While there is solid research in the area crisis-response strategies, there’s little work concerning how to evaluate these strategies among the public and specific stakeholders. In addition, although scholars acknowledge the heightened media attention surrounding racial crises, and the serious consequences of mishandling such issues, such as boycotts, protests and likely uprisings, there has been little effort to incorporate minority viewpoints in response strategies until now. Understanding what leads audiences to accept or reject responses to racial issues is critical to the success of the crisis response. Through focus groups, this study was able to highlight the need to explore other response strategies, created specifically to address crises involving race that include re-staffing and community outreach methods.

Results from this study help prove that certain response strategies already in practice may be ineffective at reducing negative opinions of organizations among African American audiences during times of racial crises. This study revealed that some African Americans seek corrective actions over apologies during these crises. In addition, this study found reducing offensiveness and evasion of responsibility strategies as possible strategies to avoid using in racial crises, and that donations should be followed up with plans of action. Overall, this study highlights the need to explore other response strategies, created specifically to address crises involving race that include re-staffing and community outreach methods.

It is important to find what crisis-response strategies African Americans accept, which ones they reject and why that is the case, in order to provide more effective messages and control for the risks associated with opposing readings of messages, which could be particularly heightened during times of racial crises. This research helps bridge the gap between crisis communication and managing race-specific crises.