın hiç yaşanmadığını iddia ettiği bir stratejidir. Sorumluluktan kaçma stratejisinde örgütler krizi inkâr etmezler ancak krizin kışkırtma, bilgi eksikliği, kaza ya da iyi niyet sonucu oluştuğunu belirterek, örgütün bu süreçte sorumluluğunun bulunmadığını vurgularlar. Olayın Büyüklüğünü Azaltma Stratejisinde örgüt, söylemleri üzerinden krizin büyüklüğünü algılanandan daha az göstererek imajını düzeltmeye çalışır. Düzeltme Eylemi Stratejisinde, krizle karşılaşan bir örgüt krizden dolayı ortaya çıkan zararı düzelteceğine, sorunu çözeceğine ya da bir daha böyle bir durumun yaşanmaması için gerekli tüm tedbirleri alacağına dair söz verir. Küçük Düşme Stratejisinde ise, örgüt krizin sorumluluğunu tamamen kabul ederek paydaşlarından özür diler. Araştırmada veri toplama aracı olarak anket formu kullanılarak 2016 yılı Nisan ayında uygunluk örneklemi ile Antalya'daki 1800 Facebook kullanıcısı araştırmaya dahil edilmiştir. Anket formunda varsayımsal bir senaryo oluşturularak, katılımcılara "Antalya'da özel bir hastanede bulaşıcı bir virus nedeniyle bir hafta içerisinde bir doktor ve üç sağlık çalışanının hayatını kaybettiği" ifade edilmiştir. Katılımcıların geçmiş deneyimlerinin araştırma sürecine yansımaması için bu senaryoda simgesel bir hastane kullanılmıştır. Araştırmanın sadece Antalya'da gerçekleştirilmesi araştırmanın temel kısıtını oluşturmaktadır. Araştırmanın verileri SPSS 22 programı ile değerlendirilmiş, frekans, Anova ve faktör analizleri kullanılmıştır. Araştırmanın sonucunda, inkar ve sorumluluktan kaçma stratejilerinin paydaşların kurumsal itibar ve güven algılarında etkili olduğu; fakat imaj düzeltme satratejilerinin davranışsal niyet üzerinde bir etkisinin olmadığı tespit edilmiştir. Kurumsal itibar ve güven kavramlarının içeriklerinin birbirine çok yakın olması, imaj düzeltme stratejilerinin her iki içerik üzerinde de aynı etkiyi gösterdiği bulgusunu somutlaştırmaktadır. Ayrıca araştırma sonucunda inkar ve sorumluluktan kaçma stratejilerinin diğer imaj düzeltme stratejilerine göre paydaşların kurumsal itibar ve güven algılarında daha olumsuz bir etki yaratması; kriz sürecindeki örgütlerin bu iki stratejiyi tercih etmemeleri gerektiğini göstermektedir. Araştırmada aynı zamanda imaj düzeltme stratejilerinin davranışsal niyet üzerinde bir etkisinin olmadığı tespit edilmiştir. Paydaşların davranışsal niyetleri öznel düşünceleri ve inançlarından oluşan karmaşık bir yapı olduğu için, imaj düzeltme stratejilerinin paydaş davranışları üzerinde tek başına etkisi olmadığı söylenebilir. İmaj düzeltme stratejilerinin öncelikle paydaşların kurumsal itibar ve güven algılarını etkileyerek, daha sonra davranışsal niyeti etkileyeceği öngörülebilir.