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RE-FRAMING CORPORATE NARRATIVES: A CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS OF MEDIA RELATIONS STRATEGIES IN ANTAM'S 109-TON GOLD CERTIFICATION CRISIS

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Abstrak: *This conceptual article examines the strategic role of media relations in navigating reputational crises triggered by digital misinformation, using the case of PT Aneka Tambang Tbk's gold certification controversy (2024–2026). The study identifies a significant narrative distortion where administrative procedural issues were misconstrued by public perception as product integrity failures, amplified by social media algorithms. Employing a qualitative descriptive method and Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT), this research analyzes how the organization transitioned from rigid legalistic rhetoric to an adaptive "Verified Authority" model. Key findings reveal that the integration of response speed, third-party validation from legal authorities, and visual education through internal digital channels was instrumental in neutralizing the "infodemic." The study highlights the strategic shift from conventional press releases to multimedia information subsidies and the importance of "searchable data" in the era of artificial intelligence. By re-framing the crisis into a momentum for public literacy, the company successfully restored institutional authority. This research contributes a new conceptual framework for state-owned enterprises to mitigate reputational risks in fragmented digital ecosystems, emphasizing that corporate sovereignty in the digital age depends on the mastery of data transparency and algorithmic management.This is an open-access article under the CC–BY-SA license.*

Keyword: *Media Relations,Crisis Communication.,Digital Reputation.,Information Subsidy,Verified Authority Model,Misinformation.*

INTRODUCTION

Public trust in gold as a global safe-haven asset is positioned as a fundamental pillar of economic stability, particularly when navigating market fluctuations and geopolitical uncertainties between 2024 and 2026. In this context, the integrity of precious metal products is viewed not merely as a physical commodity but as a representation of institutional trust that must be upheld through transparent strategic communication (Smith & Johnson, 2024). However, the mining sector faces significant challenges where reputational risks are frequently triggered by digital misinformation capable of distorting public perception instantaneously. The significance of media relations management is emphasized as a vital instrument to ensure that corporate narratives remain aligned with objective facts, thereby mitigating market panic that could adversely affect macroeconomic value (Coombs, 2023).

In the Indonesian context, the complexity of crisis communication is vividly reflected in the information dynamics surrounding PT Aneka Tambang Tbk (ANTAM), specifically regarding the alleged certification discrepancies of 109 tons of gold that drew massive scrutiny from 2024 to early 2026. Although official verification was conducted to prove the

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physical authenticity of the products, pressure from sensationalist media coverage continued to exert a significant impact on collective public sentiment (Pratama, 2024). Consequently, an adaptive and data-driven media relations strategy is essential to reconstruct the corporate image and provide comprehensive public education. Through this conceptual article, the effectiveness of ANTAM's communication patterns in navigating misinformation is analyzed to formulate a new framework for Public Relations practitioners in strategic commodity industries.

A gap in current crisis communication literature is identified in the lack of studies evaluating the mechanism of re-framing technical narratives into accessible public information within extractive industries. Most previous research has focused on general crisis response without considering the crucial role of social media algorithms that accelerate the spread of misinformation regarding strategic commodities (Savitri & Utama, 2025). While conventional media relations theories have been widely discussed, a theoretical void remains concerning how the informational authority of state-owned enterprises can be maintained when citizen journalism dominates public opinion with sensationalist narratives. The urgency of this research is highlighted by the need to bridge the gap between product certification complexity and the diverse literacy expectations of the public in the digital sphere (Hutagalung, 2023).

Furthermore, a study void exists regarding specific strategies for state-owned enterprises (SOEs) to convert rigid legalistic data into persuasive educational content for a broad audience. The gold crisis phenomenon at PT ANTAM demonstrates that procedural fact-sharing is often inadequate to dampen negative sentiments driven by information uncertainty (Pratama, 2024; Wardani & Hidayat, 2025). Therefore, a conceptual model is required to explain how technical message transformation is conducted to achieve strong resonance on social media platforms without compromising data integrity. This study is positioned to fill this gap by exploring the integration of institutional authority and digital communication flexibility to build corporate reputational resilience (Coombs, 2023).

The primary objective of this conceptual article is to establish a new framework for adaptive media relations strategies to restore informational authority following a misinformation crisis. Focusing on the interaction between companies and mass media, this study dissects communication models effective in neutralizing "infodemics." By synthesizing various crisis communication theories, a new structural approach is offered to explain how the integration of response speed and data accuracy serves as a mitigation instrument against the negative impacts of fragmented digital ecosystems (Savitri & Utama, 2025). Practically, the output of this study is positioned as a strategic guide for PR practitioners in the SOE sector to perform reputational risk mitigation through data-based counter-narratives and third-party validation (Coombs, 2023; Wardani & Hidayat, 2025).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Situational Situational Crisis Communication Theory and Digital Reputation

Situational Crisis Communication Theory or SCCT is positioned as the dominant framework for understanding how organizations must respond to reputational threats based

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on the level of responsibility perceived by the public. Within this theory, crises are categorized into primary clusters such as victim, accidental, and intentional clusters where each requires distinct communication strategies to minimize negative impacts on corporate image (Coombs, 2023). This theoretical focus provides a foundation for organizations to map their involvement in a crisis before determining specific media relations actions. In the modern context, digital reputation is viewed as an accumulation of stakeholder perceptions formed through interactions across online platforms characterized by high volatility due to the rapid circulation of information and uncontrolled social media algorithms (Pratama, 2024).

Strategic responses within SCCT range from denial to full apology where the bolstering strategy is frequently employed during misinformation crises to remind the public of past achievements and positive contributions (Smith & Johnson, 2024). This tactic aims to rebuild reputational capital eroded by biased or inaccurate reporting. Furthermore, providing instructional information is emphasized as a component of public protection where companies offer tangible guidance for consumers to identify product authenticity. Effective media relations functions thus extend beyond distributing press releases to include continuous monitoring of public perception ensuring the organization remains the most authoritative and trusted source of information amidst informational chaos (Hutagalung, 2023; Wulandari & Sari, 2025).

Media Response Dynamics and Digital Reputational Perception

The correlation between media response mechanisms and the formation of digital reputation is understood as a dialectical process that determines stakeholder trust. Strategically designed media responses function as information filters capable of reducing public uncertainty amidst the influx of speculative narratives in cyberspace (Pratama, 2024). Digital reputation is no longer viewed as a static entity but as the result of continuous negotiation between official corporate statements and the interpretations evolving across mass media platforms. Consequently, the precision of diction in every media response serves as a primary determinant of whether a crisis will dissipate or amplify into a broader reputational scandal.

Public perception in the digital age is heavily influenced by framing effects created by the media choice of perspective regarding a crisis. Maintaining harmonious relationships with media institutions allows companies to insert key messages that neutralize negative sentiment before it becomes the dominant public opinion (Hutagalung, 2023). Proactive media relations significantly increase the probability of gaining sympathy from digital audiences compared to defensive or closed approaches. Speed of response is also a critical factor where in an information environment moving in seconds, delays are often interpreted as an admission of guilt or managerial unreadiness, whereas rapid and transparent responses through mainstream channels can effectively stem the spread of damaging hoaxes (Savitri & Utama, 2025).

Information Subsidy in the Digital Era

The concept of information subsidy in public relations refers to the provision of free

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information resources to journalists to facilitate news production in the newsroom. In the high-speed digital era, this has transformed from conventional press releases into comprehensive multimedia data packages (Coombs, 2023). By providing ready-to-use materials, the verification burden on journalists is significantly reduced, increasing the likelihood that corporate narratives will be adopted by mass media outlets. This strategy is viewed as a functional collaboration that allows organizations to guide news framing without directly intervening in editorial independence.

Providing accurate data is a primary instrument for minimizing news bias resulting from journalists' limited research time. In complex crises such as commodity certification issues, the availability of credible technical facts is necessary to prevent journalists from relying on sensationalist social media speculation (Pratama, 2024). When information subsidies are provided transparently and systematically, mass media tend to adopt the terminology and logic offered by the company as their primary reference. Consequently, the role of public relations has shifted toward becoming an information curator responsible for the validity of messages consumed by the general public (Lattimore et al., 2022; Savitri & Utama, 2025).

Strategic Shift from Press Releases to Multimedia Content

A fundamental shift in public relations practice is identified through the transition from conventional textual press releases to the adoption of dynamic multimedia content. In a visual-centric digital ecosystem, textual narratives are considered less effective due to the short attention spans of modern audiences. The use of multimedia elements such as infographics and clarification videos is positioned as a new strategy to ensure corporate messages are distributed widely across social platforms (Savitri & Utama, 2025). This transformation allows companies to communicate complex technical issues more simply without losing the essential substance of the information intended for the public.

Infographics serve as highly effective information subsidies for visualizing statistical data or procedural flows that are often difficult to comprehend through linear narratives (Pratama, 2024). In clarifying product legality, infographics allow companies to present data side by side, thereby suppressing information bias early on. Furthermore, clarification videos provide a human dimension and higher transparency where by showing physical verification or audit processes in the field, public trust can be restored through visual evidence that is difficult to manipulate narratively (Hutagalung, 2023). This multimedia integration ensures message consistency and mitigates the risk of distortion during the news transmission process (Coombs, 2023; Wulandari & Sari, 2025).

MATERIAL AND METHODS

This This study employs a qualitative descriptive method designed for a conceptual article approach to analyze the dynamics of media relations during an information crisis. The qualitative descriptive design is utilized to provide a comprehensive summary of events and phenomena in everyday terms, specifically focusing on how state-owned enterprises manage reputational resilience (Coombs, 2023). By adopting this method, the research integrates various theoretical foundations to evaluate the effectiveness of corporate communication

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patterns without the requirement for empirical statistical testing. This approach allows for a deeper exploration of the strategic shift from traditional news delivery to more adaptive digital communication models (Wulandari & Sari, 2025).

The data collection and analysis process in this conceptual study are conducted through a systematic literature review and case study synthesis. Information is gathered from a variety of credible sources, including academic journals focusing on algorithmic crises and corporate misinformation, as well as actual news data regarding precious metal certification issues (Pratama, 2024; Savitri & Utama, 2025). The analysis utilizes Situational Crisis Communication Theory to categorize the crisis type and determine the appropriateness of the response strategies implemented by the organization (Coombs, 2023). Furthermore, the study evaluates the role of information subsidies, such as technical data and multimedia content, in neutralizing news bias and mitigating the impact of digital infodemics (Wardani & Hidayat, 2025).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

a. Anatomy of the Antam Gold Crisis and Narrative Distortion

The crisis affecting PT Aneka Tambang Tbk is identified through a drastic narrative shift in the public sphere, where an administrative issue regarding trademark procedures was transformed into a perceived threat against product integrity. Factually, the problem originated from internal procedural non-compliance concerning the use of the "Logam Mulia" brand by private entities; however, public perception pivoted toward the physical quality of the commodity itself. This shift from governance issues to "fake gold" rumors was triggered by the massive simplification of information by social media users (Pratama, 2024). Such a phenomenon demonstrates how vulnerable complex corporate issues are to being distorted into sensationalist narratives that damage institutional credibility instantaneously.

1. Identification of Information Gaps and Algorithmic Amplification

The distortion occurred due to a significant gap between legal facts and public understanding of precious metal certification. Terms like "illegal gold" in media reports were misinterpreted as "materially counterfeit gold," a confusion leveraged by digital algorithms to amplify collective consumer anxiety (Wardani & Hidayat, 2025). Consequently, public attention shifted from law enforcement regarding internal procedures to mass concern over investment values. This indicates an initial failure in information framing by the public relations unit before external narratives dominated the digital space. Negative sentiment spiked when the phrase "109 tons of fake gold" was used repeatedly by news portals to chase engagement (Hutagalung, 2023).

2. Impact on Competitive Advantage and Strategic Intervention

The impact of this narrative shift is identified by a decline in trust toward certification standards, which traditionally serve as a competitive advantage for the state mining company. When a procedural issue mutates into a product quality concern, reputation

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recovery becomes significantly more resource-intensive. Early media responses were deemed ineffective because they relied on a rigid legalistic approach that failed to address the public's emotional anxieties (Savitri & Utama, 2025). Therefore, understanding the anatomy of this crisis is crucial for determining the correct intervention points in future communication processes to ensure technical facts can compete with faster-moving false narratives (Coombs, 2023).

b. Strategic Media Counter-Narrative and Multilateral Coordination

To mitigate systematic noise, the organization identified barriers stemming from rigid corporate rhetoric, sensationalist media logic, and emotional social media virality. Messages regarding certification validity often experienced semantic degradation when passing through channels contaminated by public prejudice (Wardani & Hidayat, 2025).

1. **Collaboration with Legal Authorities as a Validation Source**

   The utilization of external legal authorities, specifically the Attorney General's Office, was identified as the most effective counter-narrative strategy to restore credibility. In crisis communication, the involvement of law enforcement serves as a primary source of validity that carries more weight than official corporate statements alone (Pratama, 2024). By positioning the Prosecutor's Office as an independent validator, the company confirmed that the issue was purely related to procedural governance and not material counterfeiting. This strategy relies on the principle that information from credible third parties has a much higher acceptance rate among journalists and netizens (Wardani & Hidayat, 2025).

2. **Optimization of Internal Digital Channels**

   The use of internal digital platforms, such as the official website and Instagram, was identified as a vital strategy to bypass informational bureaucracy. Owned media allowed the company to distribute official statements directly to the public without third-party distortion (Wardani & Hidayat, 2025). Instagram served as a visual channel to deconstruct complex technical issues through humanistic and interactive content, such as live broadcasts showing physical verification processes (Savitri & Utama, 2025). Meanwhile, the corporate website functioned as an information center providing full access to legal documents and press statements for journalists and industry observers (Hutagalung, 2023).

c. Proposed "Verified Authority" Model and Searchable Data Proposition

Based on the conceptual analysis, this study proposes the Verified Authority Model as a new framework integrating response speed, third-party validation, and visual education.

1. **The Three Pillars of Reputational Recovery**

   The first pillar, speed of response, fills the narrative vacuum immediately after a crisis is detected. The second pillar, third-party validation, acts as a credibility

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booster through external verification by legal or auditing institutions (Savitri & Utama, 2025). The third pillar, visual education, bridges the gap between complex data and limited public literacy using infographics and demonstration videos (Hutagalung, 2023). This synergy ensures that the message regarding product safety is effectively absorbed by various layers of society while strengthening systemic integrity (Coombs, 2023).

2. Data Accessibility in the Era of Artificial Intelligence

The proposition of providing "searchable data" is identified as a crucial evolution in media relations. In an era dominated by search algorithms and Large Language Models, corporate communication must provide structured data that can be accurately indexed by digital systems (Wardani & Hidayat, 2025). High data accessibility ensures that corporate clarification appears as the top reference when the public seeks information, thereby building a stronger information authority (Savitri & Utama, 2025). This approach ensures that transparency is not merely a slogan but a technical reality that can be verified by any stakeholder through digital devices (Lattimore et al., 2022).

CONCLUSION

The successful mitigation of the gold certification crisis is identified as the result of rigorous message synchronization across mass media platforms and internal digital channels. By integrating technical clarifications with high response speed, the organization effectively halted reputational decline before reaching a point of permanent trust degradation. The primary contribution of this crisis management lies in the strategic shift of the narrative from physical product quality concerns to matters of administrative and procedural legality. This re-framing strategy, supported by multimedia information subsidies, succeeded in educating both journalists and the public on the distinction between internal procedural errors and the material integrity of the commodity.

The involvement of external legal authorities as primary validators provided a dimension of legitimacy that internal statements alone could not achieve, thereby neutralizing public doubt through a juridical framework. Theoretically, this study contributes the Verified Authority Model, which positions speed, validation, and visual education as the core framework for reputational recovery. Furthermore, the proposition of searchable data is established as a new standard in media relations to address the challenges posed by search engine algorithms and artificial intelligence. This framework offers a proactive and adaptive approach for large organizations to manage destructive infodemics by expanding traditional communication boundaries into holistic digital information asset management.

Limitations and Suggestions

For public relations practitioners, it is recommended to transition from a reliance on conventional news publications toward the strategic management of information algorithms. Mastering search engine optimization and understanding platform algorithm mechanics are essential competencies to ensure that official corporate narratives maintain top visibility in

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the digital ecosystem. Future research should explore the impact of artificial intelligence in automatically detecting and responding to reputational crises, as well as the integration of sentiment algorithms within situational crisis protocols. Additionally, further studies focusing on the socio-psychological behavior of digital-native audiences will provide significant insights into the effectiveness of multimedia content compared to textual releases in restoring institutional trust.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this research on Nurhayati Subakat and Paragon Corp.

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