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## Crisis Communication in an International Organization: An Investigation of the BBC's Reputation in the Aftermath of the Savile Scandal

### By

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In October 2012 it was revealed that British television host Jimmy Savile had sexually abused children and teens while working as a presenter for the BBC. Reports began flooding out about cases of abuse that took place at both the BBC and at hospitals at which Savile did charity work, with reported cases of assault numbering over one thousand (Boffey, "Revealed: How Jimmy Savile abused up to 1,000 victims on BBC premises," 2014). It was revealed that BBC employees knew of the cases while they were happening and neglected to report them. Observers described the BBC's response to the scandal as lackluster. The corporation reportedly only addressed the scandal once it was made public. Sky News said of the matter: "If the BBC had been left to its own devices, the world would never have known that Sir Jimmy Savile abused children (Sky News, n.d.)." Furthermore, management, such as previous BBC director George Entwistle, seemed to not be knowledgeable about the details of the scandal even once it had been exposed ("BBC's Savile response polarises British press", 2012). The BBC, an organization known for its high standards, had its reputation on the line. This paper will discuss the BBC's response to the scandal and how the scandal was portrayed in British, Irish, and American media.

#### **Literature Review**

The Savile Crisis

Jimmy Savile was an eccentric British television personality who was known for hosting the *BBC* shows 'Top of the Pops' and 'Jim'll Fix It'. He was also known and highly respected for his philanthropy. He volunteered at a large number of hospitals throughout England. At the Leeds General Infirmary, Savile fundraised and was a porter, escorting patients around the hospital (McCoy, "How *BBC* star Jimmy Savile allegedly got away with abusing 500 children and sex with dead bodies," 2014). He was eventually knighted by Queen Elizabeth and even

honored by Pope John Paul the Second (McCoy, "How *BBC* star Jimmy Savile allegedly got away with abusing 500 children and sex with dead bodies," 2014).

ITV, a British television network, exposed the accusations against Savile in October 2012 when they aired a television documentary about the former BBC employee. George Entwistle, the BBC director during the breaking of the scandal, resigned on November 10, 2012 as a direct result of the scandal, following a short tenure. This was followed by a report from Scotland Yard that reported that these cases of abuse had occurred from 1955 until 2009 and that 75% of the 219 instances involved children. A separate report, commissioned by the BBC, reveals there to have been over 500 cases of abuse (Halliday, "Jimmy Savile: Timeline of his sexual abuse and uncovering," 2014).

Savile himself was open with the public about his sexual misconduct, albeit coyly, in interviews and in his autobiography, "As It Happens". In the book, he admitted to having girlfriends much younger than himself and also admitted to having spent the night with "a young girl who had run away from a home for juvenile offenders (Burns et al., "A Shield of Celebrity Let a *BBC* Host Escape Legal Scrutiny for Decades," 2012)." Newspaper articles covering the story continuously asked how a predator such as Savile could have gotten away with so much wrongdoing even though there were signs and rumors of his misconduct. Many articles focused on the impact of his indiscretion on the victims and the lack of response by the

#### BBC

Savile was a television legend in the UK and was trusted by many due to his philanthropic endeavors. In terms of proximity, the UK media is close to the scandal and would presumably report differently on it than media outlets in other countries, who may have never

heard of Savile before the scandal. One of the goals of this study is to examine how media in the UK, Ireland, and the US reported on the scandal. Empirical evidence from both UK and international media will be required to reach a conclusion on the perception of the scandal among the media both in the UK and internationally. The following research questions are posed:

RQ #1: How did news sources in the UK, Ireland, and the United States differ, if at all, in the emphasis placed on the *BBC* as an accomplice to the scandal?

RQ #2: How did news sources in the UK, Ireland, and the United States differ, if at all, in the emphasis placed on *Savile* as the perpetrator of the crime?

RQ #3: How did news sources in the UK, Ireland, and the United States differ, if at all, in the emphasis placed on the *victims of abuse* by Savile?

RQ #4: How did news sources in the UK, Ireland, and the United States differ, if at all, in the emphasis placed on the *condemnation of the abuse scandal*?

Public Approval of the BBC

According to a YouGov poll, the *BBC*'s reputation has fallen tremendously amongst British opinion leaders, such as journalists and members of the British media. Seventy-nine percent of respondents state that they would have rated the *BBC* highly before the crisis, while only 31% state the same post-crisis. This is a 48% drop in the *BBC*'s approval rating. This drop in approval is most likely linked to the manner in which the *BBC* handled the crisis. Sixty percent of those polled disagree with the way the *BBC* handled the crisis, which entails that even despite the scandal breaking, the *BBC* could have taken preventative actions to lessen the negative impact to its organization reputation (Kowalewski, 2012).

Despite the scandal, the *BBC* news is still watched by 66.7% of British adults, which is a significant number. Despite the high percentage of Britain's viewing audience tuning into

the *BBC*, many viewers complained that the tone of the programs was not relevant to them (*BBC* Trust, 2014). On November 12, 2012, YouGov gave the *BBC* a ranking of 13.4% (Parsons, 2012). This is discouraging for an organization which prides itself on integrity and quality programming.

A 2012 YouGov poll showed there to be a 17% drop in those claiming that they would be willing to endorse the BBC as a private corporation versus a public organization (Kowalewski, 2012). It is worth noting that both the BrandIndex Buzz score for the BBC news and BBC One dropped, which is an indication that the reputation of the entire organization and not just that of the news division was impacted by the Savile scandal. The poll does not state why this is the case, but due to the high standards of the BBC pre-crisis, it would be reasonable to assume that respondents would hold a public organization to higher standards than a private corporation. This might rest in the idea that public organizations are expected to act in the public interest whereas private corporations are expected to act in their own self-interest, which can be tied to agency theory (Kleiman, n.d.). As Amina Taylor of Press TV points out, "The major difference here is that these corporate companies are not wholly funded by the British taxpayer (Taylor, 2013)." Being that the BBC is a public organization, they are expected to act in the interests of the public and are held to a higher ethical standard than private corporations, the latter of which are generally self-sufficient. Terms they use to describe their organization and their programming show that the corporation even expects a lot of itself as an organization, using the word 'quality' repeatedly on its website (BBC, 2014).

#### **BBC** Actions

The *BBC* went through several stages after the scandal broke: denial, apology, and, finally, offering compensation. Between the denial and apology stages, the *BBC* both underwent and conducted an investigation of its culture. The *BBC*'s response to the scandal was frantic and haphazard. Management failed to communicate with each other and emails with information about the scandal went unread (Plunkett et al., 2012).

During this stage, *BBC* went on the defensive. The denial was used as the Corporation's main tactic. They denied knowledge of Savile's antics and denied that the documentary was scrapped for any reason other than lack of proof of victims' claims. Members of management continuously attempted to place blame on other members of staff. It also became clear that there was a culture of distrust at the *BBC*, which resulted in lower-level employees not trusting what was told to them by upper level management (Lyall, "Internal Documents Portray *BBC* as Top-Heavy, Bickering and Dysfunctional," 2013). During this time, there were also accusations that the *BBC* ignored the rumors about Savile (Henley, 2012). The investigation into the scandal concluded that while "...the decision to drop the original investigation was flawed... it was done in good faith ("*BBC* decision to drop Newsnight's Savile report 'flawed'," 2012)."

The *BBC* eventually apologized after denying knowledge of Savile's behavior and, following the breaking of the scandal, the *BBC* faced further controversy when it broadcast a report in which a victim claimed that he was raped by a prominent Tory politician. Online users claimed that this individual was Lord McAlpine. This turned out to be incorrect but the damage had already been done to the politician's reputation. The *BBC* ended up having to pay him a settlement for libel of £185,000 ("*BBC* reaches settlement with Lord McAlpine," 2012).

The *BBC* was eventually sued by 31 of Savile's victims (Halliday, "Jimmy Savile: 31 victims of alleged abuse sue *BBC* and star's estate," 2013). The *BBC* finally set up a £19.1 million compensation scheme for Savile's victims. Despite the scheme, the *BBC* was still criticized for the amount of money spent on its internal investigation (Swinford, "Jimmy Savile: *BBC* sets aside millions to compensate victims," 2013).

The *BBC* faced even more controversy when it broadcast an episode of the CBeeie's, a children's television show, in which one of the main characters was dressed as Jimmy Savile.

This resulted in further criticism from the media and a torrent of anger from viewers. One *BBC* viewer tweeted, "The complete lack of quality control the *BBC* have over their programming was absolutely sickening" while another viewer tweeted "Are *BBC* trying to self-destruct? Max from Twennies dressed as Jimmy Savile just now nearly chokes on my cornflakes (Fahey, "*BBC* apologises for Savile impersonation on children's show", 2013)."

The *BBC*'s actions both during and after the breaking of the scandal raised issues of trust amongst the public and made the organization seem incapable of responding appropriately. Both the *BBC* management and the actions of *BBC* management were discussed and, in some cases, condemned by media. The following research questions will be posed:

RQ #5: How did news sources in the UK, Ireland, and the United States differ, if at all, in the coverage given to the *actions taken by the BBC management* following the scandal?

RQ #6: How did news sources in the UK, Ireland, and the United States differ, if at all, in their condemnation of the BBC management's alleged indecisive response to the abuse scandal?

#### BBC's Image and Reputation

The *BBC* uses the following terms to describe important traits of their programming: 'thought-provoking,' 'relatable,' 'quality,' and 'challenging content' (*BBC* Trust, 2012). The brand image of the *BBC* is important to note in relation to the Savile case. No matter the organization, such a crisis would have damaged the organization's reputation to some degree, but with a brand as trusted and respected as the *BBC*, this can be detrimental to the organization. As far as marcom personality dimensions go, the *BBC* can be identified as being both sophisticated and competent. Marcom personality dimensions help serve as a guide to establishing and guiding brand personality and, in return, brand equity.

The Savile scandal devalued the *BBC*'s brand equity as neither of the marcom dimensions seem to be reflected in the way in which the corporation dealt with the aftermath of the crisis. After the scandal, the *BBC* needed to either reinforce these macron personality dimensions in order to regain public trust and save its reputation or to rebrand itself where these dimensions were no longer relevant. Due to the *BBC*'s long history, strong brand associations with these dimensions, and the organization being in the news industry, the organization really had little choice except to try to realign itself as a sophisticated, competent, and trustworthy source. It is important that the *BBC* realign itself with these three personality dimensions as it will provide the brand with some equity that it lost during the crisis (Shimp et al, 36-37).

The next section of this analysis will review Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) in order to evaluate crisis response strategies that should have been used by the *BBC*. SCCT is a public relations theory that "...argues that as the reputational threat increases,

the crisis manager should use response strategies that demonstrate acceptance of responsibility for the crisis and that address victim concerns (Coombs, 2014)."

Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT)

SCCT derives from attribution theory, which states "... that people assign responsibility for negative, unexpected events (Coombs, 2004, 152)." People will look to attribute wrongdoing or fault to some entity. Timothy Coombs defines situational crisis communication theory as the utilization "... of attribution theory to evaluate the reputational threat posed by the crisis situation and then recommends crisis response strategies based upon the reputational threat level" (Coombs, 2004, 153).

SCCT dictates that three factors be considered when considering the threat posed to an organization's reputation. These factors are crisis type, crisis history, and prior reputation. Crisis types fall into three categories: the victim cluster, the accidental cluster, and the preventable cluster. The victim cluster receives the least attribution from the public, while the preventable cluster receives the highest level of attribution for responsibility in relation to crisis. The accidental cluster falls between the two, with low levels of attribution (Coombs, 2014).

The victim cluster includes natural disasters, rumors, workplace violence, and malevolence. The accidental cluster includes challenges, technical-error accidents, and technical-error product harm while the preventable cluster includes crises such as human-error accidents, human-error product harm, and organizational misdeeds. SCCT suggests different responses depending on which cluster the crisis falls into (Coombs, 2014).

Managers should respond to crises in the preventable cluster by using apology and compensation. Victim crises should be responded to through either providing an excuse or an apology. Managers facing a crisis which falls under the victim cluster, for which the least blame is placed on the organization, can either attack the accuser, if there is enough evidence supporting the organization's claims, deny the accusations, or place blame elsewhere. The *BBC* crisis falls under preventable cluster responses and should use rebuilding strategies. Certain strategies, such as denial and diminishment, should not be mixed whereas other strategies, such as diminishment and rebuilding, could be mixed (Coombs, 2014).

Based on the stipulations of SCCT, empirical evidence would be required to examine whether the *BBC* used any of the response strategies that should be used in preventable crises. These strategies are compensation and apology. It would also be important to establish whether any other media have recommended the use of apology or compensation. The following research questions will be posed:

RQ #7: Did the *BBC* use *apology*, *compensation*, or any other *rebuilding strategy* as recommended by SCCT as the most appropriate strategies to use in crises falling under the preventable cluster of crises?

#### Restructuring and Rebranding

Restructuring and rebranding issues also arise when researching this case. The *BBC* has a long and strong reputation to uphold. With the Savile crisis, questions of how far the *BBC* needs to distance itself from its old branding arise in relation to its old management strategies and lack of transparency. It seems that in some way, the *BBC*, if attempting to rectify its structural issues, needs to take this chance to reframe its image and make it more relatable to the British public. At the very least, the *BBC* needs to use explanatory messages, image restoration, and renewal as tactics to restore trust with the British and international publics (Seeger, 2013).

According to Harrison, a major benefit of maintaining a strong organizational reputation is that the company can maintain "stakeholder support for your organization in times of controversy... (Harrison, n.d.)." Although the *BBC* had a strong reputation before the Savile scandal, the crisis was preceded and followed by other scandals, which seemed to reinforce the damage that had already been done to the *BBC*'s reputation.

In the aftermath of the Savile scandal, it was revealed that *BBC* executives were receiving huge payouts, including former director George Entwistle. The head of the investigating PAC stated the following: "a failure at the highest levels of the *BBC* to challenge payments to senior managers and what appears to have been a culture of cronyism that allowed for the liberal use of license fee payers' money (Syal, "*BBC* payoffs damaged its reputation, say MPs," 2013)." It seemed like the *BBC* was endorsing the actions of the executives of the organization during the Savile scandal by paying them off. In relation to Entwistle, it could have been perceived as if that the *BBC* was rewarding him for seeming less than knowledgeable or concerned about Savile's victims or the lack of transparency of the *BBC*. This was not only a new scandal itself involving public funds, but it also seemed to heighten public distrust of the *BBC* surrounding its involvement in and knowledge of the Savile case.

#### Methods

This study used a combination of research techniques, among them content and textual analyses in order to explore where blame was being placed and how the media in each country expected the *BBC* to respond to the crisis. A content analysis was conducted of media coverage in the UK, the US, and internationally in order to facilitate an analysis of establishing the similarities and differences in the coverage of the case and a textual analysis was used to support

the findings of the content analysis and used examples from papers in each country to explore the qualitative content of the coverage in further detail. The combination of content and textual analyses also allowed the researcher to pinpoint the emphasis put on certain crisis response strategies and evaluate what the media thought should have been done.

Articles were taken from news sources in three countries: the United Kingdom, Ireland, and the United States. These countries were chosen due to their use of the English language, which is the native language of the researcher. International sources were used as a means of establishing commonalities and differences of the coverage in the three countries. Papers were chosen based on the size of their readerships. If a paper with a large readership did not have enough coverage of the story, another paper was used.

News articles were chosen from October 2012 to February 2015. October 2012 was chosen as this was the month when the scandal broke and February 2015 was chosen as the scandal was ongoing and allowed the researcher to explore ongoing developments. Papers were chosen in order to reflect the entire scandal, not just that with direct *BBC* ties. This allowed the researcher to explore the emphasis placed on the *BBC* versus that placed on other organizations or on Savile himself. Fifteen articles were used from each source, as this was determined to be a sufficient number from which to run statistical tests. The only exception was the *Los Angeles Times*, which had only published fourteen articles on the Savile scandal.

The British sources which were used were the *BBC*, *The Guardian*, and the *Telegraph*. The Irish papers which were used include *Irish Times*, *Irish Independent*, *RTE*, The American newspapers which were used were *The New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and the *Boston Globe*. Articles were located via Google and were located by typing in 'Jimmy Savile' and the

newspaper title. Articles were also located via the websites of the newspapers themselves. These articles were search for through the term "Jimmy Savile." Articles were chosen from newspaper websites based on the terms used in the headlines of the articles. The terms children, BBC, Savile, and crisis/scandal. The headlines were used in order to gauge each article's content. A variety of articles were chosen from each paper covering each pertinent topic, which included the BBC, Savile, NHS, compensation, and victims, among other terms which were incorporated into the study when discovered. These terms were chosen to account for the various aspects of the scandal and to ensure that the media coverage was accurately represented in the findings

Each paper had varying amounts of articles covering the story, with *The New York Times* and the *BBC* each having the largest number of stories. Fifteen articles were reviewed from each news source. A variety of articles were chosen in relation to Savile, not just those pertaining to the *BBC*. This was done in order to get an overall view of the coverage of the crisis and allowed the data to reflect the coverage more accurately. For example, if a newspaper had coverage of the NHS' involvement in the scandal, this will be reflected in the data as the focus will lie more heavily on Savile and abuse and less on the *BBC*.

To ensure intercoder reliability, a graduate student from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln helped the researcher code eleven articles from *The New York Times*, which resulted in twenty-two articles being coded and compared. The researcher verbally explained each definition to the second coder and later trained this coder on the differences between the implicit and explicit meanings which were being used. The researcher then went over a few articles with the coder in order to ensure that the coder was using the correct functional definitions. If certain items were unclear to the coder, the coder and the researcher discussed the definitions and

decided on whether to include a term as part of the definition. The null hypothesis was that there would be no difference between the interpretation of both coders of the terms and articles. An analysis of intercoder reliability via Scott's Pi showed that there was agreement between coders of 0.86. The null hypothesis was that there would be no difference between the interpretation of both coders of the terms and articles. Since 0.86 is a statistically significant, the null hypothesis will not be rejected.

#### Content Analysis

Content analysis was used as a means of spotting recurring themes within the articles. Both implicit and explicit meanings were included in the study. "Savile" and "BBC" were counted explicitly, but referential terms such as "the DJ" and "the corporation" were both counted. "Trust" was also counted explicitly. The term "children" was also counted explicitly, but the terms "child," "girls," "boys," "teenagers," and "youngsters" were included. This term was used to show the emphasis placed on Savile's victims being children. Ages under the age of 18 were also counted under this term. The term "victim(s)" was counted explicitly and used in order to determine the emphasis placed on the victims in each media source.

The terms "scandal" and "crisis" were counted explicitly and used to gauge the emphasis placed on the scandal itself. This helped differentiate the coverage given to the scandal versus the coverage given to the *BBC*, Savile, and Savile's actions, the latter which is denoted by the term "abuse". The term "*ITV*" was counted explicitly and was used to gauge how many instances the document and the breaking of the story was discussed in media sources. The term "allegation" was counted explicitly and included the term "accusation". Finally, the term "compensation" was

counted explicitly and included monetary amounts and the word "scheme" when it related back to the term "compensation."

"Victim complaints" was counted implicitly and includes instances where the complaints or retellings of incidents by victims were included in media sources. The term "justice" was counted both implicitly and explicitly, as was the term predatory. The former was used to denote how much emphasis was placed on justice for Savile's victims and the latter was used to indicate how many times the papers characterized Savile, such as when they refer to him as a predatory or taking advantage of vulnerable victims. The term "apology" was analyzed both implicitly and explicitly and was used to gauge how much emphasis the media placed on apology, one of the strategies that should be used as recommended by SCCT. The term "denial" was also counted implicitly and explicitly and was used to gauge the emphasis placed on denial in relation to crisis management techniques. It is important to note that most of the discussion surrounding denial in the articles was negative and correlated with management condemnation. The terms "management actions" and "management condemnations" were counted implicitly and were used to account for if and what media sources were focusing on.

#### **Findings**

A comparison of each news source was conducted by an analysis of variance (ANOVA) as a means of determining correlations between countries and whether these correlations were statistically significant. A one-way between subjects ANOVA was conducted in order to compare the difference of use in sixteen terms used by nine news sources representing three countries, the UK, Ireland, and the US. The results are shown below in relation to each of the research questions posed in this study.

#### ANOVA Results

Regarding RQ1, an ANOVA of the term "BBC" yielded significant variation among conditions, F(8, 125) = 7.100, p = .000. The New York Times (M = 13.53; SD = 6.80) and the Los Angeles Times (M = 10.50; SD = 9.38) differed from RTE (M = 5.20; SD = 4.26), the Irish Times (M = 3.88; SD = 5.00). This is interesting as it entails that Irish and American sources differ on the emphasis which they placed on the BBC.

Regarding RQ2, an ANOVA showed the term "Savile" did not yield significant variation among conditions, F(8, 125) = 1.356, p = .222. Regarding RQ3, an ANOVA of the term "victims" did not yield significant variation among conditions, F(8, 125) = 1.427, p = .191 and an ANOVA of the term "victims complaints" did not yield significant variation among conditions, F(8, 125) = .777, p = .624.

Regarding RQ4, an ANOVA of the term "scandal" yielded significant variation F(8, 125) = 8.249, p = .000. According to post hoc results, there was significant difference in the use of the term scandal between American papers and British and Irish papers. *The New York Times (M* = 2.73; SD = 2.28), the *Los Angeles Times (M* = 1.50; SD = 1.40), and the *Boston Globe (M* = 1.20; SD = 1.26) varied significantly from RTE (M = .400; SD = .63), the *Irish Independent (M* = .40; SD = .83), the *Irish Times (M* = .07; SD = .26), the *Telegraph (M* = .27; SD = .59), *The Guardian (M* = .67; SD = 1.11), and the SDC (SD = .4880). This is interesting as it shows that American papers focused more heavily on the scandal itself than British and Irish media.

Regarding RQ5, an ANOVA of the term "management actions" yielded significant variation among conditions, F(8, 125) = 2.809, p = .007. The New York Times (M = 1.67; SD = 1

1.50) and the *Los Angeles Times* (M = 1.00; SD = 1.11) varied significantly from Irish and British media in their coverage of management actions. The differences were as follows: RTE (M = .533; SD = 1.30), the *Irish Independent* (M = .67; SD = 1.40), the *Irish Times* (M = .20; SD = .56), the *Telegraph* (M = .133; SD = .57), and *The Guardian* (M = .40; SD = .91). The BBC's (M = 1.40; SD = 1.76) coverage of managerial actions also differed significantly from Irish and English papers.

Regarding RQ6, an ANOVA of the term "management condemnation" yielded significant variation among conditions, F(8, 125) = 3.443, p = .001. It is interesting to note that the *BBC* (M = 4.47; *SD* = 6.03) *and The New York Times* (M = 3.20; *SD* = 2.54) varied significantly from *RTE* (M = 1.53; SD = 2.62), the *Los Angeles Times* (M = 1.86; SD = 2.28), the *Boston Globe* (M = .933; SD = 1.33), the Irish Independent (M = 1.47; SD = 2.42), the *Irish Times* (M = .40; SD = .91), the *Telegraph* (M = .00; SD = .00), and *The Guardian* (M = 1.73; SD = 3.28). This is particularly interesting as both of these news sources were involved in the scandal and these findings show their coverage differed in relation to the condemnation of their own management, in the case of the *BBC*, and the previous employer of their new CEO, in the case of *The New York Times*.

Regarding RQ7, an ANOVA of the term "compensation" yielded significant variation among conditions, F(8, 125) = 2.493, p = .015. The *Irish Times* (M = 2.00; SD = 4.21) and the *Telegraph* (M = 1.73; SD = 2.74) differed in the emphasis they placed on compensation from a majority of other news sources, including *RTE* (M = .333; SD = .90), *The New York Times* (M = .00; SD = .00), the *Los Angeles Times* (M = .00; SD = .00), the *Boston Globe* (M = .13; SD = .57), *The Guardian* (M = .867; SD = 2.29), and the *BBC* (M = .13; SD = .35). By looking at the means, one is able to see that the British and Irish media differ most from the American media.

These differences are interesting as the indicate variation in the coverage of an Irish and a British source from all American sources. This entails that the American sources placed less emphasis on compensation than do their British and Irish counterparts.

Regarding RQ7, an ANOVA of the term "denial" yielded significant variation among conditions, F(8, 125) = 4.763, p = .000. It is interesting to note that the *BBC* (M = 1.07; SD = 2.22) and *The New York Times* (M = 1.93; SD = 1.91) varied in their use of the term denial from other sources, including RTE (M = .27; SD = .59), the *Los Angeles Times* (M = .21; SD = .43), the *Boston Globe* (M = .27; SD = .59), the *Irish Independent* (M = .07; SD = .26), the *Irish Times* (M = .33; SD = .90), the *Telegraph* (M = .13; SD = .35), and *The Guardian* (M = .13; SD = .52). The *BBC* did not significantly differ from the *Irish Times* in their use of the term denial.

Regarding RQ7, an ANOVA of the term "apology" did not yield a significant variation among conditions, F(8, 125) = .669, p = .718. Although there was not a statistically significant difference in the coverage of the term apology between all sources, it is interesting to note that there was some difference between international sources. Irish papers mentioned apology more than their British and American counterparts. RTE (M = .60; SD = .91) and the  $Irish\ Times$  (M = .60; SD = 1.12) varied from  $The\ New\ York\ Times$  (M = .33; SD = .49), the Boston Globe (M = .40; SD = .63), the Telegraph (M = .133; SD = .35), and from  $The\ Guardian$  (M = .27; SD = .70). In relation to RQ7, an ANOVA of the term "justice" did not yield significant variation among conditions, F(8, 125) = .454, p = .886.

#### Summary of Findings

It is interesting to note that the terms relating to crisis response were significantly different between sources. These terms include compensation and denial. This means that

sources differed in the expectations they had for the *BBC*'s response to the crisis, some sources focusing more on denial and some on compensation. It is also interesting to note that the emphasis places on allegations did not differ between sources. It is also interesting to note that management condemnations and actions were significantly different between sources. This is important as this entails that sources placed different weight on the coverage given to the *BBC*'s handling of the crisis and the blame they placed on *BBC* management and their actions during the breaking of the scandal. In relation to crisis communication, it the lack of difference between sources for the term apology was a surprising finding. This entails that there was not statistical significance in the difference in the amount of emphasis placed on apology between sources.

Overall, sources varied internationally with the emphasis they placed on the terms assault, predatory, victims, scandal, compensation, denial, and allegations. British sources placed a heavier emphasis on assault than the media sources in other countries. The *Los Angeles Times*, an American newspaper, placed more emphasis on the predatory nature of Savile. The American newspapers placed less emphasis on compensation than did their British and Irish counterparts. The *Boston Globe*, an American paper, covered the actual breaking of the scandal more than international sources, which is denoted by the term *ITV*. There was not statistical difference between the *Boston Globe* and the *Los Angeles Times*. The American papers placed more emphasis on denial, although most of this coverage was negative of the use of such a tactic, as was shown by the content analysis.

These findings indicate that English and Irish papers placed a heavier emphasis on compensation than American papers. It is also interesting to note that American papers placed a heavier emphasis on the actual breaking of the scandal itself and the actions of Savile, with terms

such as allegations, predatory, and *ITV*, being significantly different from Irish and English sources.

#### Textual Analysis

A few terms and concepts were chosen that needed some clarification and detail which the content analysis could not provide on its own. Coverage of the *BBC*, Savile's character and actions, management condemnation, management actions, transparency, trust and denial were all deserving of additional investigation, as either richer findings were available through both a content analysis or through the combination of a textual analysis and content analysis. Excerpts from *The Washington Post* articles were also used as part of the content analysis as these articles were often more descriptive in their coverage of the scandal than the rest of their American counterparts.

#### RQ #1

Based on the findings of the content analysis, there was a difference between American and Irish media from British media. The texts support this finding in their differences of tone and reporting style. British sources are more prone to referring to the government inquiries while American and Irish sources are more prone to using emotive language and to expose details of the *BBC*'s misdeeds.

In relation to the exposure of the *BBC* culture after the Savile scandal, the *Telegraph* writes: "Mr. Shapps said a new culture of openness was now needed, after scandals which have seen the *BBC* struggle to explain its conduct to the public (Ross, "*BBC* could lose right to licence fee over 'culture of waste and secrecy', minister warn," 2013)." *The Guardian* states, in relation to the reports of preliminary investigations, that "Both reports are expected to include in sharp

criticism of *BBC* procedures and staff (O'Carroll, "*BBC* to publish findings on Newsnight's Jimmy Savile report on Wednesday," 2012)" and that "the report reveals constant criticism of HR, and endemic culture of fear, favouratism and exclusion of the freelance majority (Brown, "*BBC* bullying exposes broader cultural ills and poor management," 2013)". The *BBC* was somewhat kinder to itself in its reporting on its handling of the crisis, but it reports that "the failings identified by Mr. MacQuarrie are unacceptable, and the Executive Board is taking clear and decisive action, as set out below, to restore public trust in the *BBC*'s journalism ("Ken MacQuarrie report: Summary of findings," 2012)." It is worth noting that the *BBC* mostly uses quotes and writing from external sources about itself, as was stated in the *BBC* article "Viewpoints: What next for the *BBC*?."

RTE stated that "The BBC has been thrown into disarray by accusations it helped cover up sexual abuse by Savile, and has struggled to explain why one of its own shows killed an investigation into it (Holden, "Savile police 'staggered' at extent of inquiry," 2012)." The Irish Times states that "The horror stories about Savile emerged only after ITV broadcast a documentary at the start of this month - sparking mayhem at the BBC over losing its scoop and leading to the allegations of a cover-up ("Rippon quits over Savile scandal," 2012)." The Irish Independent states that "An inquiry led by Janet Smith, a former British court of appeal judge, is expected to find the corporation (BBC) turned a blind eye to the former DJ and presenter's offending, allowing him to rape and sexually assault hundreds of victims over five decades (Edgar, "Savile abused 1000 children on BBC premises, report finds," 2014)."

The Washington Post wrote "...the top of the venerable institution (BBC) has been in turmoil" and "With management focused on questions about the Savile report, and decision-

making suddenly divided into two groups of people, critical decisions fell through the cracks (McGregor, "The *BBC* and crisis management: Why the second mistake can be worse than the first," 2012)". The *Los Angeles Times* writes "...once the accusations surfaced on rival network *ITV* and questions began to be raised about the aborted "Newsnight" program, the *BBC* responded with breathtaking incompetence (Chu, "*BBC* cleared of coverup in Jimmy Savile case," 2012)." The paper also states that "After the allegations of serial sexual abuse of children by Jimmy Savile came to light on a rival broadcaster, the *BBC*'s management mounted a confused, inept and completely inadequate response that showed considerable internal distrust... (Chu, "Report finds 'flawed' response but no cover-up at *BBC*," 2012)." *The New York Times* states that in relation to the exposure of *BBC* culture following the scandal that "The disclosures raise new questions about the workplace culture at the *BBC*, the behavior of its employees, and what it may have condoned or overlooked over the years (Lyall, "*BBC* Faces New Allegations of Sexual Abuse", 2013)."

In relation to trust of the *BBC*, *The Washington Post* claims that "...critics have accused the *BBC* of turning a blind eye to the various rumors that circulated for years around one of its top performers" and "...female *BBC* presenters have also raised questions in recent days about the corporation's culture in the 1980s." The paper goes on to state that "Liz Kershaw, a *BBC Radio* DJ, said she was "routinely groped" in the 1980s while broadcasting live on air. She said that when she complained, she was told: Don't you like it? Are you a lesbian?" (Adam, "*BBC* apologizes for alleged sex abuse by Jimmy Savile," 2012)."

This coverage shows the lack of action on part of the *BBC* management when victims actually did come forward. *The New York Times* claims that "The *BBC* is to be subject to two

separate inquiries over the Savile affair... complacency will be condemned, procedures will be tightened, but the deeper human flaw will be ignored (Meek, "Don't Get Found Out," 2012)." They also wrote that Mr. Patten, the chairman of the supervisory trust, "...described the failings that led to the scandal as ones that the *BBC* would quickly put right (Burnse et al., "Top *BBC* Figures Acknowledge 'Errors' in Reporting Scandals," 2012)." The *Los Angeles Times* writes that "The scandal has put a cloud over the reputation of the *BBC*, an institution of such stature, trust, and omnipresence in British public life that it has been nicknamed "Auntie." Long associated with integrity and quality not just in Britain but throughout the world, the broadcaster now finds itself under tremendous pressure and scrutiny."

RTE writes "some of the alleged victims have said there was a culture of sexual abuse inside the BBC when Savile was at the height of his fame in the 1970s and 80s, and that other well-known stars were involved" and followed by a quote by Peter Spindler, the head of one of the inquiries surrounding the BBC, stating that "I'm very satisfied with the level of support the BBC have provided. They are fully cooperating... (RTE, "Savile suspected of abusing up to 25 girls-police," 2012)."

The *Telegraph* writes, "The *BBC*, with its quasi-familial role in British life, did not actively collude in the crimes of Sir Jimmy Savile. Nor, in all likelihood, did it engineer a coverup of his predatory pedophilia. But sins of omission can be almost as reprehensible as those of commission, and the *BBC* appears guilty, at the least, of willful ignorance. The corporation's senior managers seem, like the three wise monkeys, to have chosen to see no evil, hear no evil and speak no evil (Riddell, "It was the culture of neglect that allowed Jimmy Savile to flourish," 2012)."

The content analysis showed there to be no difference in the emphasis which the media from Britain, Ireland, and the US gave to Savile. This finding was confirmed by the textual analysis, as there was consistency in the media's reporting on Savile and his reputation.

In relation to *The Washington Post*'s coverage of Savile, the paper writes that "Savile's reputation appears to be in tatters following an expose on *BBC* rival *ITV*... (Adam, "*BBC* apologizes for alleged sex abuse by Jimmy Savile," 2012)." The *Los Angeles Times* states that "His (Savile's) charity work at various hospitals now appears as little more than a way for him to gain access to vulnerable people to kiss, grope and force himself on... Most of his alleged victims did not speak out, for fear of not being taken seriously. Those who did found their accounts scoffed at by authority figures such as parents or caregivers (Chu, "Jimmy Savile sex-abuse scandal stretches across decades, report says," 2013)."

The New York Times states that "Few men in living memory, perhaps none in Britain, have undergone such a rapid descent from public adulation to almost universal loathing (Burns et al., "Shield of Celebrity Let Jimmy Savile Escape Legal Scrutiny for Decades," 2012)" and that "...he (Savile) denied the rumors, often in ways that seemed artfully constructed to leave audiences struggling to decide whether he was admitting to pedophile behavior - and making a joke of it - or simply mocking his accusers (Burns et al., "Shield of Celebrity Let Jimmy Savile Escape Legal Scrutiny for Decades," 2012)."

In relation to Savile, *The Guardian* states "It's plain now that Savile exploited his fame as an entertainer ruthlessly, crafting an image as an indefatigable charity worker in order to gain unfettered access to vulnerable people and abuse them (Orr, "We must demand more of

celebrities, not confer advantages on them like Jimmy Savile had," 2014)." The *BBC* was apologetic in its commentary on Savile, stating "'We are horrified by allegations that anything of this sort could have happened at the *BBC* - or have been carried out by anyone working for the *BBC* (*BBC News*, "Sir Jimmy Savile: *BBC* 'horrified' over rape allegations," 2012).

*RQ* #6

In relation to the findings of the content analysis, there were significant differences in the amount of coverage given to the condemnation of *BBC* management. *The New York Times* and the *BBC* varied in their coverage of management, which is interesting as both sources were involved in the scandal, as was mentioned in the content analysis. The textual analysis supported this finding, with both papers being less emotive and less specific in their criticism of the *BBC*'s management.

In relation to the condemnation of *BBC* management, the *Los Angeles Times* states, "...the network has also been accused of shoddy reporting regarding its program "Newsnight." One report falsely accused a Conservative Party official of child abuse (Ng, "*BBC* hires Royal Opera House chief Tony Hall after scandal," 2012)." *The New York Times* writes, "...the disclosures raise new questions about the workplace culture at the *BBC*, the behavior of its employees, and what it may have condoned or overlooked over the years (Lyall, "*BBC* Faces New Allegations of Sexual Abuse," 2013)." The *Boston Globe* states, "The *BBC* is a bloated, top-heavy, and poorly led corporation staffed by dull executives and backbiting journalists... (Satter, "*BBC* officials criticize company," 2013)."

The *Irish Times* states, "...the furor over Savile has led to scrutiny of the culture within *BBC* radio in the 1960s and 1970s (McGreevy, "Jimmy Savile was 'weird', says *BBC* DJ Tony

Blackburn," 2014)." The *Irish Independent* states, "...Jimmy Savile was known to be a "nasty sleaze-bag" within the *BBC*, it has been claimed, ahead of a damning review which is expected to uncover hundreds of victims abused by the shamed entertainer and reveal a culture of ignorance with "protected" him (Irish Independent, "Jimmy Savile 'could have abused up to 1,000 victims' while at the *BBC*," 2014)." The *Irish Independent* also states, "...for the *BBC* to now say it is "horrified" by what Jimmy Savile did seems more than a little ridiculous given the persistence of rumours around him over such a prolonged period (Irish Independent, "The lesson here is all about power," 2012)."

The Guardian states, "......the BBC began disciplinary action on Monday night against senior editorial staff after an internal investigation discovered "unacceptable" management failings that led to the calamitous Newsnight report... that wrongly accused an unnamed Tory peer of child sexual abuse (Sweney et al., "Newsnight scandal report reveals 'unacceptable' failings by BBC bosses," 2012)." The BBC states, "...Nick Pollard's review found that BBC's management system had "proved completely incapable of dealing" with the issues and "the level of chaos and confusion was even greater than was apparent at the time (BBC News, "BBC criticised for Newsnight axed Jimmy Savile report," 2012)." The Telegraph states, "...The BBC... is a troubled national institution affected by demographics, mismanagement, and the betrayal of the public by a hierarchy that protected staff guilty of vile and cruel behavior (Odone, "Why the BBC license fee should be scrapped," 2015)."

#### RQ #5

The findings from the content analysis show that American sources differed in the emphasis placed on management actions than British and Irish media. The textual analysis

backed up these findings, showing that the American media more openly condemning the *BBC* in relation to their reputation than their British and Irish counterparts.

In relation to the condemnation of *BBC* management actions, the *Los Angeles Times* states "...'the *BBC* has effectively changed its story about why it dropped the 'Newsnight' program about Jimmy Savile' (Chu, "*BBC* editor steps down in wake of Jimmy Savile sex-abuse probe," 2012)." *The New York Times* writes, "...As sexual abuse accusations multiplied against Jimmy Savile... attention turned on Friday to clues of any misconduct that had been ignored, overlooked or brushed aside while he was alive (Cowell, "Investigation of *BBC* Host examines Dropped Cases," 2012)." The *Boston Globe* states, "...The *BBC* has been accused of covering up the Savile case by canceling a "Newsnight" report on the accusations against him last December and going ahead with several Christmas specials that paid tribute to Savile (Burns, "*BBC* chair says scandal has revealed a 'ghastly mess'," 2012)."

The *Irish Independent* states, "...the *BBC* set out to point the finger at the failures of the establishment, and, when none emerged, concluded there was no story, not seeing that emerging from this decision was a much bigger story about the failings of one of the most politically correct, liberal institutions in the country to protect vulnerable children from one of its own (*Irish Independent*, "The lesson here is all about power," 2012)."

The *BBC* states that, "...a *BBC* inquiry later said some of the basic journalistic checks had not been completed... (*BBC* News, Lord Patten defends *BBC* pay-off to George Entwistle, 2012)." *The Guardian* states, "...(Stephen) Mitchell was sharply criticised for removing in late 2011 the Newsnight Savile investigation from the "risk register", a list of all sensitive

programmes being made by the corporation at any given time (O'Carroll, "Pollard report: *BBC* News deputy Stephen Mitchell retires without payout," 2012)."

RQ #7

The content analysis showed there to be variation in international sources, with American sources focusing more heavily on denial than other sources. Denial is mentioned in a negative light by American sources, as shown below. When combined, the content and textual analyses show that although the American papers did not differ in their views on denial from the British and Irish papers, they did focus more on the *BBC*'s use of denial.

The New York Times states, "Mr. Thompson has said he knew nothing of the Savile investigation before it was canceled by the editor of the BBC's "Newsnight" program. As for what he knew afterward, his statements have evolved: He first said he was unaware of the investigation, but then acknowledged he was subsequently told of its cancellation by a reporter at a cocktail party. He said while he "may have formed an impression" about possible areas of a Savile investigation, including his charity work, he was unaware of child-sexual-abuse accusations (Purdy, "As Scandal Flared, BBC's Leaders Missed Red Flags," 2012)."

The Guardian states that, "...the BBC rejected the accusation... that it had dropped plans to set up a Childline-style helpline... (and) now faces dozens of civil compensation claims (Plunkett et al., "Jimmy Savile report: institutions in the line of fire," 2013)." The Telegraph quoted Helen Boaden, the head of news at the time of the scandal's breaking, as saying "she...'had never heard any dark rumours about Jimmy Savile' (Rayner et al., "Chaos and 'faffing at BBC as Jimmy Savile scandal detonated," 2013)."

The *Irish Independent* writes, "...the corporation's World Affairs Editor...rejected a report in the Observer which suggested that knowledge of the presenter's offending was widespread (*Irish Independent*, "Jimmy Savile 'could have abused up to 1,000 victims' while at the *BBC*, 2014")." The paper also writes that *BBC* broadcaster Terry Wogan stated "'...'No, nobody knew him. He was a front, he was a façade, whether there was a real person in there I don't know... I am sitting in front of the television, and have no idea about how the *BBC* is administered or run' (Sweeney, "'A front, a façade' - Wogan breaks silence on Savile at *BBC*," 2012)."

Although prevention was not covered in the content analysis, it is still useful to look at.

The media seemed concerned about the lack of action on the *BBC*'s part and raised concern about the possibility of such abuse happening again. The Irish media's coverage was much more emotive than that of the British and American media.

The *Los Angeles Times* writes, "...Tim Davie, the acting director general of the *BBC*, insisted that the scandal has not been without consequence for staff members involved and that the broadcaster is trying to draw the appropriate lessons (Chu, "BBC cleared of coverup in Jimmy Savile case," 2012)."

RTE quoted a victims' lawyer when she said that "...'it is for getting their stories out there to get them believed and to prevent it from happening again. You don't do it for the money' (RTE, "Victims of Jimmy Savile to seek compensation from BBC and other organizations," 2013)." The *Irish Independent* quotes the NSPCC helpline director Peter Watt as saying, "'...If one glimmer of hope is to come from this torrid affair, it is that children today will be safer because we all learn to listen (*Irish Independent*, "Fears over multiple Savile probes," 2014).""

The *BBC* states "...Dame Janet Smith will begin a review into the culture and practices of the *BBC* during Savile's time at the corporation and will also examine if the *BBC*'s child protection and whistleblowing policies are fit for purpose (*BBC*, "*BBC* regrets dropped Newsnight investigation," 2012)."

In relation compensation, the *Irish Times* writes, "the judge had described the compensation scheme as a "sensible and pragmatic" attempt at solving a "complex situation" (*Irish Times*, "Compensation for Jimmy Savile abuse sought by 203 people," 2014).' The RTE emphasized the *BBC*'s and Department of Health's involvement in the scandal, pointing out that they "...are among a number of organisations embroiled in the scandal (*RTE*, "Victims of Jimmy Savile to seek compensation from BBC and other organizations," 2013)." The *Irish Independent* writes, "Their decision means that a chunk of money will have to be taken out of Savile's estate to cover legal fees - reducing the amount available to be paid out as compensation to victims. The paper goes on to state, "Liz Dux, who works at law firm Slater and Gordon, which represents victims, said the costs ruling did not overshadow the overall decision (*Irish Independent*, "Jimmy Savile estate to cover legal fees of victims," 2014)."

The *BBC* quoted Liz Dux, the victims' solicitor, as stating, "Twelve months is an awful long time. It could have led to absolutely disastrous consequences for the victims, because if Savile's estate had been distributed in that twelve months they would have been left with absolutely no access to justice at all... (*BBC*, "*BBC* criticised for Newsnight axed Jimmy Savile report," 2012)." *The Guardian* states, "The *BBC* now faces civil compensation claims from victims who believe they were physically or psychologically harmed by the abuse (Plunkett et al., 2013)." The *Telegraph* writes, "They just want some recognition of what they have been

through so they can then be able to move on with their lives. Hundreds of Savile's victims, who are represented by Slater & Gorden, have already signed up to the scheme in the hope that they would receive some form of justice without the need for drawn-out and costly litigation (*Telegraph*, "Jimmy Savile: Victims' compensation scheme approved," 2014)." There was no descriptive material in American sources relating to compensation which were worth noting.

#### **Discussion**

Expectations for Crisis Management by Country

The findings suggest that the media in each country focused on different aspects of the scandal and had varying expectations for the public relations techniques which should have been used in response to the *BBC*'s involvement in the case. While the British and Irish media focused on compensation, the American media placed a lot of emphasis on denial. This entails that when practicing public relations in the UK or in Ireland, companies should provide compensation as part of their crisis communication response. This will be an important step in taking steps to get back in the good graces of the general public after a crisis has occurred.

American media focused more on the scandal and the breaking of the scandal itself. This means that the actions of the organization will be more focused on in the US than in the UK or Ireland. This finding entails that the steps taken to smooth over a crisis will be very important in the US and that it will be very important to have a crisis communications plan set in place in American companies or companies which have a presence in the US.

Although the findings would need to be compared to the coverage of other scandals in the UK, it seems that the emphasis placed on assault and abuse by British sources would warrant special consideration of cases involving assault or abuse. In the very least, the prevalence of

terms associated with abuse and assault show that the British media are concerned more than international sources with the actions and the crime itself, rather than the handling of the crisis and the breaking of the scandal. This entails that organizations responding to a crisis in the UK would need to account for the actions of the crisis itself in its response strategy.

The emphasis placed on apology did not vary by country. This entails that apology should be included in every crisis communication plan, or at least crisis communications plans aimed at Irish, English, or American audiences. Just because the media focus more heavily on one response strategy does not mean that multiple tactics cannot be used in response to a crisis though. SCCT suggests that multiple methods can be combine. Therefore, when facing a crisis, an organization should consider combining these methods for optimal results. This entails that for companies trying to soothe a crisis in the UK or Ireland, compensation should be more heavily focused upon, although an apology should also be given. In the USA, an apology should be the main focus, while compensation can be given as a means of retribution.

News sources also focused on the issue of trust in relation to the *BBC*. With the chaos surrounding the Savile case and the issues that followed, such as coming under fire for other *BBC* staff being accused of abuse, the *BBC*'s reputation has been torn apart. There was even talk of the licensing fee, the *BBC*'s means of funding, being stripped (Ross, "*BBC* could lose right to licence fee over 'culture of waste and secrecy', minister warns," 2013). The reports indicated that not only were the media sources mistrusting of the *BBC* due to what appeared to be a cover up, but that the other scandals and its behavior following the *ITV* documentary raised even more concerns. The focus on the terms scandal, abuse, victims, and allegations indicate a concern with those who suffered the abuse of Savile and the blame and accusations that were being thrown

around in the midst of the scandal. This entails that *The New York Times* believes that nothing will really change at the *BBC*; that is that it does not trust the *BBC* to act upon the findings.

While Irish sources did emphasize concern about the lack of transparency and the trust in the *BBC*, they were much more sympathetic in their coverage of the *BBC*, acknowledging that the corporation is working with police who are carrying out the inquiries. British media emphasized the organizational failings of the *BBC* but were not as emotive as the Irish and American media. While the American media focused more on victims' allegations and towards the *BBC* and Savile and the vulnerability of the victims, the British and Irish media focused more on victims and slightly more on justice than their American counterparts. The American media focused more on the faults of management and the *BBC*'s involvement with the scandal itself. Its coverage of the *BBC* was also harsher than that of British and Irish media. As the content analysis showed, the American media focused on the impact the scandal had on the trust and reputation of the *BBC*. They also showed mistrust in changes being undertaken.

When practicing public relations in Ireland, it is suggested that communicators weigh compensation and apology equally. Although the Irish media focused more on compensation, the difference in the emphasis is not significantly significant and, therefore, this difference should not be reflected in a public relations crisis communication strategy.

#### What the BBC Should Have Done

Cultural dimensions are shown to impact the way the media expect an organization to handle a crisis, especially one involving people. The *BBC* crisis falls into the preventable cluster in relation to SCCT and this requires the highest level of response by the organization, as the

most blame is placed on the organization for the actions. There is a lot of focus on prevention, apology, and compensation in the SCCT literature. Recently, the *BBC* has stated its intention of exploring its culture but, as of March 2015, no plans have been proposed for making any changes. Being that the crisis falls under the preventable cluster of SCCT, rebuilding strategies such as apology and compensation should have been used. Instead, denial and victamage response strategy were used in combination, thus negatively impacting the *BBC*'s recovery from the crisis.

The research shows that American audiences focused more on the crisis itself and the breaking of the scandal. This shows that the *BBC* would have needed to react immediately in order to satisfy American audiences. The *BBC* did not do this though. Instead, the organization went into a state of denial and avoided responsibility. The American media showed their concern surrounding this, as was represented in the American media's emphasis on denial. Instead of denying their knowledge or involvement in the scandal, the *BBC* should have opted for transparency and apology in their response to the crisis. Even if they did not know about Savile's actions, which is unlikely as there is evidence pointing to the fact that they did have some knowledge about the abuse, they should have apologized for any negative impact their presenter had on the victims. Any type of apology, whether they did or did not admit fault, would have been better than none as it would have shown that the *BBC* was attempting to take action and responsibility for their presenter.

Since American media focus more on the breaking of the scandal itself and the denial associated with the breaking of the scandal, it would have been in the *BBC*'s best interest to focus on its involvement as an organization in the scandal and the issues that the dropping of the

Newsnight documentary would have had. When it decided not to air the documentary, the organization should have been upfront about the evidence featured in the documentary and the victims' accounts. The *BBC* should have turned the information over to the police and have let the public know that although they had dropped the documentary, they had taken actions to rectify any wrongs which had been done by its former employee.

In order to appease British and Irish audiences, the *BBC* should have focused more heavily on what it was doing to offer compensation to the victims. Instead of stalling and only providing compensation as part of its more recent crisis communication strategy, the *BBC* should have offered compensation at an early stage of their crisis communication strategy. At the very least, the *BBC* should have at least offered some promise of compensating the victims for their suffering. The *BBC* waited too long to mention their intent of compensating the victims and focused more on their internal disputes and trying to put off taking any blame for the crisis.

Since apology did not differ in media coverage, the *BBC* should have led with apology when the crisis broke. Since there was confusion amongst management, the organization should have offered a general apology to Savile's victims and anyone impacted by his actions. They should have also focused on making amends to those who had been impacted by actions which took place on their premises or issues which arose involving victims and the organization. The *BBC* then should have went ahead with announcing and completing its investigation, keeping stakeholders informed of any important findings and using transparency when dealing with the general public.

Instead of focusing more on its internal disruption and on firing and reassignments, it should have focused on its how someone could have gotten away with actions such as Savile's.

Related to this last point, the *BBC* should have focused on its culture and structure. It should have also conveyed to the public that it would make changes to any issues found in its corporate structure in order to empower victims and ensure something like this could not occur again.

Finally, according the findings of the textual analysis, the *BBC* should have rolled out any changes in its organization that would help empower victims and whistleblowers and follow through with its promise to offer compensation to victims. The problem is that the *BBC* did voice its intention to explore structural issues but no changes were ever made to its structure or culture. The lack of action following the investigations just give the public and *BBC* stakeholders more reason to not trust the organization. The lack of action makes the *BBC* seem like it is not really committed to any real change. Furthermore, it is more important that the *BBC* be transparent about its processes and progress, being that the *BBC* is funded by the taxpayer through the licensing fee.

Overall, the *BBC* should have taken a clear line of steps in order to redeem itself to the general public. It should have taken some responsibility for what happened and should have immediately apologized for its presenter and for any pain he caused his victims. It should have also followed through with its promises of change and have offered compensation, or at least the promise of compensation, before pressed to do so. Instead, the *BBC* appeared to only act after not having any other option but to do so. This, in return, made any of its actions appear insincere and forced.

Labour Party politician Ben Bradshaw sums up the media expectations of the *BBC* by the British public, writing the following: "Firstly, the *BBC* needs to sort out its journalism. Secondly, the corporation needs to make sure it has the right people and the right systems to deal with a

crisis. Thirdly, the *BBC* needs to act firmly, but fairly on the outcome of the various reports it's commissioned into what went wrong. Next, and in a slightly longer time scale, the *BBC* needs to implement the "thorough and radical changes" in management structure promised by the chairman [of the *BBC* Trust], Lord Patten ("Viewpoints: What next for the *BBC*?," 2012)." This entails that the media want restructuring of the *BBC* and that the changes need to be quite substantial. Although this quote is representative of the British public's expectations of the *BBC*, from this study's findings, these suggestions could be extended to a crisis communication plan responding to an international organization.

#### Crisis Management in an International Organization

Organizations should interpret steps taken in the aftermath of a crisis as a means of reaching out to the general public and renewing faith in the organization, not as a means of covering up a crisis or making a crisis disappear. The *BBC*'s response to the Savile crisis is reflective of the latter way of thinking about a crisis response plan, whereas an effective crisis communication response would be reflective of the former way of thinking. A large amount of thought should be placed in how the public will interpret the actions of the organization in a crisis and what their expectations will be from the organization. The organization should consider what steps need to be taken in order to mend relations with both the public and the victims.

Crisis communication becomes more complicated in international organizations when one entity is speaking to stakeholders who might interpret the same action in different ways.

There will also be further complication in relation to which means of retribution should be emphasized when various stakeholders from different cultures will emphasize the importance of

certain actions over others. It is recommended that international organizations have different strategies for each country in which they have a presence and hone their crisis communication strategies according to cultural expectations. When unable to do so due to budget or time limitations, it is recommended that the organization incorporate both apology and compensation in their plan and avoid denial altogether.

#### Limitations

One limitation of this study is that, due to an ongoing investigation, the topic is still being heavily covered by various news sources. The result of this is that new articles are constantly being released. The scandal is still ongoing and there will certainly be more coverage in the near future. This complicates this study as until the investigations are closed, there will still be new information being release. Furthermore, the tone of the articles and the topics covered by media outlets might change due to new knowledge coming to light. This has the ability to impact the quality of the data analysis.

There is some concern regarding the depth of the content analysis of media sources. Although a variety of sources were chosen from Ireland, the UK, and the United States, the number of articles were limited due to time and resources. Although enough research has been completed to support the suggestions made by SCCT, ideally, a larger portion of published articles from most major news sources in each country would have been evaluated. Future studies should also explore the entire coverage of each paper in relation to the subject matter, which this study did not do due to limitations on time and resources.

A larger number of international news sources should also be covered in countries where the *BBC* has a branch. Although the research gives public relations professionals suggestions

about actions they should take in international crises, other studies should incorporate a greater variety of international news sources and non-English resources as a means of extending the study beyond the UK, Ireland, and the US. For example, the actions suggested for UK organizations might not translate well for Russia or China. There may be differences in dimensions such as power distance which might impact the reaction of the public to certain crisis communication strategies.

Future studies should consider exploring the differences between conservative and liberal media. There might be differences in the emphasis different media place on certain terms. For example, liberal media might place more emphasis on victims whereas conservative media might place more emphasis on the *BBC* or Savile. Future studies might also explore the differences in emphasis placed on certain terms due to religious and legal differences in each country. For example, the strict libel laws in the UK could have impacted the reporting of British media sources. The religion of each country could also have an influence on the moral codes of the populations in those countries. This could have an impact on the emphasis placed on moral elements, such as abuse, in each country's reporting. For example, Ireland might have placed more emphasis on justice in the form of compensation than American sources due to that country's strong Catholic heritage.

### **Conclusion**

This study has made both theoretical and practical suggestions for crisis communication strategy in an international organization. Theoretically, the conclusions back the suggestions made by SCCT. The study shows that the media in the UK, Ireland, and the US expected responses which are suggested by SCCT. This verifies those suggestions made by SCCT in

relation to how organizations should act when a crisis arises. It also shows that SCCT, a predominantly American theory, is relevant to crisis communication in other countries besides the US. Practically, this study suggests that an international organization should use apology and compensation in response to preventable crises. The findings were specific to the UK, Ireland, and the US, but there is no reason to think that similar actions should not be used in other countries with similar cultures.

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# Appendix

## Descriptive Output

Descriptives

	Descriptives										
		N	Mea	Std.	Std.	95% Co	nfidence	Mini	Maxi		
			n	Deviatio	Error	Interval f	or Mean	mum	mum		
				n		Lower	Upper				
						Bound	Bound				
BBC	RTE	15	5.20	4.2628	1.10	2.839	7.561	.0	12.0		
			0		06						
	NYT	15	13.5	6.8020	1.75	9.767	17.300	4.0	25.0		
		l	33		63						
	Los Angeles	14	10.5	9.3377	2.49	5.109	15.891	1.0	25.0		
	Times	45	00	0.0500	56	0.700	44.454		000		
	The Boston	15	7.46	6.6533	1.71	3.782	11.151	.0	20.0		
	Globe Irish	15	7 6.06	6.0056	79 1.55	2.741	9.392	.0	18.0		
	Independent	15	7	6.0036	06	2.741	9.392	0.0	10.0		
	maepenaem		'		00						
	Irish Times	15	3.86	4.9981	1.29	1.099	6.635	.0	14.0		
	mon mico	"	7	4.5501	05	1.000	0.000		14.0		
	Telegraph	15	2.80	3.6878	.952	.758	4.842	.0	14.0		
			0		2			"			
	The	15	7.20	5.8211	1.50	3.976	10.424	.0	21.0		
	Guardian		0		30						
	BBC	15	18.0	12.4671	3.21	11.096	24.904	.0	41.0		
			00		90						
	Total	134	8.27	8.3336	.719	6.852	9.700	.0	41.0		
			6		9						
Savile	RTE	15	7.46	4.0332	1.04	5.233	9.700	2.0	18.0		
Cavile	1112	10	7.40	4.0002	14	0.200	3.700	2.0	10.0		
	NYT	15	8.86	11.5131	2.97	2.491	15.242	.0	47.0		
			7		27						
	Los Angeles	14	6.57	4.0328	1.07	4.243	8.900	1.0	14.0		
	Times		1		78						
	The Boston	15	4.26	3.3267	.858	2.424	6.109	1.0	13.0		
	Globe		7		9						
	Irish	15	9.73	7.2945	1.88	5.694	13.773	1.0	26.0		
	Independent		3		34						
	Irish Times	15	10.2	4.2840	1.10	7.894	12.639	2.0	17.0		
	Tolograph	15	67 10 F	7.9361	61	6.138	14.000	1.0	27.0		
	Telegraph	15	10.5 33	7.9301	2.04 91	0.138	14.928	1.0	27.0		
	The	15	6.73	4.8766	1.25	4.033	9.434	.0	16.0		
	Guardian	13	3	4.0700	91	4.000	3.434	.0	10.0		
	BBC	15	9.46	9.7824	2.52	4.049	14.884	.0	39.0		
		,,	7	5., 5£-	58			.0	55.5		
	Total	134	8.22	7.0055	.605	7.027	9.421	.0	47.0		
I				,							

victims	RTE	15	2.46 7	3.0907	.798 0	.755	4.178	.0	11.0
	NYT	15	1.46 7	1.7674	.456 3	.488	2.445	.0	6.0
	Los Angeles Times	14	1.71 4	2.8128	.751 8	.090	3.338	.0	8.0
	The Boston Globe	15	.867	1.3020	.336	.146	1.588	.0	5.0
	Irish Independent	15	2.80 0	3.4682	.895 5	.879	4.721	.0	8.0
	Irish Times	15	3.00 0	2.8284	.730 3	1.434	4.566	.0	10.0
	Telegraph	15	2.80 0	4.3128	1.113	.412	5.188	.0	17.0
	The Guardian	15	1.86 7	3.0907	.798 0	.155	3.578	.0	8.0
	BBC	15	.600	1.2984	.335	119	1.319	.0	5.0
	Total	134	1.95 5	2.8677	.247 7	1.465	2.445	.0	17.0
assult	RTE	15	4.33 3	3.6968	.954 5	2.286	6.381	1.0	16.0
	NYT	15	4.93 3	3.5950	.928	2.943	6.924	.0	13.0
	Los Angeles Times	14	4.42 9	2.5933	.693 1	2.931	5.926	.0	9.0
	The Boston Globe	15	4.06 7	1.8310	.472 7	3.053	5.081	2.0	7.0
	Irish Independent	15	5.93 3	4.0083	1.03 49	3.714	8.153	.0	14.0
	Irish Times	15	6.06 7	3.1952	.825 0	4.297	7.836	1.0	12.0
	Telegraph	15	6.66 7	9.1859	2.37 18	1.580	11.754	.0	34.0
	The Guardian	15	3.60 0	2.8735	.741 9	2.009	5.191	.0	9.0
	BBC	15	3.40 0	2.3543	.607 9	2.096	4.704	.0	8.0
	Total	134	4.82 8	4.2560	.367	4.101	5.556	.0	34.0

scandal	RTE	15	.400	.6325	.163	.050	.750	.0	2.0
	NYT	15	2.73	2.2824	.589	1.469	3.997	.0	7.0
	Los Angeles	14	1.50	1.4005	.374	.691	2.309	.0	5.0
	Times The Boston	15	1.20	1.2649	.326	.500	1.900	.0	4.0
	Globe Irish Independent	15	.400	.8281	6 .213 8	059	.859	.0	3.0
	Irish Times	15	.067	.2582	.066	076	.210	.0	1.0
	Telegraph	15	.267	.5936	.153 3	062	.595	.0	2.0
	The Guardian	15	.667	1.1127	.287	.050	1.283	.0	3.0
	BBC	15	.333	.4880	.126 0	.063	.604	.0	1.0
	Total	134	.836	1.3666	.1181	.602	1.069	.0	7.0
children/kids	RTE	15	1.73	1.6242	.419 4	.834	2.633	.0	6.0
	NYT	15	3.73	3.8999	1.00 70	1.574	5.893	.0	14.0
	Los Angeles Times	14	3.57 1	1.9499	.5211	2.446	4.697	1.0	7.0
	The Boston Globe	15	1.40	1.3522	.349 1	.651	2.149	.0	5.0
	Irish Independent	15	5.00	4.4561	1.15 06	2.532	7.468	.0	11.0
	Irish Times	15	2.80	2.7568	.7118	1.273	4.327	.0	7.0
	Telegraph	15	7.93 3	11.0548	2.85 43	1.811	14.055	.0	41.0
	The Guardian	15	2.06	2.1536	.556	.874	3.259	.0	7.0
	BBC	15	3.33	4.7459	1.22 54	.705	5.962	.0	16.0
	Total	134	3.50 7	4.9672	.429 1	2.659	4.356	.0	41.0

complaints	RTE	15	1.13	1.4075	.363	.354	1.913	.0	5.0
(victims)	NYT	15	3 1.20 0	2.5967	.670 5	238	2.638	.0	10.0
	Los Angeles Times	14	1.07	1.3281	.354	.305	1.838	.0	3.0
	The Boston Globe	15	.267	.4577	.1182	.013	.520	.0	1.0
	Irish Independent	15	.533	.9155	.236 4	.026	1.040	.0	2.0
	Irish Times	15	.600	.9856	.254 5	.054	1.146	.0	3.0
	Telegraph	15	.933	1.9074	.492 5	123	1.990	.0	7.0
	The Guardian	15	.733	2.0517	.529 7	403	1.870	.0	8.0
	BBC	15	.333	.6172	.159 4	008	.675	.0	2.0
	Total	134	.754	1.5091	.130 4	.496	1.012	.0	10.0
ITV	RTE	15	.333	.4880	.126 0	.063	.604	.0	1.0
	NYT	15	.400	.6325	.163 3	.050	.750	.0	2.0
	Los Angeles Times	14	.286	.4688	.125	.015	.556	.0	1.0
	The Boston Globe	15	.000	.0000	.000	.000	.000	.0	.0
	Irish Independent	15	.200	.5606	.144 7	110	.510	.0	2.0
	Irish Times	15	.400	.5071	.130 9	.119	.681	.0	1.0
	Telegraph	15	.467	.6399	.165 2	.112	.821	.0	2.0
	The Guardian	15	.067	.2582	.066 7	076	.210	.0	1.0
	BBC	15	.200	.4140	.106 9	029	.429	.0	1.0
	Total	134	.261	.4894	.042	.178	.345	.0	2.0

justice (for	RTE	15	.467	.9155	.236	040	.974	.0	3.0
victims)	NYT	15	.400	.6325	.163	.050	.750	.0	2.0
					3				
	Los Angeles Times	14	.357	.9288	.248 2	179	.893	.0	3.0
	The Boston Globe	15	.067	.2582	.066	076	.210	.0	1.0
	Irish Independent	15	.267	1.0328	.266 7	305	.839	.0	4.0
	Irish Times	15	.200	.5606	.144 7	110	.510	.0	2.0
	Telegraph	15	.333	.6172	.159 4	008	.675	.0	2.0
	The Guardian	15	.333	.8997	.232	165	.832	.0	3.0
	BBC	15	.133	.5164	.133	153	.419	.0	2.0
	Total	134	.284	.7318	.063 2	.159	.409	.0	4.0
predatory	RTE	15	.467	.9155	.236 4	040	.974	.0	3.0
	NYT	15	.333	.4880	.126 0	.063	.604	.0	1.0
	Los Angeles Times	14	1.14 3	1.0271	.274 5	.550	1.736	.0	3.0
	The Boston Globe	15	.600	1.1212	.289 5	021	1.221	.0	4.0
	Irish Independent	15	.800	1.0823	.279 5	.201	1.399	.0	4.0
	Irish Times	15	.400	.8281	.213 8	059	.859	.0	3.0
	Telegraph	15	.600	1.0556	.272	.015	1.185	.0	3.0
	The Guardian	15	.400	.6325	6 .163 3	.050	.750	.0	2.0
	BBC	15	.333	.6172	.159 4	008	.675	.0	2.0
	Total	134	.560	.8970	.077 5	.406	.713	.0	4.0

management	RTE	15	1.53	2.6150	.675	.085	2.981	.0	10.0
condemnation	NYT	15	3 3.20 0	2.5411	.656 1	1.793	4.607	.0	9.0
	Los Angeles Times	14	1.85 7	2.2823	.610 0	.539	3.175	.0	6.0
	The Boston Globe	15	.933	1.3345	.344 6	.194	1.672	.0	4.0
	Irish Independent	15	1.46 7	2.4162	.623 9	.129	2.805	.0	9.0
	Irish Times	15	.400	.9103	.235 0	104	.904	.0	3.0
	Telegraph	15	.000	.0000	.000	.000	.000	.0	.0
	The Guardian	15	1.73 3	3.2834	.847 8	085	3.552	.0	10.0
	BBC	15	4.46 7	6.0340	1.55 80	1.125	7.808	.0	19.0
	Total	134	1.73 1	3.0783	.265 9	1.205	2.257	.0	19.0
management actions	RTE	15	.533	1.3020	.336	188	1.254	.0	5.0
	NYT	15	1.66 7	1.4960	.386	.838	2.495	.0	5.0
	Los Angeles Times	14	1.00	1.1094	.296 5	.359	1.641	.0	3.0
	The Boston Globe	15	.800	1.2071	.3117	.132	1.468	.0	4.0
	Irish Independent	15	.667	1.3973	.360 8	107	1.440	.0	5.0
	Irish Times	15	.200	.5606	.144 7	110	.510	.0	2.0
	Telegraph	15	.133	.5164	.133 3	153	.419	.0	2.0
	The Guardian	15	.400	.9103	.235 0	104	.904	.0	3.0
	BBC	15	1.40 0	1.7647	.455 7	.423	2.377	.0	5.0
	Total	134	.754	1.2711	.109 8	.537	.971	.0	5.0

apology	RTE	15	.600	.9103	.235	.096	1.104	.0	3.0
	NYT	15	.333	.4880	.126	.063	.604	.0	1.0
	Los Angeles	14	.357	.6333	.169	009	.723	.0	2.0
	Times The Boston Globe	15	.400	.6325	.163	.050	.750	.0	2.0
	Irish Independent	15	.333	.8165	3 .210 8	119	.785	.0	3.0
	Irish Times	15	.600	1.1212	.289 5	021	1.221	.0	4.0
	Telegraph	15	.133	.3519	.090 9	062	.328	.0	1.0
	The Guardian	15	.267	.7037	.181 7	123	.656	.0	2.0
	BBC	15	.533	.7432	.191 9	.122	.945	.0	2.0
	Total	134	.396	.7360	.063 6	.270	.521	.0	4.0
compensation	RTE	15	.333	.8997	.232	165	.832	.0	3.0
	NYT	15	.000	.0000	.000	.000	.000	.0	.0
	Los Angeles Times	14	.000	.0000	0 .000 0	.000	.000	.0	.0
	The Boston Globe	15	.133	.5164	.133 3	153	.419	.0	2.0
	Irish Independent	15	.133	.3519	.090 9	062	.328	.0	1.0
	Irish Times	15	2.00	4.2088	1.08	331	4.331	.0	12.0
	Telegraph	15	1.73	2.7377	.706	.217	3.249	.0	7.0
	The	15	.867	2.2949	9 .592	404	2.138	.0	7.0
	Guardian BBC	15	.133	.3519	.090	062	.328	.0	1.0
	Total	134	.597	1.9702	9 .170 2	.260	.934	.0	12.0

denial	RTE	15	.267	.5936	.153	062	.595	.0	2.0
	NYT	15	1.93	1.9074	.492	.877	2.990	.0	5.0
	Los Angeles	14	.214	.4258	5 .1138	032	.460	.0	1.0
	Times The Boston	15	.267	.5936	.153	062	.595	.0	2.0
	Globe Irish Independent	15	.067	.2582	3 .066 7	076	.210	.0	1.0
	Irish Times	15	.333	.8997	.232	165	.832	.0	3.0
	Telegraph	15	.133	.3519	.090	062	.328	.0	1.0
	The Guardian	15	.133	.5164	.133	153	.419	.0	2.0
	BBC	15	1.06	2.2190	.572	162	2.295	.0	8.0
	Total	134	.493	1.2124	9 .104 7	.285	.700	.0	8.0
allegations	RTE	15	3.26 7	2.0517	.529 7	2.130	4.403	.0	7.0
	NYT	15	2.86 7	2.0999	.542 2	1.704	4.030	.0	7.0
	Los Angeles Times	14	5.28 6	3.7299	.996 9	3.132	7.439	2.0	14.0
	The Boston Globe	15	3.53	2.5317	.653 7	2.131	4.935	.0	9.0
	Irish Independent	15	2.53 3	2.5317	.653 7	1.131	3.935	.0	8.0
	Irish Times	15	4.13	3.7960	.980	2.031	6.235	.0	16.0
	Telegraph	15	3 3.26	4.2167	1.08	.932	5.602	.0	17.0
	The Guardian	15	7 1.33 3	2.2254	88 .574 6	.101	2.566	.0	8.0
	BBC	15	2.26	1.8696	.482	1.231	3.302	.0	5.0
	Total	134	7 3.14 9	3.0025	7 .259 4	2.636	3.662	.0	17.0

## ANOVA Output

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
BBC	Between	2885.950	8	360.744	7.100	.000
	Groups					
	Within Groups	6350.833	125	50.807		
Savile	Total	9236.784 521.188	133	65.149	1.356	.222
Savile	Between Groups	521.100	٥	65.149	1.356	.222
	Within Groups	6006.095	125	48.049		
	Total	6527.284	133			
victims	Between	91.541	8	11.443	1.427	.191
	Groups					
	Within Groups	1002.190	125	8.018		
	Total	1093.731	133	22.222	4 440	000
assult	Between	160.024	8	20.003	1.112	.360
	Groups Within Groups	2249.029	125	17.992		
	Total	2409.052	133	17.552		
scandal	Between	85.821	8	10.728	8.249	.000
Souriau	Groups	00.021		10.720	0.240	.000
	Within Groups	162.567	125	1.301		
	Total	248.388	133			
children/kids	Between	480.997	8	60.125	2.684	.009
	Groups					
	Within Groups	2800.495	125	22.404		
	Total	3281.493	133	4 700		201
complaints (victims)	Between	14.345	8	1.793	.777	.624
	Groups Within Groups	288.529	125	2.308		
	Total	302.873	133	2.300		
ITV	Between	3.001	8	.375	1.625	.124
	Groups	0.001		.070	1.020	.124
	Within Groups	28.857	125	.231		
	Total	31.858	133			
justice (for victims)	Between	2.010	8	.251	.454	.886
	Groups					
	Within Groups	69.214	125	.554		
	Total	71.224	133			
predatory	Between	8.108	8	1.014	1.281	.259
	Groups	00.044	405	704		
	Within Groups Total	98.914 107.022	125 133	.791		
management	Between	227.547	8	28.443	3.443	.001
condemnation	Groups	221.541	0	20.443	3.443	.001
oon aon maadh	Within Groups	1032,781	125	8.262		
	Total	1260.328	133	0.202		
management actions	Between	32.740	8	4.092	2.809	.007
· ·	Groups					
	Within Groups	182.133	125	1.457		
	Total	214.873	133			
apology	Between	2.956	8	.370	.669	.718
	Groups	00.004	405	550		
	Within Groups Total	69.081 72.037	125 133	.553		
compensation		71.039		8.880	2.493	.015
compensation	Between Groups	/1.039	8	0.000	2.493	.015
	Within Groups	445.200	125	3.562		
	Total	516.239	133			
denial	Between	45.669	8	5.709	4.763	.000
	Groups		-			
	Within Groups	149.824	125	1.199		
	Total	195.493	133			
allegations	Between	149.091	8	18.636	2.219	.030
	Groups	1040.004	405	0.000		
	Within Groups	1049.924	125	8.399		
	Total	1199.015	133			