

## PT UNILEVER INDONESIA'S REPUTATION AND PROFITABILITY RECOVERY STRATEGY IN OVERCOMING BOYCOTT ACTION

Ade Mahendra<sup>1\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>LSPR Institute of Communication and Business Jakarta, Indonesia

E-mail: [26284050008@lspr.edu](mailto:26284050008@lspr.edu)

Correspondence: [26284050008@lspr.edu](mailto:26284050008@lspr.edu)

Received: 11/06/2026 | Revised : 20/06/2026 | Accepted: 10/07/2026 | Published :16/07/2026

### Abstract

The rapid growth of digital communication has transformed corporate reputation into a dynamic construct shaped by interactions among multiple stakeholders, making multinational companies increasingly vulnerable to boycott movements and *cancel culture*. This study aims to analyze the reputation crisis experienced by PT Unilever Indonesia following the boycott movement using the Corporate Rhetorical Arena Theory (CRAT) and to formulate an effective reputation recovery strategy based on Image Restoration Theory (IRT). A qualitative case study approach was employed through in-depth interviews, non-participant observation of digital communication, and document analysis involving corporate reports, press releases, news coverage, and social media content. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis supported by triangulation to ensure credibility. The findings reveal that the reputation crisis was not primarily driven by the company's official communication but by multi-actor interactions involving consumers, digital communities, influencers, media organizations, and civil society groups. Although the company implemented communication strategies emphasizing *reducing offensiveness* and *corrective action*, these efforts were insufficient to counter rapidly evolving digital narratives. This study proposes an integrative reputation recovery model consisting of Transparency Hub, Digital War Room, Active Dialogue, and Local Value Proof. The model represents the study's theoretical contribution by integrating CRAT and IRT into a comprehensive framework linking multi-actor crisis communication, reputation recovery, stakeholder trust, and sustainable corporate profitability.

**Keywords:** *Cancel Culture, Corporate Rhetorical Arena Theory, Corporate Reputation, Image Restoration Theory, Reputation Recovery.*

### INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of digital technology has fundamentally transformed the ways in which organizations build, maintain, and restore corporate reputation. In the era of traditional communication, corporate reputation was predominantly managed through mass media and one-way communication channels. In contrast, the contemporary digital environment has shifted reputation formation toward dynamic and continuous interactions between organizations and a broad range of stakeholders. Social media platforms enable consumers, online communities, influencers, news media, regulators, civil society organizations, and even competitors to simultaneously generate, amplify, and reshape public narratives concerning an organization. As a result, organizations are no longer the sole actors controlling public communication; rather, corporate reputation has become a socially constructed phenomenon that emerges from the interactions and perceptions of multiple stakeholders (Frandsen & Johansen, 2017). Consistent with this perspective, Coombs (2022) argues that digital transformation has significantly increased the complexity of crisis communication, as public opinion can evolve and spread more rapidly than organizations are able to formulate and implement effective responses. Recent research further suggests that digital reputation has become a critical strategic asset, given its substantial influence on customer loyalty, brand equity, investment decisions, and the long-term sustainability of business organizations (Lendvai, 2025). This phenomenon is reflected in the boycott campaign targeting PT Unilever Indonesia Tbk., which gained momentum in late 2023. A wide range of Unilever products became the subject of boycott campaigns due to public perceptions regarding the company's alleged association with the geopolitical conflict in the Middle East. Although such claims were not consistently supported by legal evidence or the company's ownership structure, narratives disseminated through social media were able to shape public opinion on a large scale, thereby influencing consumers' purchasing

behavior. From the perspective of contemporary corporate communication, this case illustrates that reputational crises are no longer solely triggered by organizational failures or operational misconduct. Rather, they may also emerge from socially constructed perceptions generated through interactions among multiple actors within the digital communication environment. This phenomenon is further intensified by the characteristics of social media, which facilitate the rapid, viral, and often uncontrollable dissemination of information beyond the direct control of organizations.

The boycott subsequently evolved into a broader manifestation of cancel culture, defined as a form of collective rejection directed toward individuals or organizations perceived to have violated particular moral, social, political, or humanitarian values. From a marketing perspective, cancel culture represents a form of consumer behavior in which individuals intentionally withdraw their support from a brand as a means of imposing social sanctions based on public perceptions of a company's actions (Cummings et al., 2025). These boycott campaigns are further amplified by social media algorithms that accelerate the diffusion of moral outrage, expand the reach of information, and foster digital communities united by shared values and beliefs. A recent systematic literature review indicates that cancel culture has evolved into a strategic challenge for contemporary organizations because its consequences extend beyond reputational damage to include declining customer loyalty, changes in purchasing behavior, and threats to long-term business sustainability (*Cancel Culture: Unveiling the Dark Side of Social Media for Brands*, 2024).

The consequences of this reputational crisis are reflected in the declining business performance of PT Unilever Indonesia Tbk. over recent years. Prior to the emergence of the boycott movement, the company reported net sales of IDR 41.2 trillion in 2022. Following the escalation of negative sentiment across digital platforms, net sales declined to IDR 38.6 trillion in 2023 and further decreased to IDR 35.1 trillion in 2024. These figures suggest that reputational deterioration may have direct implications for corporate financial performance and profitability. Beyond reducing customer loyalty, a weakened corporate reputation also increases communication and crisis management costs, heightens investment risk, and undermines an organization's ability to maintain its social license to operate. Previous studies consistently demonstrate that organizations with strong corporate reputations are generally more resilient in responding to crises than those with lower levels of public trust, as reputation functions as a form of reputational insurance capable of mitigating the adverse consequences of organizational crises (Coombs, 2022; Lendvai, 2025).

These developments indicate that corporate communication strategies relying solely on clarification or promotional activities are no longer sufficient to address the complexities of the digital communication environment. Organizations must recognize that crisis communication takes place within a multi-actor ecosystem in which stakeholders possess different interests, levels of influence, and capacities to shape public narratives. This perspective is articulated through the Corporate Rhetorical Arena Theory (CRAT) developed by Frandsen and Johansen. The theory argues that organizational crises do not occur exclusively between an organization and the media; rather, they unfold within a rhetorical arena involving consumers, journalists, regulators, local communities, civil society organizations, influencers, competitors, and employees, all of whom simultaneously contribute to the construction of public perceptions of the organization (Frandsen & Johansen, 2017). Consequently, the effectiveness of crisis communication is no longer determined by an organization's ability to control messages but by its capacity to foster dialogue, understand the evolving interactions among diverse stakeholders, and effectively manage communication within the digital public sphere.

In addition to understanding the dynamics of communication within the rhetorical arena, organizations require appropriate strategies to restore their image once their reputation has been damaged. One of the most influential frameworks in crisis communication research is the Image Restoration Theory (IRT) proposed by Benoit (1997). According to this theory, organizations may employ five primary image restoration strategies: denial, evasion of responsibility, reducing offensiveness, corrective action, and mortification. Benoit (2015) further emphasizes that successful image restoration depends not only on the delivery of persuasive messages but also on an organization's ability to demonstrate concrete actions that align with stakeholder expectations. Accordingly, communication strategies should be accompanied by meaningful organizational policies and tangible corrective actions to rebuild public trust. Within the context of the present study, the application of Image Restoration Theory is operationalized through four strategic initiatives develop for Transparency Hub, Digital War Room, Active Dialogue, and Local Value Proof. These initiatives are designed to enhance information transparency, strengthen two-way communication with stakeholders, demonstrate the company's tangible contributions to the local economy, and improve organizational responsiveness to the spread of misinformation. Collectively, these strategies are expected to transform public perceptions of the company from a boycotted brand into one that is responsive, transparent, and

accountable, as proposed in the strategic reputation recovery framework for PT Unilever Indonesia Tbk. Previous studies on crisis communication have primarily focused on organizational response strategies after crises occur, including the selection of communication strategies, response speed, and the use of social media as a channel for disseminating organizational messages (Coombs, 2022; Benoit, 2015). Meanwhile, research on cancel culture has largely been conducted from the perspectives of consumer behavior, marketing, and brand management, emphasizing factors influencing boycott intentions, brand hate, and changes in consumer purchasing behavior (Cummings et al., 2025; Lendvai, 2025).

Comparatively fewer studies have conceptualized crises as outcomes of interactions among multiple actors within the digital communication ecosystem, despite Frandsen and Johansen's (2017) assertion that organizational reputation is continuously constructed through the dynamics of a rhetorical arena involving organizations, media, consumers, regulators, communities, and other stakeholders. To date, only limited research has integrated Corporate Rhetorical Arena Theory (CRAT) with Image Restoration Theory (IRT) to explain how multi-actor communication dynamics within digital environments influence the selection of reputation recovery strategies for multinational corporations confronted with boycott movements driven by geopolitical issues. Such theoretical integration has the potential to provide a more comprehensive conceptual framework for understanding the interrelationships among public narrative formation, crisis communication management, and adaptive reputation restoration strategies capable of addressing the unique characteristics of cancel culture in the digital era (Frandsen & Johansen, 2017; Benoit, 1997; Coombs, 2022; Cummings et al., 2025; Lendvai, 2025).

Based on the identified research gap, this study aims to analyze the reputational crisis experienced by PT Unilever Indonesia Tbk. following the boycott movement through the lens of Corporate Rhetorical Arena Theory (CRAT) and to formulate an organizational reputation recovery strategy grounded in Image Restoration Theory (IRT). By integrating these two theoretical perspectives, the study seeks to advance the literature on digital crisis communication by providing a more comprehensive understanding of how multi-stakeholder communication dynamics influence organizational reputation and the selection of appropriate image restoration strategies in the context of cancel culture. In addition to its theoretical contribution, this research offers practical implications for multinational corporations by proposing an integrated communication framework that can assist organizations in restoring public trust, maintaining their social legitimacy, and strengthening long-term business sustainability and profitability in an increasingly complex digital communication environment.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Corporate Rhetorical Arena Theory (CRAT)**

Frandsen and Johansen (2022) developed the Corporate Rhetorical Arena Theory (CRAT) as a theoretical framework to explain that crisis communication is no longer a linear process occurring solely between an organization and its publics but instead unfolds within a rhetorical arena involving multiple stakeholders. The theory conceptualizes crisis communication through two complementary dimensions: the macro rhetorical arena and the micro rhetorical arena. At the macro level, analysis focuses on the structure of stakeholder relationships, the distribution of communicative power, interaction networks, and the dynamics of public opinion formation during organizational crises. At the micro level, attention is directed toward how messages are produced, disseminated, received, and interpreted through four interrelated elements: context, media, genre, and text (Frandsen & Johansen, 2022). This framework provides a comprehensive perspective for understanding how organizational reputation is constructed and negotiated within increasingly complex communication environments. The relevance of CRAT has become even more pronounced with the rapid evolution of digital crisis communication. Shahi et al. (2021) demonstrate that social media has transformed crisis communication into a highly dynamic process in which information evolves through interactions among thousands of users who simultaneously reinforce, challenge, and reshape public narratives. Consequently, organizations must adopt proactive social listening practices, identify influential stakeholders, and map patterns of information diffusion from the earliest stages of a crisis. These findings are supported by Limatiusa (2024), who argues that effective crisis communication depends on an organization's ability to coordinate diverse stakeholders and strategically manage the narratives emerging across digital platforms. Furthermore, Simpson (2025) highlights the importance of understanding the nonlinear nature of digital communication networks, while Zhao and Johansen (2026) identify Corporate Rhetorical Arena Theory as one of the most comprehensive approaches for explaining contemporary crisis communication because it integrates insights from rhetoric, organizational communication, and digital communication. In the present study, Corporate Rhetorical Arena Theory is employed to explain the communication dynamics underlying the boycott movement directed at PT Unilever Indonesia Tbk. The reputational crisis is conceptualized as the outcome of interactions among multiple

actors as if including consumers, news media, digital communities, religious organizations, influencers, regulators, and business competitors, who collectively shape public perceptions of the company. Accordingly, effective reputation recovery cannot rely solely on unilateral clarification or defensive messaging but instead requires communication strategies that are dialogic, transparent, and collaborative. This perspective is subsequently integrated with Image Restoration Theory (IRT) to provide the theoretical foundation for developing a comprehensive corporate reputation recovery strategy.

### **Image Restoration Theory (IRT)**

Image Restoration Theory (IRT) developed by Benoit (1997) is one of the main theories in crisis communication that explains how organizations maintain and restore their reputation when faced with accusations or negative perceptions from the public. This theory is based on the assumption that reputation is a strategic asset that affects the legitimacy, public trust, and sustainability of an organization. According to Benoit (1997), image restoration is needed when the organization is perceived to be responsible for an adverse event, where the success of the communication strategy is determined more by public perception than by objective facts alone (Benoit, 1997; Benoit, 2015). Image Restoration Theory identifies five main strategies, namely denial, evasion of responsibility, reducing offensiveness, corrective action, and mortification. Among the five strategies, corrective action is seen as the most relevant in the context of modern crisis communication because it emphasizes concrete actions to improve conditions and prevent a recurrence of crises. Coombs (2022) emphasized that organizations need to combine transparent communication with concrete actions in order to be able to rebuild public trust. Research by Liu et al. (2023), Nöhammer et al. (2023), and Ki et al. (2024) also shows that responsive, empathetic, and dialogue-based communication is more effective in restoring reputation than defensive approaches. In the context of the cancel culture phenomenon, Image Restoration Theory becomes relevant because reputation restoration is not enough to be done through clarification, but must be supported by real commitments that can be verified by the public. Therefore, this study uses IRT as a foundation in formulating a strategy to restore PT Unilever Indonesia's reputation through the implementation of Transparency Hub, Digital War Room, Active Dialogue, and Local Value Proof as a form of corrective action. The integration of IRT with Corporate Rhetorical Arena Theory (CRAT) is expected to be able to produce more effective communication strategies in rebuilding public trust amid the complexity of digital communication (Badham et al., 2025).

### **Cancel Culture and Corporate Reputation in the Digital Era**

The development of social media has changed the relationship between companies and stakeholders, as well as giving birth to the phenomenon of cancel culture as a form of collective rejection of individuals or organizations that are considered to be contrary to certain moral, social, or political values. In contrast to conventional boycotts that are oriented towards changing corporate behavior, cancel culture aims to stop support for a brand through social pressure amplified by the dissemination of information in digital media. This phenomenon allows public opinion to form quickly and massively, increasing the risk of damage to an organization's reputation (Cummings et al., 2025; Nuortimo et al., 2024). In the era of digital communication, corporate reputation is no longer formed only through official company communication, but also through the interaction of various stakeholders, such as mass media, digital communities, influencers, and consumers. Therefore, reputation is the result of a collective evaluation that is dynamic and influenced by the development of information in the digital space. Organizations with strong reputations tend to be better able to deal with crises because reputation serves as a strategic asset that increases public trust and reduces the negative impact of crises (Nuortimo et al., 2024). The development of digital communication also requires organizations to manage crises more adaptively through social listening, identification of influential actors, and fast, transparent, and dialogue-based responses. This approach has proven to be more effective in maintaining public trust than defensive communication strategies (Coombs, 2022; Nuortimo et al., 2024). This condition is reflected in the boycott of PT Unilever Indonesia since the end of 2023, where public perception is shaped by the interaction of consumers, media, digital communities, religious organizations, and influencers that collectively affect purchasing decisions and the company's reputation (Frandsen & Johansen, 2022). Based on this phenomenon, this study integrates Corporate Rhetorical Arena Theory (CRAT) to explain the dynamics of reputation crisis formation through the interaction of various actors with Image Restoration Theory (IRT) as a basis for formulating PT Unilever Indonesia's reputation restoration strategy that is adaptive to the challenges of cancel culture in the digital communication era.

### **Integration of Corporate Rhetorical Arena Theory (CRAT) and Image Restoration Theory (IRT) in Reputation Restoration Strategy**

The cancel *culture* phenomenon shows that the crisis of corporate reputation in the digital era cannot be explained through just one theoretical perspective. Corporate Rhetorical Arena Theory (CRAT) explains that reputation crises are formed through the interaction of various actors, such as consumers, media, digital communities, influencers, regulators, and community organizations that jointly build public perception of companies (Frandsen & Johansen, 2017, 2022). Meanwhile, Image Restoration Theory (IRT) provides a communication framework that explains how organizations restore reputation through strategies such as *denial*, *reducing offensiveness*, *corrective action*, and *mortification* according to the level of attribution of responsibility perceived by the public (Benoit, 1997, 2015). The integration of the two theories results in a more comprehensive approach to reputation crisis management. CRAT functions to analyze the dynamics of multiactor communication and narrative formation in the digital space, while IRT is the basis for determining the right communication strategy to restore public trust. Coombs (2022) emphasizes that the effectiveness of crisis communication depends not only on the speed of response, but also on the organization's ability to combine transparent communication with concrete action. In line with that, Nuortimo et al. (2024) show that transparency, stakeholder engagement, and two-way communication are important factors in accelerating the recovery of an organization's reputation. In this study, the integration of CRAT and IRT was used to explain the dynamics of the boycott action against PT Unilever Indonesia as well as formulate a reputation restoration strategy through Transparency Hub, Digital War Room, Active Dialogue, and Local Value Proof. This approach not only explains how reputational crises are formed, but also offers adaptive communication strategies to rebuild public trust. Thus, this study fills the literature gap through the integration of CRAT and IRT as a conceptual framework in dealing with the phenomenon of *cancel culture* in the digital communication era.

## **METHOD**

### **Research Design**

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method to analyze PT Unilever Indonesia's reputation recovery strategy in the face of boycotts that are developing in the digital space. The qualitative approach was chosen because it is able to produce a deep understanding of the phenomenon of crisis communication influenced by the interaction of various actors, public perception, and social context that cannot be explained only through a quantitative approach. The case study was used because the research focused on one contemporary case, namely the boycott of PT Unilever Indonesia, thus allowing a comprehensive exploration of the crisis formation process, organizational response, and reputation restoration strategy (Yin, 2018). The research design is descriptive-exploratory, by integrating Corporate Rhetorical Arena Theory (CRAT) as a framework for analyzing the dynamics of multi-stakeholder communication during crises and Image Restoration Theory (IRT) as a basis for evaluating corporate reputation restoration strategies (Frandsen & Johansen, 2022; Benoit, 2015). This approach allows the research to explain how crisis narratives are formed in the digital space as well as formulate communication strategies that are adaptive to the phenomenon of cancel culture.

### **Research Object and Informants**

The object of the research is PT Unilever Indonesia Tbk., especially the company's communication strategy in the face of the boycott action that has developed since the end of 2023. The research focuses on the dynamics of communication involving various stakeholders, including consumers, mass media, digital communities, community organizations, influencers, and companies as key actors in the corporate rhetorical arena. Primary data was obtained through in-depth interviews with selected informants using purposive sampling techniques. This technique was chosen because it allows researchers to obtain information from individuals who have knowledge, experience, and direct involvement in the phenomenon being studied (Patton, 2015). The research informants consisted of corporate communication and public relations practitioners, academics who have expertise in crisis communication and corporate reputation, digital media practitioners, and consumers who followed the development of PT Unilever Indonesia's boycott. The selection of informants is carried out until data saturation is achieved, which is a condition when the information obtained has shown a consistent pattern and no new themes are found (Guest et al., 2020).

### **Data Collection Techniques**

The research used three data collection techniques, namely in-depth interviews, documentation studies, and non-participant observations. Interviews are conducted in a semi-structured manner so that researchers have flexibility in exploring the experiences and views of informants regarding crisis communication dynamics and corporate reputation restoration strategies (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Documentation studies were conducted on various secondary sources which include PT Unilever Indonesia's annual report, Sustainability Report, press releases,

industry reports, national and international media reports, scientific articles, and official company documents. These documents were used to strengthen the results of the interviews as well as to understand the chronology of the development of the boycott action. In addition, the study conducted non-participant observations of digital communication on various social media platforms such as Instagram, X (Twitter), TikTok, Facebook, YouTube, and online news portals. Observations were focused on the identification of communication actors, narrative dissemination patterns, forms of interaction between stakeholders, and company responses to emerging issues (Frandsen & Johansen, 2022).

### **Data Analysis Techniques**

Data analysis uses thematic analysis as developed by Braun and Clarke (2022). The analysis is carried out through four main stages, namely:

1. Data Reduction,
2. Theme categorization and coding,
3. Interpretation Based on Theoretical Frameworks, and
4. Drawing conclusions.

In the initial stage, all interviews, observations, and documentation are transcribed and then classified based on key themes, such as communication actors, narrative formation, corporate responses, communication strategies, and reputation restoration. Furthermore, data were analyzed using Corporate Rhetorical Arena Theory (CRAT) to map inter-stakeholder relationships, the distribution of communication influences, and the dynamics of narrative dissemination during crises (Frandsen & Johansen, 2022). After that, Image Restoration Theory (IRT) was used to evaluate the effectiveness of corporate communication strategies based on the five image restoration strategies proposed by Benoit (1997, 2015), with an emphasis on corrective action as the main strategy in this study. The final stage produced a synthesis in the form of recommendations for PT Unilever Indonesia's reputation restoration strategy through the development of Transparency Hub, Digital War Room, Active Dialogue, and Local Value Proof.

### **Research Validity**

The validity of the data is maintained through the application of source triangulation, method triangulation, and member checking. Source triangulation is carried out by comparing information obtained from various groups of informants with company documents, media reports, and scientific literature (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The triangulation method is carried out through a combination of interviews, observations, and documentation studies so that it can increase the credibility of the research results (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In addition, researchers apply member checking, which is reconfirming the results of interpretation to several key informants to match the information they convey (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To increase dependability and confirmability, the entire research process is documented in the form of a *trail audit* that contains the process of data collection, coding, analysis, and drawing conclusions. With this procedure, the research results are expected to have a high level of credibility, consistency, and objectivity so that they can be scientifically accounted for.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Dynamics of Corporate Rhetorical Arena in the Boycott of PT Unilever Indonesia**

The results of the study show that PT Unilever Indonesia's reputation crisis did not develop as a direct consequence of the company's operational errors, but was formed through a communication process involving various actors in the digital space. Based on the results of interviews, social media observations, and documentation studies, the study identified that negative perceptions of companies are formed through simultaneous interactions between consumers, mass media, digital communities, religious organizations, influencers, regulators, and companies themselves. These findings show that crisis communication takes place in a corporate rhetorical arena, where each actor has the ability to generate, strengthen, or change the narrative that develops in the public space. Analysis at the macro rhetorical level shows that the actors who have the greatest influence on the formation of public opinion are the digital community, influencers, online media, and community organizations that actively disseminate information about the boycott. The company is no longer the main source of information, but rather just one of the actors among the various parties that participate in the formation of public perception. The results of the observations show that the spread of narratives takes place across platforms, mainly through X (Twitter), Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and online news portals. The characteristics of social media algorithms cause messages containing emotions, group identities, and moral issues to obtain a higher rate of dissemination than the company's official clarifications. Meanwhile, analysis at the micro rhetorical arena level shows that communication dynamics are

influenced by four main elements, namely context, media, genre, and text. The geopolitical context is the main factor that shapes public sensitivity to the boycott issue. Social media serves as the main channel for the spread of narratives, while the dominant form of messaging is in the form of short posts, short videos, infographics, and opinion-based content that is easy to share back. From the text aspect, the narrative that develops emphasizes more moral aspects, humanitarian solidarity, and social identity than factual information about the company's ownership structure and policies. This condition causes the formation of public opinion to be influenced more by collective perception than information verification.

The results of interviews with corporate communication practitioners show that the speed of information dissemination is the main challenge in managing reputation crises. One of the informants stated:

*"When the boycott issue began to go viral, the company actually gave an explanation. However, on social media, the official clarification is not as fast as the narrative built by thousands of users. As a result, public perception is formed before the company has a chance to explain its position."*

A similar view was also conveyed by a crisis communication academic who explained that:

*"In the digital era, organizations can no longer control communication unilaterally. What needs to be managed is not only the content of the company's message, but also the relationship with the actors who shape public opinion."*

The findings of the study also show that the relationship between actors in the corporate rhetorical arena is dynamic. Influencers and online media act as opinion amplifiers that expand the reach of information, while consumers become actors who strengthen the legitimacy of narratives through the process of sharing experiences and recommendations on social media. On the other hand, community organizations and digital communities function as agenda setters that maintain the sustainability of issues through online campaigns that are carried out repeatedly. This interaction caused the boycott issue to develop into a cancel culture phenomenon that had an impact on changing consumer perception, decreasing brand loyalty, and weakening the company's reputation. Overall, the results of the study show that PT Unilever Indonesia's reputation crisis is the result of the construction of multi-actor communication that takes place in the corporate rhetorical arena, not solely due to corporate communication. Therefore, the reputation restoration strategy is not enough to be carried out through the delivery of one-way clarifications, but requires mapping influential actors, strengthening dialogical communication, and managing relationships with all stakeholders as part of an ongoing crisis communication strategy. These findings are the basis for further analysis of the formation of cancel culture narratives and the evaluation of reputation restoration strategies based on Image Restoration Theory.

### **The Formation of Cancel Culture Narrative in Digital Media**

The results of the study show that the phenomenon of *cancel culture* against PT Unilever Indonesia develops through a narrative formation process that takes place gradually and involves various actors in the digital communication ecosystem. Based on the results of observations on social media, interviews with informants, and analysis of documentation, the study found that the spread of narratives did not begin with official company communication, but by public conversations that developed through the uploads of social media users, digital communities, influencers, community organizations, and online media. This condition causes public opinion to form before the company has the opportunity to provide a comprehensive explanation. In the early stages, the narrative developed through the dissemination of information about PT Unilever Indonesia's alleged links to geopolitical conflicts in the Middle East. The information was then reinforced through various uploads linking Unilever products to humanitarian and global solidarity issues. Although some of the information has not been supported by adequate verification, the high intensity of reposts, comments, and the use of certain hashtags has caused the issue to receive widespread attention from the public. The results of observations show that social media algorithms contribute to accelerating the spread of narratives, especially for content that contains emotional, moral, and group identity elements.

The results of the interviews show that the decision of some consumers to participate in the boycott action is more influenced by the dynamics of conversations on social media than by official company information. One of the informants stated:

*"Initially, I knew about the boycott issue from social media. After many accounts discussed the same thing, I began to believe that the information was true even though I had not read the company's official explanation"*

The statement shows that the process of forming public perception takes place through the mechanism of social proof, which is the tendency of individuals to trust information when the information receives support from

many social media users. As a result, narrative legitimacy is not only built on facts, but also through the number of interactions and the level of virality of a content. The study also found that influencers and *content creators* have an important role as narrative amplifiers, i.e. actors who extend the reach of messages to a larger group of audiences. On the other hand, online mass media serves as an agenda extender, because news about boycotts prolongs the cycle of public attention to the issue. The combination of user conversations, influencer activities, and media coverage causes narratives to develop simultaneously across various digital platforms, making it difficult for companies to control. In addition, the results of the study show that the digital community plays a role as opinion reinforcement, which strengthens the beliefs of group members through discussions, sharing experiences, and disseminating content that has the same value orientation. In these conditions, companies face challenges in building counter-narratives because official communication tends to get lower engagement rates than organic conversations between social media users.

Based on the results of the analysis, the study identified four main characteristics of the formation of cancel culture for PT Unilever Indonesia, namely:

**Table 1. Characteristics of Cancel Culture Narrative Formation**

| Features           | Research Findings                                                                      |
|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Narrative source   | Coming from various actors, not just the mass media                                    |
| Deployment pattern | Viral, cross-platform, and accelerated social media algorithms                         |
| Dominant actor     | Consumers, influencers, digital communities, online media, and community organizations |
| Impact             | Changing public perception, declining trust, and increasing support for boycotts       |

The results of the study also show that companies are in a relatively reactive position in dealing with narrative developments. The clarification conveyed through official communication channels has not been able to keep up with the speed of information dissemination on social media. As a result, the communication space is more dominated by publicly-constructed narratives than official corporate messages. This condition indicates that crisis communication management in the digital era requires social listening skills, mapping influential actors, and a quick response to changes in public opinion. Overall, the findings of the study show that the cancel culture towards PT Unilever Indonesia is the result of a complex interaction between digital technology, social media algorithms, and multi-actor communication that takes place simultaneously. Narrative formation is not linear, but develops through the process of reinforcing each other among various stakeholders resulting in reputational pressure that impacts consumer trust and the sustainability of the company's business. These findings are the basis for evaluating the company's communication response based on **Image Restoration Theory**, which will be discussed in the next subchapter.

### **Evaluation of PT Unilever Indonesia's Communication Response Based on Image Restoration Theory**

The results of the study show that PT Unilever Indonesia has made various communication efforts to respond to the boycott action that has developed since the end of 2023. Based on the results of the analysis of the company's press releases, official statements, social media activities, and interviews with informants, the company's communication response was more directed at providing clarification on the company's position, commitment to business activities in Indonesia, and affirmation that the company's operations are carried out independently in accordance with applicable regulations. However, the effectiveness of this strategy is considered not to be able to reduce the development of negative narratives that have already been formed in the digital space. Based on the Image Restoration Theory (IRT) framework, the study identified that PT Unilever Indonesia's communication strategy is dominated by a reducing offensiveness and corrective action approach. The strategy of reducing offensiveness is realized through the delivery of information about the company's contribution to the national economy, labor absorption, micro business empowerment, and various corporate social responsibility programs. Through this approach, the company seeks to reduce negative perceptions by emphasizing the social and economic benefits that have been provided to the Indonesian people. In addition, the company also implements a corrective action strategy through strengthening communication regarding its commitment to transparency, business sustainability, and relationships with stakeholders. Based on the results of the documentation, the company consistently conveys information about operational activities, sustainability programs, and contributions to national economic development through various official communication channels. However, the results of the study show that most of

these communications are still informative and have not fully established an intensive dialogue with the communities involved in the boycott.

The results of interviews with corporate communication practitioners show that the company's communication strategy is relatively slow compared to the speed of information dissemination on social media. One of the informants said:

*"The company has actually provided clarification, but it is more through the official media. Meanwhile, the public conversation has developed much faster through social media so that the clarification is not able to change the perception that has been formed."*

This opinion was reinforced by another informant who stated:

*"In a situation like this, the public is not only waiting for the company's explanation, but also wants to see open, responsive, and empathetic communication to the public's concerns."*

The results of observations on the company's digital communication also show that the intensity of two-way interaction with social media users is still relatively limited. Most of the company's posts contain information about products, sustainability activities, and social programs, while responses to public comments or questions about the boycott have not been consistent. This condition causes the conversation room to be dominated more by narratives that develop outside the company's official communication channels. Based on the results of the analysis using Image Restoration Theory, the study identified that two other strategies, namely mortification and bolstering (part of reducing offensiveness), have not been utilized optimally. Companies tend to avoid communication that explicitly acknowledges the impact of the crisis on consumer relationships, and has not maximized the delivery of messages that show empathy for people's concerns. As a result, some members of the public still view that corporate communication is more oriented towards reputation protection than rebuilding relationships with stakeholders.

Based on the findings of the research, the evaluation of PT Unilever Indonesia's communication strategy can be summarized as follows.

**Table 2. Evaluation of PT Unilever Indonesia's Communication Response Based on Image Restoration Theory**

| IRT Strategy              | Implementation by PT Unilever Indonesia                                       | Evaluation Results                                                                                 |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Denial                    | Not predominantly used                                                        | Appropriate, because it has the potential to increase public resistance.                           |
| Evasion of Responsibility | Not the focus of communication                                                | Irrelevant to the characteristics of the evolving crisis.                                          |
| Reducing Offensiveness    | Explain the economic, social, and sustainability contributions of the company | Implemented, but less able to change the perception that has been formed.                          |
| Corrective Action         | Conveying a commitment to transparency and sustainability                     | It has been implemented, but it still requires a more dialogical and participatory implementation. |
| Mortification             | Very limited                                                                  | They have not been able to build empathy and emotional closeness with the public.                  |

Overall, the results of the study show that PT Unilever Indonesia's communication strategy has led to an Image Restoration Theory approach, especially through reducing offensiveness and corrective action. However, the implementation of this strategy is still oriented towards one-way information delivery so that it is not fully able to keep up with the communication dynamics that are developing in the corporate rhetorical arena. These findings show that reputation restoration in the era of cancel culture requires a more dialogical, responsive, and stakeholder engagement-based communication strategy.

### **PT Unilever Indonesia's Integrative Strategy for Reputation Restoration**

The results of the study show that the restoration of PT Unilever Indonesia's reputation requires an approach that not only focuses on the delivery of clarifications, but also integrates multi-stakeholder communication management with concrete actions capable of rebuilding public trust. Based on the results of interviews, observations, and documentation analysis, the study found that corporate communication strategies will be more effective if they combine the principles of Corporate Rhetorical Arena Theory (CRAT) and Image Restoration Theory

(IRT). The integration of the two theories results in a reputation restoration strategy model that not only responds to crises after they occur, but also strengthens the organization's ability to manage the dynamics of digital communication in an ongoing manner. Based on the results of the analysis, the research identified four main strategies that are the foundation for PT Unilever Indonesia's reputation recovery, namely Transparency Hub, Digital War Room, Active Dialogue, and Local Value Proof. The four strategies complement each other in building transparent, participatory, and action-based communication so that it is able to answer the characteristics of the reputation crisis in the cancel culture era.

The first strategy is the Transparency Hub, which is the provision of a digital information center that contains information about the company's ownership structure, operational policies, supply chain, sustainability programs, and the company's contribution to the national economy. The results of the interviews show that one of the causes of the development of negative perceptions is the limited public access to easy-to-understand information about the company. Therefore, the existence of the Transparency Hub is seen as able to reduce the information gap while increasing company transparency. The second strategy is the Digital War Room, which is the establishment of a special unit tasked with monitoring digital conversations (social listening) in real time. Based on the results of observations, the study found that the spread of negative narratives is so fast that companies need a system that is able to detect changes in public opinion from the early stages. Through the Digital War Room, companies can identify emerging issues, map high-impact actors, and develop faster and more coordinated communication responses. The third strategy is Active Dialogue, which is to strengthen two-way communication with stakeholders through social media, community forums, public discussions, and stakeholder engagement activities. The results of the study show that corporate communication during the crisis is still dominated by one-way information delivery. Most informants stated that the public wanted a dialogue space that allowed companies to provide explanations openly while listening to public aspirations.

One of the informants said:

*"The public not only needs clarification, but also wants to feel heard. When companies open dialogue spaces, the level of trust usually increases because the public feels involved in the communication process."*

The fourth strategy is Local Value Proof, which is to strengthen communication about the company's real contribution to society through verifiable evidence. Based on the results of the documentation, PT Unilever Indonesia has implemented various MSME empowerment programs, local farmer development, job creation, and environmental sustainability programs. However, the study found that information about the impact of the program has not been fully systematically communicated to the public. Therefore, *the Local Value Proof* strategy is directed to show empirical evidence of the company's contribution to economic, social, and environmental development so as to be able to increase the company's legitimacy in the eyes of the public. Based on these four strategies, the study proposes a reputation restoration model as presented in Table 3.

**Table 3. PT Unilever Indonesia's Integrative Strategy Model for Reputation Restoration**

| Strategy          | Purpose                                                | Expected Results                                                    |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Transparency Hub  | Increase the disclosure of company information         | Reduce disinformation and increase company credibility              |
| Digital War Room  | Monitor and respond to issues in real time             | Accelerating communication responses and reducing crisis escalation |
| Active Dialogue   | Strengthen two-way communication with stakeholders     | Increase public trust and participation                             |
| Local Value Proof | Demonstrate the company's real contribution to society | Strengthen social legitimacy and rebuild the company's reputation   |

Overall, the results show that the success of reputation restoration in the cancel culture era is not only determined by the speed of clarification delivery, but also by the company's ability to build transparent, responsive, participatory, and evidence-based communication. The integration between Corporate Rhetorical Arena Theory and Image Restoration Theory produces a strategy model that is able to connect the process of identifying actors in the communication arena with the implementation of image restoration actions oriented towards long-term trust building. This model is expected to be a practical reference for multinational companies in managing reputation crises influenced by the dynamics of digital communication and the cancel culture phenomenon.

### Conceptual Model of Reputation and Profitability Restoration Strategies

The results show that the success of restoring a company's reputation in the cancel culture era does not only depend on the organization's ability to respond to crises, but also on its ability to manage relationships with stakeholders in a sustainable manner. Based on the synthesis of interview results, digital observations, documentation studies, and analysis using Corporate Rhetorical Arena Theory (CRAT) and Image Restoration Theory (IRT), this study produced a conceptual model that explains the relationship between the formation of reputational crises, communication strategies, the restoration of public trust, and the increase of corporate profitability. The conceptual model shows that the reputation crisis is initiated by the formation of a multi-actor rhetorical arena, which is a communication space involving consumers, mass media, social media, influencers, community organizations, regulators, and companies. The interaction between actors produces various narratives that develop simultaneously through digital platforms so as to form a collective perception of the company. In these conditions, the dissemination of information takes place very quickly and is strengthened by social media algorithms so that organizations lose dominance in controlling the flow of communication. These findings show that changes in a company's reputation are more influenced by the dynamics of communication between actors than by official communication between the organization.

The next stage in the model is the analysis of the communication arena. At this stage, companies need to conduct stakeholder mapping, social listening, identification of actors who have high influence, and analysis of public sentiment. The results show that the company's ability to understand digital communication patterns is an important factor in determining the effectiveness of reputation restoration strategies. Informants from corporate communications practitioners stated that organizations that are able to identify changes in public opinion early on will have a greater chance of preventing crisis escalation than organizations that only respond after the issue has gone viral. Furthermore, the research identified that the reputation restoration process needs to be implemented through four main strategies, namely Transparency Hub, Digital War Room, Active Dialogue, and Local Value Proof. These four strategies are a form of implementing corrective action within the framework of Image Restoration Theory, which not only emphasizes information delivery, but also real changes in the company's communication patterns. The Transparency Hub functions to increase information disclosure, the Digital War Room enables quick response based on real-time monitoring, Active Dialogue strengthens two-way communication with stakeholders, while Local Value Proof shows the company's real contribution to society through verifiable evidence.

The results of the study show that the implementation of the four strategies produces three main outputs, namely increasing communication transparency, strengthening stakeholder trust, and restoring company legitimacy. These three outputs then contribute to the formation of a stronger organizational reputation that increases consumer loyalty, improves brand image, reduces the intensity of boycotts, and supports the sustainability of relationships with stakeholders. Furthermore, the study found that reputation restoration has direct implications for a company's profitability. Rising consumer confidence drives the recovery of purchasing decisions, strengthens customer loyalty, improves sales stability, and improves the company's financial performance in the long run. Thus, reputation is seen not only as an intangible asset, but also as a source of competitive advantage that contributes to the sustainability of the company's business. Based on these results, the study proposes an Integrative Model of PT Unilever Indonesia's Reputation Restoration Strategy as shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1. Integrative Model of PT Unilever Indonesia's Reputation Recovery Strategy**

The conceptual model is a novelty of research because it integrates Corporate Rhetorical Arena Theory and Image Restoration Theory in one conceptual framework that explains the process of crisis formation, identification of communication actors, implementation of reputation restoration strategies, and its implications for increasing company profitability. In contrast to previous studies that generally only focused on post-crisis communication responses or the effectiveness of image restoration strategies separately, the model produced in this study offers a more holistic approach by placing multiactor communication as the basis for designing reputation restoration strategies. Thus, this model not only contributes to the development of crisis communication theory, but also offers practical implications for multinational companies in facing the challenges of cancel culture in the digital communication era.

## Discussion

### Dynamics of Corporate Rhetorical Arena in the Boycott of PT Unilever Indonesia

The results of the study show that PT Unilever Indonesia's reputation crisis was formed through the interaction of various actors who simultaneously produce and disseminate narratives in the digital space. These findings reinforce the Corporate Rhetorical Arena Theory (CRAT) which states that crisis communication no longer takes place linearly between organizations and the public, but develops in a rhetorical arena involving consumers, media, digital communities, regulators, influencers, and community organizations (Frandsen & Johansen, 2022). The dominance of the digital community and influencers in shaping public opinion shows that companies are no longer the main actors in controlling communication. The results of this study are also in line with Shahi et al. (2021), who explain that social media creates a multidirectional communication pattern so that the dissemination of information depends on inter-actor interaction. Thus, the success of crisis management is not only determined by the quality of the organization's message, but also by the company's ability to map influential actors, build collaborative relationships, and conduct stakeholder engagement. These findings expand the application of CRAT in the context of boycotts of multinational companies due to geopolitical issues that develop through digital media.

### The Formation of Cancel Culture Narrative in Digital Media

The results of the study show that cancel culture towards PT Unilever Indonesia develops through social proof mechanisms, content virality, and strengthening narratives by the digital community. These findings support the view of Cummings et al. (2025) that cancel culture is a form of collective social sanction influenced by group identity, morality, and digital interaction. In contrast to conventional boycotts, cancel culture is growing rapidly because it is amplified by social media algorithms that promote content with high engagement rates. In addition, the results of the study show that the legitimacy of a narrative is built more through the frequency of interaction than the validity of information. These findings reinforce the research of Nuortimo et al. (2024) who explain that corporate reputation in the digital era is the result of collective evaluation that continues to change following the development of online conversations. Therefore, companies need to develop social listening capabilities, sentiment analysis, and

early detection of emerging issues in order to be able to anticipate crisis escalation before it affects consumer behavior and brand loyalty.

### **Evaluation of PT Unilever Indonesia's Communication Response Based on *Image Restoration Theory***

The results showed that PT Unilever Indonesia's communication response was dominated by strategies of reducing offensiveness and corrective action, while the mortification and empathic communication approaches had not been optimally applied. These findings are in line with the Image Restoration Theory developed by Benoit (1997, 2015), which asserts that the effectiveness of image restoration depends on the suitability of communication strategies with the public's perception of organizational responsibility. Although the company has highlighted its economic and social contribution through various sustainability programs, the approach has not been able to change the negative perception because communication is still one-way. These results also support Coombs (2022) who states that modern crisis communication requires transparency, rapid response, and ongoing dialogue with stakeholders. Thus, the company's communication strategy is not enough to just convey clarifications, but it is necessary to build empathy, openness, and public participation so that the reputation restoration process takes place more effectively in the digital communication era.

### **PT Unilever Indonesia's Integrative Strategy for Reputation Restoration**

This research produces four main strategies, namely Transparency Hub, Digital War Room, Active Dialogue, and Local Value Proof, as an integrative model of reputation recovery. These findings suggest that successful reputation restoration requires integration between the mapping of communication actors as described in Corporate Rhetorical Arena Theory and the implementation of corrective actions in Image Restoration Theory. The Transparency Hub functions to reduce the information gap, while the Digital War Room allows companies to conduct social listening and response in real time. Active Dialogue strengthens two-way communication, while Local Value Proof shows tangible evidence of a company's contribution to society. These results support Coombs (2022) who emphasizes the importance of real action-based communication, as well as Nuortimo et al. (2024) who state that transparency and stakeholder engagement are key factors in rebuilding an organization's reputation. Therefore, reputation restoration strategies are not only oriented towards symbolic communication, but also on strengthening long-term relationships with stakeholders.

### **Conceptual Model of Reputation and Profitability Restoration Strategies**

The resulting conceptual model shows that reputation restoration is a process that starts from identifying communication dynamics in the corporate rhetorical arena, followed by the implementation of communication strategies based on Image Restoration Theory, to resulting in an increase in trust, consumer loyalty, and company profitability. This model expands the study of crisis communication by linking narrative formation, multiactor communication management, and business implications in one whole, conceptual framework. In contrast to previous research that tends to separate crisis formation analysis and image recovery strategies, this study shows that the two processes are interrelated and must be managed in an integrated manner. These findings provide a theoretical contribution through the integration of Corporate Rhetorical Arena Theory and Image Restoration Theory, as well as provide practical implications for multinational companies in dealing with the phenomenon of cancel culture. Thus, reputation is positioned as a strategic asset that contributes to the sustainability of the business and the increase of the company's profitability in the long term.

### **CONCLUSION**

This study aims to analyze the dynamics of PT Unilever Indonesia's reputation crisis due to the boycott through the perspective of Corporate Rhetorical Arena Theory (CRAT) and formulate a reputation restoration strategy based on Image Restoration Theory (IRT). The results of the study show that reputation crises are not solely caused by official corporate communication, but are formed through the interaction of various actors, such as consumers, mass media, digital communities, influencers, community organizations, and regulators in a *corporate rhetorical arena*. The dynamics of communication that take place in a multidirectional manner cause negative narratives to develop quickly and affect public perception, consumer loyalty, and company profitability. This study also found that PT Unilever Indonesia's communication strategy has led to a *reducing offensiveness* and *corrective action approach*, but its implementation is still dominated by one-way communication so that it has not been able to keep up with the development of narratives in the digital space. Therefore, this study proposes an integrative strategy model that combines CRAT and IRT through four main strategies, namely Transparency Hub, Digital War Room,

Active Dialogue, and Local Value Proof. The model places transparency, dialogical communication, *social listening*, and proving the company's real contribution as the main factors in rebuilding public trust and strengthening the company's legitimacy. Theoretically, this study contributes by integrating CRAT and IRT into a single conceptual framework that explains the relationship between crisis formation, communication strategies, reputation recovery, and increased corporate profitability. Practically, the resulting model can be a reference for multinational companies in designing crisis communication strategies that are more adaptive to the phenomenon of *cancel culture* in the digital era. Further research is recommended to test this model quantitatively or *mixed methods* in various industry sectors to test the validity and generalization of findings so that a more comprehensive reputation restoration model is obtained.

## REFERENCES

- Badham, M and Luoma-aho, V and Valentini, C (2025) "Digital Communication and Corporate Reputation." In: Carroll, CE and Huang-Horowitz, NC, (eds.) *Handbook of Communication and Corporate Reputation*. Wiley. (In Press)
- Benoit, W. L. (1997). Image repair discourse and crisis communication. *Public Relations Review*, 23(2), 177–186. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0363-8111\(97\)90023-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0363-8111(97)90023-0)
- Benoit, W. L. (2015). *Accounts, excuses, and apologies: Image repair theory and research (2nd ed.)*. State University of New York Press.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2022). *Thematic Analysis: A Practical Guide*. SAGE.
- Cancel Culture: Unveiling the Dark Side of Social Media for Brands: A Systematic Literature Review. (2024). *International Journal of Current Science Research and Review*.
- Coombs, W. T. (2022). *Ongoing crisis communication*. In W. T. Coombs & S. J. Holladay (Eds.), *The handbook of crisis communication (2nd ed., pp. 23–42)*. Wiley. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119678953>
- Coombs, W. T. (2022). *Ongoing crisis communication: Planning, managing, and responding (6th ed.)*. SAGE Publications.
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches (4th ed.)*. SAGE.
- Cummings, K. H., et al. (2025). #Canceled! Exploring the phenomenon of canceling. *Journal of Business Research*, 185, 115074.
- Frandsen, F., & Johansen, W. (2017). *Organizational crisis communication*. SAGE Publications.
- Frandsen, F., & Johansen, W. (2022). Rhetorical arena theory: Revisited and expanded. In W. T. Coombs & S. J. Holladay (Eds.), *The handbook of crisis communication (2nd ed., pp. 169–188)*. Wiley. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119678953.ch12>
- Guest, G., Namey, E., & Chen, M. (2020). *A simple method to assess and report thematic saturation in qualitative research*. PLOS ONE, 15(5), e0232076.
- Ki, E. J., Ertem-Eray, T., & Hayden, G. (2024). The evolution of digital public relations research. *Public Relations Review*, 50(5), 102505. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2024.102505>
- Lendvai, G. F. (2025). More than just a buzzword—Mapping the evolution of cancel culture. *Human Behavior and Emerging Technologies*, 2025, Article 4671293.
- Limatiusa, H. (2024). *A rhetorical arena perspective on government crisis communication*. University of Helsinki.
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. SAGE.
- Liu, B. F., Jin, Y., & Austin, L. (2023). Digital crisis communication theory: Current landscape and future trajectories. In *Public relations theory III (pp. 191–212)*. Routledge.
- Nöhammer, E., Schorn, R. & Becker, N. *Optimizing the Organizational Crisis Communication Portfolio*. *Corp Reputation Rev* 26, 304–319 (2023). <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41299-022-00156-6>
- Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods (4th ed.)*. SAGE.
- Raupp, J. (2019). Crisis communication in the rhetorical arena. *Public Relations Review*, 45(5), 101768. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2019.101768>
- Shahi, G. K., Clausen, S., & Stieglitz, S. (2021). Who shapes crisis communication on Twitter? *Proceedings of the ACM Web Conference 2021*, 1–12.
- Simpson, M. (2025). *Digital crisis communication and stakeholder engagement in networked environments*.
- Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case Study Research and Applications: Design and Methods (6th ed.)*. SAGE.
- Zhao, H., & Johansen, W. (2026). A review of Nordic crisis communication research (2010–2024): Patterns, concerns, and reflections on a specific Nordic perspective. *International Journal of Strategic Communication*.