

Image Repair Discourse of Kenya Police facing a Scandal

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Abstract: The present study aims to analyze image repair strategies employed in press releases issued by the Kenya police. The main aim of the study was to analyze the linguistic resources of image repair strategies in press releases issued by the Kenya police. This study took the reporting periods from 30th March 2008 until 30th May 2012. Seven press releases were selected for analysis: Torture in Turkana, Mount Elgon operation saves lives, Criminal acts attributed to Mungiki, Human Rights Watch Report, brief on the explosion at Kampala coach offices, Allegations on the conspiracy of silence, and a Report on Post-Election Violence. Three major linguistic strategies are adopted: denial, reducing the offensiveness of the event, and corrective action. For this study, the linguistic resources used were the use of active, and passive voice and the use of modal auxiliary verbs constructions.

Keywords: discourse, image repair, Kenya, Police

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Introduction

Human beings desire to achieve and maintain a positive public image because doing so has value and is worthwhile. Benoit (1995) argued that complaints are routinely leveled at people in all walks of life for all sorts of alleged misbehavior and human beings are repeatedly faced with situations that impel them to explain or justify their behavior.

Brinson and Benoit (1996) defined image as perceptions of the rhetor held by the audience, shaped by the words and deeds of that rhetor, as well as the actions of others. Moffitt, (1994) defined image as a single impression shared by an audience. Cameron (2004) present image best by comparing an organization's image to a snapshot, where a person is photographed, and we see an image of the person not the actual person and everything they truly are. Brown and Levinson (1978) observed that people can be expected to defend their faces if threatened.

Previous typologies of organizational image repair have identified some of these strategies of denial and blame shifting (Ulmer and Sellnow 1997; Brinson and Benoit 1996; Coombs 1995; Ware and Linkugel 1973), the deliberate use of ambiguity (Nilson 1974; Weick 1995) and minimization of guilt (Benoit 1995). This study sought to make contribution in this area of study by analyzing the linguistic resources the Kenya police use to repair their image and focusing on police context where little has been found about its language.

The three controversial issues identified in the media as a precursor to the discussion on the image repair discourse techniques used by the Kenya Police over the period of the study are based on press releases about "Human Rights Watch Report", "Report on Rape during the Post-Election Violence", "Criminal acts attributed to Mungiki", "Press brief on the explosion at Kampala coach offices", "Allegations on conspiracy of silence", "Torture in Turkana" and "Mount Elgon Operation" were selected for analysis using image restoration theory by Benoit (1995). The study focused primarily on police press releases that were responding to media claims from 30th March 2008 until 30th May 2012.

The corpus used in the study included 7 press releases. The press releases were collected from the Internet pages of the Kenya police <http://www.police.govt.nz> during the period from March 2008 until May 2012. Therefore, I first searched the Internet for news about the police in Kenya and I went to the home page of the Kenya police in question and read the available press releases issued from March 2008 until May 2012. Press releases about "Human Rights Watch Report", "Report on Rape during the Post Election Violence", "Criminal acts attributed to Mungiki", "Press brief on the explosion at Kampala coach offices", "Allegations on conspiracy of silence", "Torture in Turkana" and "Mount Elgon Operation" were downloaded on the Kenya police website (web site (<http://www.police.govt.nz>)). The study focused primarily on media releases that were responding to media claims in from 30th March 2008 until 30th May 2012. Specifically, press releases were chosen because they are the means by which police communicate their story to the media and are therefore, the most representative of the police attempts at image repair. In addition, press releases are the messages that the media used to base stories on and since they are a primary source, they are better able to account for any media differences. This time period was selected since the actual event was widely covered within this timeframe. This included the use of press releases, interviews by officers on radio and television, and the maintenance of a web page. The three issues that were identified as a precursor for discussion are presented below:

On 8th April 2012, two torture victims narrated their ordeals with the police after NTV played out a video clips showing police brutality at a GSU Camp Kerita Trans Nzoia County in 2009. The victim identified as Joseph claimed that police found him on a mission to locate his cattle and was brutally beaten by them. The victim reported that police applied pepper on all his openings of his body and then afterwards tied him on a tall tree in the camp and left him hanging. According to media reports, six other people were reported to have undergone the same ordeal.

The resultant debate within the media was why police officer disregarded the rule of law by using excessive force. Although the Commissioner of Police took charge of the cases by instructing the Director of CID to

take over the case and ensure the investigations are completed and a case file forwarded to the Director of Public Prosecutions within 7 days and no further reports was produced by police.

In 2009, the Human Rights Watch conducted 102 interviews regarding sexual violence in the Dadaab Refugee camp. In 46 of the cases, police were accused of gang-raping women in the camps or on their way to the camps. The Center for Rights Education Awareness alleged in 2008 reported that policemen raped women in the Kibera slum in Nairobi and those seeking refuge in police station. A local radio station reported that during the same year approximately 300 crimes in Dadaab were reported to UNHCR authorities, of which almost two-thirds were gender-based crimes, including 107 cases of reported sexual violence rape. More cases were reported by the Commission of Inquiry into Post Election Violence headed by justice Waki that the number of sexual offences was over 3000 during the post-election violence.

Alfred was found dead on 5th May 2008 shortly after his arrest in Kitale. This killing generated significant public disquiet and was subject to extensive media coverage (Daily nation 12th May 2008) under the titles "Killing raises doubts over Elgon Operation" and "Man found dead after arrest" respectively. His death raised a number of issues including: Did police use excessive force when arresting Alfred? What was the role of the military in the operation? Although investigations into the killing commenced immediately concerns were also raised about the length of time the investigations would take.

The KNCHR report entitled the Cry of Blood Report on Extra Judicial Killing and Disappearances September 2008 confirmed at least 349 deaths of young men suspected to belong to the Mungiki who were reportedly killed or disappeared by the police between 2007 and 2008. IMLU and WKHRW reported that the government failed to investigate disappearances in connection with the 2008 security force operation in Mount Elgon and the crackdown on the Mungiki criminal organization in 2008. The government denied that security forces engaged in torture and refused to prosecute individuals alleged to have participated in torture during the two operations. Thus, the following section analyzes and discusses the findings of the discourses used and strategies employed by the Kenya police.

Attack the Accuser

Offensiveness may also be minimized by attacking one's accuser. This strategy involves impairing the opponent's image in order to bolster one's own. The police used language to discredit his opponent or opponents. In this way, their actions are meant to be seen in a more favorable way. Police spokesman made use of attack the accuser rhetoric in his messages while responding to the Mount Elgon operations allegation as seen below:

Example 1

The feature articles are replete with falsehoods-they are an example of how irresponsible journalism can be used to subvert public interest.

In the above example, his attack sort to impair the credibility media with the aim of persuading his public to support him. As observed by Benoit (2009) the language directs attention to the shortcomings of the opponents. In response to the Mount Elgon operation the police spokesman attacked the Daily Nation by claiming the allegation was an indicator of "irresponsible journalism...discredits the operation for criminal interests and other parties who had made a career out of the suffering..." The word replete and falsehoods have been used to emphasize allegations were filled with lies.

Example 2

We regret that the Daily Nation has provided an opportunity to those who wish to discredit the operation for criminal interests and other parties who had made a career out of the suffering visited upon innocent wananchi in this area.

By attacking the accuser, the police spokesman appealed to the audience and suggested what he viewed as his opponents' weaknesses by using the expression '...irresponsible journalism...discredits the operation for criminal interests and other parties who had made a career out of the suffering...'

The rhetoric allowed him to create images of his opponents that are not favorable to the audience thus undermining credibility of the media as seen below:

Example 3

In the same vein, we wish to draw the attention of all Kenyans of good will to an emerging trend where foreign activists masquerading under human rights banners incessantly offer unsolicited proposals on how the internal security affairs of this country should be managed. In conclusion, the false and fabricated allegations made by the Human Rights Watch NGO must be dismissed with contempt.

In the above example, the word *unsolicited* suggested that the support given by the human rights group was not required by police. The use of these attacks was a calculated rhetorical strategy for a number of reasons. Firstly, the rhetoric exposed the media as irresponsible. Secondly, it cast them as liars. This suggests to the public that the media cannot be trusted.

Other press release expression in the 'Human Rights Watch Report', the police spokesman attacked the accuser by claiming the allegations are "well- founded complaints, absurd and outlandish" and therefore they "will not be entertained." as seen in the examples below:

Example 4

Kenya police has studied these allegations and finds them to be deliberate falsehood concocted to discredit Government efforts and depict Kenya as hostile to Somali refugees. No foreign NGO can arrogate to itself the determination as to whether the Kenya – Somali border should be closed or remain open. While the Kenya police undertake to respond to and investigate all well- founded complaints, absurd and outlandish allegations by foreign NGO's will not be entertained.

In examples 4, the words *absurd* and *outlandish* meant that the allegations were meaningless and strange thus painting the media negatively and emphasize that the unethical behavior of the human rights will not be tolerated by the police. The use of the phrase... *to be deliberate falsehood ...was used* to mean the media purposeful reported lies.

The rhetoric according to Benoit (2000) appeals to the public. Through using the rhetoric Kenya police appeals to the audience values of duty, solidarity and patriotism in the audience. The audience is also being persuaded to sympathize with the Kenya police.

Denial

The denial strategy was used to distance the Kenya police from the actions of individuals involved in the allegation. The Commissioner attempted to restore public confidence in the police by shifting the blame and indicating the media had made wrong allegations against police officers. Denial appeared in the press releases frequently, as a strategy to combat rumors or when there was credible evidence to deny charges. In response to the Mount Elgon operation the police spokesman denied claims that the "...the operation has turned into an exclusive undertaking by the military". Two reasons are cited for the presence of the military "technical and logistical support" and "survey and identify a suitable location for a permanent base near the border with a neighboring country." he noted the following concerning the role of the military as seen in the examples below:

Example 5

The operation has turned into an exclusive undertaking by the military. The military is there to provide technical and logistical support especially in regard to the difficult terrain, the heavily forested areas and the caves where members of the criminal gang have been retreating after committing vicious crimes. The military is also using this opportunity to survey and identify a suitable location for a permanent base near the border with a neighboring country.

A further example of this strategy is found in press release on the allegation of conspiracy where the police denied claim that they were ineffective by using phrases such as... *allegations about insensitive officers at the police station gleefully demanding a replay of the events are false and far-fetched* . In response to the allegations of police conspiracy of silence the police spokesman denied claims that police were ineffective in handling cases dealing with gender as farfetched and false as seen below:

Example 6

Therefore, allegations about insensitive officers at the police station gleefully demanding a replay of the events are false and far-fetched. Those making such allegations are living in the yester-years and have no touch with the reality on the ground.

Transcendence

Benoit (1997) noted this was a strategy in which the accused tries to build rapport and identify with the public. Average people, as well as corporations with their backs to the wall, commonly respond that their intentions were noble even if their actions were judged to be bad. A fourth way of reducing offensiveness is the transcendence strategy, when the act is placed in a more favorable context (Benoit 1995, 77). The speaker may even claim that a higher purpose was behind the wrongdoing.

The Kenya police do not stop by saying that its intentions were good. 'Mount Elgon Operation' used phrases that described the good things that the police had achieved. These expressions were meant to encourage positive inference as seen below:

Example 7

Before we expose some blatant falsehoods in this article, we would like to inform the public that "Operation Okoa Maisha" has registered tremendous success and so far, it has gone a long way to restore law and order in Mount Elgon and surrounding areas...members of public who had been subjected to the trauma of living under a constant threat of crime are once more enjoying their civil liberties, several schools have re-opened and the social and economic life in the area is resuming normal.

In example 7, the message was clear and concise, and as it promotes an image of a dynamic Kenya police taking responsibility of its actions by using phrases such as ... *would like to inform the public that "Operation Okoa Maisha" has registered tremendous success and so far, it has ...*The spokesman reported that "law and order" and "civil liberties, several schools have re-opened and the social and economic life in the area is resuming normal..." the use of the word civil liberties meant Kenya is a country where citizens enjoy their freedom. Transcendence was a tactic that can be used in order to repair an image by placing the offensive act into a larger setting. By placing its responses into a global context, it reduced the offensiveness of the original offensive act. In other words, the Kenya police tried to reinforce positive things done in order to minimize the negative feelings towards the most recent act of wrongdoing.

The Kenya police tried to identify themselves with something viewed favorably by the audience by using phrases such as ...*their civil liberties, several schools have re-opened and the social and economic life...* since goodwill from there action will produce a certain amount of positive effect towards the actor, negating some of the recent negative effect.

Bolstering

Bolstering is used to reduce the offensiveness of the act to which a rhetor is responding. This tactic is used in order to "mitigate the negative effects of the act...by strengthening the audience's positive affect for the actor" (Benoit 1997, p. 156). Bolstering was a strategy that strengthens the stakeholder's positive feelings by for example expressing concerns or admitting to feelings.

The Kenya police took the next step of describing all the good things that they had done. Drawing on Benoit (1995) bolstering was used in an attempt to strengthen positive feelings towards the police. Bolstering,

which “attempts to improve the accused’s reputation in hopes of offsetting or making up for the damage to the image from the undesirable act” (Benoit 1995, 73), falls under the reducing offensiveness category.

The aim was to offset any negative feelings arising from the wrongful act. In order to maintain its image, police incorporated the tactic of bolstering in its press release. The police used the bolstering to imply that it has always been a strong organization by mentioning positive attributes of Kenya.

Here police utilized this strategy to respond to the Human Rights Group. Two reasons are cited on the success of the police: “...that Kenya hosts close to 500,000 Somali refugees...and... Kenya hosts the largest number of Somali refugees ...” Here he uses number game and statistics to appear credible and national self-glorification: a device to create positive self-representation by glorifying one’s country.

The rhetorical effect is to reduce offensiveness of the whole issue. This is meant to present the Kenya police as people who have always had good intentions despite what the papers were saying. Their good intention in the whole issue was supposed to cast them in a good light. The strategy here is clear as he is asking the public’s not to judge police harshly as they have done good things for them in the past. This strategy was used to evade responsibility of the action committed. Here the police spokesman used phrases that appeared to say that their actions were noble and there never meant to cause harm.

Unpleasant incidents are therefore reduced in their importance and mentioned almost as an addendum to the central and praiseworthy work of the police. The following phrases reported the praise worth work of the Kenya police:

“Kenya police recognizes the important duty performed by our security and immigration officers serving at border points and in areas where refugee is hosted. These officers have difficult circumstances and quite often at serious risk to their own lives”.

The making of references of this type in the above examples allowed the police to make positive statements about themselves. The phrase ...Kenya hosts...was used to suggest that Kenya is a friendly country. The rhetorical effect was to reduce offensiveness of the whole issue. This was meant to present the Kenya police as people who have always had good intentions despite what the media was saying. Their good intention in the whole issue was supposed to cast them in a good light as seen below.

Example 8

Kenya’s track to record in handling refugees is internationally recognized and acclaimed. Kenya has traditionally treated all refugees with due care and dignity.

In examples 8 we find a number of adjectival expressions: care and dignity internationally, *a well-known, the important duty* etc. The making of references of this type allowed the police to make positive statements. The Kenya police tried to emphasize the good traits and beneficial past acts and tries to offset damage from the wrongful act at hand. Kenya police continued to bolster the situation and tries to reduce the offensiveness of the event by emphasizing or describing the positive acts they have done in the past. Bolstering was used to ask the public not to judge police harshly as they had done good things for them in the past and to evade responsibility of the action committed as seen in the above example:

Example 9

*It is a well-known fact that Kenya hosts close to 500,000 Somali refugees who fled the civil war in their country.
Ever since the fall of the Siad Barre regime seventeen years ago, Kenya is on track record of hosting almost 95% of all Somali refugees have transited through Kenya. Kenya has traditionally treated all refugees with due care and dignity.*

In this text the commissioner was also bolstering their image as a whole by stressing the good traits of the police force by using words such as care and dignity. The police spokesman used phrases that appeared to say that their actions were noble and there never meant to cause harm as seen below:

Example 10

Kenya police recognizes the important duty performed by our security and immigration officers navigating at border points and in areas where refugee is hosted. These officers have difficult circumstances and quite often at serious risk to their own lives.

Additionally, this press release also tried to bolster the image by stressing the hard work of the police. It demonstrated a sense of innocence. By employing this strategy, the police attempt to act as a victim of a situation.

Corrective action

Evident also in the Kenya police press releases message to his publics was Benoit (1997) strategy of taking corrective action in order to repair one's damaged image. According to Benoit an organization or individual tries to make amends for the act that was committed and takes measures to prevent the event from reoccurring. While responding to the allegations of torture in Turkana the police spokesman highlighted how he dealt with culprits who had committed the act.

In response to the Mount Elgon operation the police spokesman highlighted the corrective measure the Kenya police had put in place to correct by using phrases... *has opened an inquest file and investigations have commenced to apprehend those responsible for the murder and prosecute them in a court of law...* such as seen in the examples below:

Example 11

Kitale Police Division has opened an inquest file and investigations have commenced to apprehend those responsible for the murder and prosecute them in a court of law.

The above example meant the Kenya police were able to appropriately respond to any form of complaint in a professional and appropriate manner. Corrective strategy was used enhance confidence and interaction with the police. Press release statements about 'Post Election Violence noted the measures the police had used to prevent any other occurrence of sexual misconduct by using phrases "...special task force composed of senior female police officers to investigate all unreported cases of violence against women and particularly cases ..." as seen in the examples below:

Example 12

The Commissioner of Police has set up a special task force composed of senior female police officers to investigate all unreported cases of violence against women and particularly cases of rape that occurred during the post-election violence, including any case involving police officers.

Kenya police used the document to imply that it has always been a strong organization and that it was choosing to improve and enhance its operations as opposed to repair or rebuild. The language used above made it appear as though the additional steps police was planning to take are above and beyond standard operating benchmarks. Specifically, the document detailed the actions that police intended to take. The police spokesman made use of corrective strategy while responding to the allegation of sexual misconduct allegations on post-election violence and allegations of conspiracy and silence seen below:

Example 13

Accordingly, the Kenya police will continue to collaborate with FIDA and other NGOS to tackle this serious problem and ensure all cases of violence against women are investigated.

As part of this commitment the Kenya Police has put in place a gender and children's desk at the Police Headquarters to handle rape related issues, defilement and other assaults on the vulnerable group of our society that is women and children.

Through this office, child protection centers have been established in various parts of the country – in Nyanza, Western, Rift Valley and Nairobi. The Spider squad which was established to deal with rape cases is still operational and its successes cannot be over emphasized.

Police Department has inculcated Gender and Children issues into its training curriculum at the Police Training College. This has been made possible in collaboration with NGO specializing in women and children issues. Through this programme, our officers have been trained on how to handle victims of rape in a descent and confidential manner.

Kenya Police wish to discourage those who are speculating about our commitment to combat ...

In the above examples, the Kenya police commit themselves not to allow a similar incident to tarnish its image. The terms “collaborate” and “commitment” was used in this statement to emphasize the preventative actions that police would take to prevent future occurrence. The police also noted that external reviews, observations and recommendations would provide a base for ongoing improvement to police processes and procedures. The Kenya police attempts to bolster their corporate image by discussing willingness to improve the situation and arguing that the organization is reliable. In these messages the Kenya police uses phrases that camouflages that its action is recognized by other agencies. The website camouflages that it’s doing good thing that are recognized by FIDA and other NGOS.

The police spokesman made use of this strategy while responding to the allegation of sexual misconduct allegations. “Accordingly, the Kenya police will continue to collaborate with FIDA and other NGOS to tackle this serious problem and ensure all cases of violence against women are investigated”. Here the Kenya police commit themselves not to allow a similar incident to tarnish his image as this has repercussions on the bigger mission. In this way he pleads for leniency in judgment to his publics. His commitment to make sure that a similar lapse in judgment will not be repeated should be persuasive to his publics.

Corrective techniques were used in the press release to offset the damage by emphasizing the willingness to improve the situation by investigating the situation and also by finding solutions for the problems, and therefore also strengthening publics’ positive feelings towards the police. The Commissioner of Police also “pledged the commitment of the organization to respond positively to sexual misconduct by using phrases such as “...part of this commitment the Kenya Police has put in place a gender and children’s desk at the Police Headquarters to handle rape related issues... this office, child protection centers have been established in various parts of the country... Department has inculcated Gender and Children issues into its training”.

Such discourse was meant to present Kenya police as fair in its handling of gender issues. His commitment to make sure that a similar lapse in judgment will not be repeated should be persuasive to his public. In order to maintain its image, police incorporated corrective action throughout the press release detailing the actions that police intended to take in order to prevent future occurrences.

In above messages the Kenya police used phrases that camouflages that its action are recognized by other agencies. The website camouflaged that it was doing good thing that are recognized by FIDA and other NGOS as seen in example 19. Press release about torture allegation in Turkana seems to give an impression of an apology. The police spokesman reported the following:

Example 14

Once again let me reiterate my commitment to Kenyans ... this incident has embarrassed the Government of Kenya, Kenya Police and the entire Kenyan public. We condemn it in the strongest terms possible.

The terms “reiterate” and “commitment” were used in above statement to emphasize the actions the police were taking to prevent such an occurrence. The police emphasized their willingness for co- operation, by using the word commitment. The text of the Kenya police mentions activities existentially by expressing good things done to correct the situation, as follows in the criminal acts attributed to Mungiki and press brief on the explosion at Kampala coach offices seen below:

Example 15

We would like to assure the public that we are working with stakeholders to make our entire travelling hubs safe this festive season.

Example 16

Investigations into this murder are at advanced stage and police are focusing on suspects who reported gave the family false information to the effect that the officer had been arrested by these colleagues.

Consequent upon this insecurity, Kenya police is calling upon the public to more vigilant in community policing and readily give information on the individual criminals so that they can be dealt with according to the law.

Further in the above examples, the police spokesman detailed strategies to enhance police capacity and proactive readiness to respond to any form of complaints by using phrases such as ... *we are working with stakeholders to make our entire travelling hubs safe this festive...* Kenya police is calling upon the public to more vigilant in community policing...into this murder are at an advanced stage and police are focusing on suspects who reported gave the family ... when responding to the allegations of sexual misconduct rape cases during the post-election violence, Mt. Elgon operation and torture allegation in Turkana. It could be argued that this statement helps to create an image of seriousness and professionalism. Note that the clauses 'we are working' and 'police are focusing' suggest that police have taken the lead in this situation and are acting in good faith. Further the police spokesman made use of forward-looking statements to provide a positive evaluation of the police work in future. This was done by introducing verb forms that project future expectations as seen below:

Example 17

Accordingly, the Kenya police will continue to collaborate with FIDA and other NGOs to tackle this serious problem and ensure all cases of violence against women are investigated.

We expect the Daily Nation to move fast to correct the wrong impression created.

I will be personally monitoring to ensure that this case is expeditiously investigated, and the victim gets justice.

Kenya Police Force is once more assuring the public that operation Okoa Maisha will continue until law and order is fully restored in Mt Elgon and the surrounding areas.

In the above examples, the press release explained the specific actions that police will do to prevent reoccurrences of the offensive act in future. The example above was especially interesting, since the use of the phrases such as... *I will be personally monitoring ... police will continue...* helps to create the effect of solidarity with the reader by portraying the police as sincerely committed to repair the damage caused to its publics. In both cases, there was an emphasis on the police goodwill and readiness to solve the problems caused by human failure.

Linguistic Strategies Employed in the Kenyan police image repair

Passives

Another device was the passive voice which was used to indicate objectivity and self-distancing. Passive-like constructions are illustrated in below.

Example 18

Kenya police has studied these allegations and finds them to be deliberate falsehood concocted to discredit Government efforts and depict Kenya as hostile to Somali refugees'' ... (by whom)

No foreign NGO can arrogate to itself the determination as to whether the Kenya - Somali border should be closed or remain open... (by whom)

While the Kenya police undertake to respond to and investigate all well-founded complaints, absurd and outlandish allegations by foreign NGO's will not be entertained... (by whom)

For example, in the above example he used the passive construction while responding to the Human Rights Watch report; the police avoid the agent-phrase by police. By not mentioning the police, he appears to avoid the attendant negative associations of wrongdoing which the phrase would have elicited.

Use of modality

The Kenya police attacked the accuser using the modals pronouns as follows: Modality in the selected press release was expressed through using different textual strategies such as modal auxiliaries. It also extends to police attitude towards the situation or event described by the sentence. The following excerpts on Human Rights Watch Report revealed contrasting discourses in terms of expressive modality expressed through modal verbs:

Example 19

*Indeed, any of these claims had an iota of truth; they **would** have been exposed a long time ago during the seventeen years all these refugees have been in Kenya.*

*The timing of this report is ill intentioned, and it **must** be dismissed with contempt it deserves. No foreign NGO **can** arrogate to itself the determination as to whether the Kenya – Somali border should be closed or remain open... the Kenya police undertake to respond to and investigate all well-founded complaints, absurd and outlandish allegations by foreign NGO's **will not** be entertained.*

In the same vein, we wish to draw the attention of all Kenyans of good will to an emerging trend where foreign activists masquerading under human rights banners incessantly offer unsolicited proposals on how the internal security affairs of this country should be managed.

*In conclusion, the false and fabricated allegations made by the Human Rights Watch NGO **must** be dismissed with contempt.*

In the above-mentioned excerpts, the Kenya police not only reported the information but also provided their own attitude towards the events through using certain modal verbs.

The modal 'must' express a compelling obligation on the media to stop reporting liars against the police. In the same vein modal auxiliaries 'can' and 'should' are repeatedly employed to possibility and expectation. The modal auxiliary will not be frequently used in the press releases to express certainty or confidence about future events.

Table 4.1: Modal verbs and their functions from the Human Rights Watch

MODAL VERB	FUNCTION
1. WILL NOT	Future time
2. MUST	Strong Obligation
3. SHOULD	Expectation
4. WOULD	Desirability
5. CAN	Possibility

Use of active voice

Kenya police also speaks existentially when describing its intended action. The main clauses in the torture allegation in Turkana:

"... I ordered... I have directed... I have also instructed the Director CID to take over the case ...suspend ... will be personally monitoring to ensure that this case is expeditiously investigated..." are in the active voice.

The use of active voice may be viewed as an attempt by the Kenya police to project them as a disciplined profession capable of dealing with any matter whether it involved the public or the police themselves.

Significantly, almost all of the verbs in the above examples are meant to project the Kenya police positively as in the examples above.

The strategic use of first-person singular along with the careful choice of lexical verbs (direct, instruct, suspend and ordered) contribute to the construction of a serious police force which knows what it is doing and were used to demonstrate goodwill, good sense, and various moral virtues, such as integrity, diligence, and professionalism as seen below:

Example 20

I ordered the Commandant GSU to commence investigations.

So far the Commandant has informed me that initial investigations indicate that the incident occurred at a GSU Camp in Kerita Trans Nzoia County sometimes in 2009.

The officers concerned had just returned to the camp with the victim whom they had arrested following a shootout with armed bandits where some of his armed accomplices escaped. Going by the clip provided by NTV, the Commandant GSU has already identified some of the officers involved in the incident.

He has also confirmed that one of them was dismissed from service in 2011 on grounds of gross indiscipline. Following confirmation that the incident involved out officers, I have directed the Commandant GSU to complete the process of identifying all the culprits and immediately suspend them from duty.

I have also instructed the Director CID to take over the case and ensure the investigations are completed and case file forwarded to the Director of Public Prosecutions within 7 days.

In the above examples, the verb constructions were often deployed as a rhetorical means to provide a positive evaluation of Kenya police and the police appeared as agents of action involved to correct the situation professionally. In this press release the Kenya police emphasize trustworthiness, reliability, and outlined specific steps that have been taken by the police to ensure corrective action.

Conclusion

The study concluded that the Kenya Police made use of a combination of image repair discourse strategies to repair their image in response to this event. The Kenya police mainly used different strategies. This included denial, bolstering, attack the accuser, minimizing the problem, transcendence and corrective action. The denial strategy was used to distance the Kenya Police from the wrong doing by shifting responsibility to the media. The communication strategy transcendence was used to express confidence in the Kenya police while highlighting the greater good of police work despite the unpredictable nature of police work. 'Attack the accuser' was used to reducing the damage caused by the wrongdoing. Bolstering was used to strengthen stakeholder's positive feelings towards the Kenya Police. Employing bolstering is a successful strategy. By using bolstering the organizations tried to strengthen the positive feelings towards the organization by describing positive past acts and traits of the organizations stressing the concerns. In other words, they tried to convey that they are not the ones responsible and are the ones doing everything as far as they can and could. Corrective action was used as an attempt to reassure public that they can interact with the police with confidence and ensuring the system of handling serious complaints was world standard. The findings of the study indicated that corrective action was often a desirable choice for image repair particularly when the damage or harm was real. Clearly, the public responded favorably to a clear admission of wrong-doing and corrective action in this case. In conclusion, the following were the repair strategies that the Kenya police used to repair their tarnished image: attack the accuser, denial, transcendence, bolstering and corrective strategy. Finally, the study has shown how the Kenya police repaired their tarnished image through the use of linguistic resources namely passive and active voice and through the use of modal verbs.

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