

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

PT Jasa Marga (Persero) TBK is the leading and a strategic state-owned toll road operator in Indonesia. Jasa Marga is the main company that develops, manages, and maintains toll roads throughout Indonesia, which play a vital role to uphold mobility, logistics, and economic integration nationally. With over a thousand kilometers of toll roads in the coffers and continuous involvement in large scale infrastructure expansion, the company is subject to constant public scrutiny and awareness.

One of Jasa Marga's most ambitious and widely discussed projects is the Jakarta - Cikampek II Elevated Toll Road, later renamed the MBZ Elevated Toll Road in 2021. Constructed from 2017 until 2019, this 36.4-kilometer elevated toll road was intended to reduce congestion on Jakarta - Cikampek dense traffic and serve the rapidly expanding industrial area, just east of Jakarta (Jasa Marga, 2023). MBZ Elevated Toll Road is known as the longest elevated toll road in Indonesia to this day (Khasanah, 2025). However, from the time of construction to its operational phase, the MBZ project have attracted significant attention not only for its scale, but also for its issues, controversies, and crises that surrounds its infrastructure quality, operational safety, and overall management.

The elevated toll road is recently connected with many accidents and user losses connected not only to random incidents, but directly connected to the physical characteristics and conditions of the infrastructure. One of the most famous cases happened on Thursday, 19th of October 2023, when 21 vehicles experienced consecutive tire rupture at KM 18+400 due to a defect at an expansion joint where metal debris caused punctures and tire damage (Fadilah, 2023).

“Terlebih jalan tol layang dibangun berdasarkan superstruktur sehingga mengandalkan pier (kolom) dan girder (balok beton) yang panjang hingga memungkinkan perubahan geometrik jalan tol,”
(Deddy Herlambang official written statement regarding the expansion joint causing MBZ accident, 24th October 2023)

The incident raised public concern about the structural condition of MBZ and triggered many user complaints highlighting sudden bumps, uneven joints, and vibrations throughout the elevated toll road. These accidents were widely spread across the media, and the people many times questioned whether Jasa Marga had properly maintained, conducted quality assurance, and kept a good surveillance of the infrastructure safety standards.

Figure 1. Foreign Object in MBZ Expansion Joint



Other than operational accidents, experts and engineering observers publicly questioned the construction quality of MBZ. Several people using independent journalism pointed out potential drawbacks in material quality of the road. This includes concrete that allegedly did not meet required national standards and warned that parts of the structure might not reach the intended standard. This results in the discomfort of driving while cruising on the elevated toll road. Deddy Herlambang, as the Coordinator of Indonesia Toll Road Watch (ITRW) stated that MBZ Elevated toll Road may be considered one of the “most” uncomfortable roads to cross compared to other toll road sections in Indonesia. The MBZ toll road has

a girder that is not very rigid so that the road surface is wavy following the height of the pier points (Har, 2023). For Jasa Marga, these claims represented a crisis not only of infrastructure performance, but also of institutional credibility in project management and quality control.

Figure 2. Users Complaint About MBZ Toll Road Quality



Jasa Marga faced more than one issue in terms of backlash that threatened the reputation of their company. Other than operational negligence and crisis, Jasa Marga also received allegations regarding development fundings being corrupted by the developer, improper reductions in project volume, and manipulation of construction specifications. The allegations were further investigated by the company PT Tridi Membran Utama. In the court room discoursing the issue, the director of the company, Andi Widjaja stated that in the timeframe of six months, they have sampled 75 types of concrete, and find a significant amount of substandard hard concrete material (Kamil & Krisandi, 2024). The end results in The Jakarta's High Courts exposing irregularities in the corruption case of the toll road construction project of Djoko Dwijono, the president director of PT Jasamarga Jalan Layang Cikampek (JJC) at the time of the crisis. The judge of the court sets a number of violations by the ex-director of the company, including changing the specification documents, passing the bid winner, failing to conduct evaluations, and subcontracting almost all of the main work on the MBZ Toll Road project (Budi, 2024). These irregularities placed the company in a sensitive reputational position.

Public perception often linked these governance failures back to the operator, creating urgent communication challenges requiring strategic response, clarification, and reputation protection for the company.

Public criticism toward the MBZ Elevated Toll Road has raised questions about how PT Jasa Marga communicates during a crisis, particularly in maintaining its corporate reputation. A reputation of a corporation is intriguing when discussing its impact on the organization. Corporate reputation is not something that the corporation can control at will, but it's how the corporation will be perceived by their stakeholders (Hinsberg et al., 2025). As we know Jasa Marga is the most prominent and the biggest company in toll road development. According to a Top Business blog, in 2023, Jasa Marga's market share reached 47 percent of the total toll roads operating in Indonesia (Akhmad, 2024). This placed Jasa Marga as a very strong market competitor, and made it impossible for similar companies to overtake them in terms of revenue and profit. But this also a very threatening spot to be in for Jasa Marga. Having the position they were at the moment, Jasa Marga's stakeholders could perceive Jasa Marga as a irresponsible enterprise, and could potentially have the opportunity to reduce the overall value of Jasa Marga as company, if stakeholders and investors withdraw their investments.

Transparency, trust, and responsiveness are the main survival factors of any enterprise. A big company like Jasa Marga may have planned something general or at least have a solid plan on negating a crisis with communication. But some people or should we say in this case some stakeholder. It could be very difficult to “forgive” Jasa Marga for the negligence and badness they have seen. Negative word-of-mouth from the people, failure to respond to a crisis, and a lack of transparency can swiftly affect the reputation of the organization. Therefore, it is necessary that any owners of business enterprises should always be prepared to maintain the reputation of their enterprise among their stakeholders (Bracey, 2013). The reputation is highly vulnerable and requires maintenance. This brings up the question of efficient reputation management of the enterprise, which is among the

major objectives of the enterprise (Hanna et al., 2021). From that statement, we can conclude that with the lack of scrutiny and deliverance of promises, Jasa Marga is in a dangerous position, not because of a lack of users, but because of the threat of a decline in the number of investors willing to work with them for future projects. Although at the time the threat is not yet visible, If Jasa Marga keep moving in the phase that they were, some investor and stakeholder might had enough and withdraw a chunk of their investment in the company

There is an interesting case in research having a similar problem with the one Jasa Marga had at that moment. Cavico and Mujtaba (2016) conducted research for a famous case study similar to Jasa Marga's case. Their case discourse about the scandal of one of Germany's biggest automotive manufacturers, Volkswagen. In short, Volkswagen USA installed a "defeat device" on their latest diesel car at the time, to cheat government tests, and their vehicle was found to emit 40 times the legal emission limit. This is done by Volkswagen so that their latest cars do not sacrifice engine performance for strict emission regulations, and to squeeze more profit from each vehicle sold. As a result, after an announcement from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), there are highly significant negative abnormal stock returns for Volkswagen (Bouzzine & Lueg, 2020). According to an analysis by Nunes, and Park (2016), Volkswagen lost a total of €25 billion market value, as a cumulative outcome of a -37% stock return. Similarly, Jasa Marga's investor also lost some of its investor's trust and sparked some shocks and concern over the government enterprise. This is shown in the drop of Jasa Marga's stock at the time of their ex-director, Djoko Dwijono's announcement of a corruption case. The drop of stock like this may seem trivial to Jasa Marga, but if the company continues to accept and face the same problems over and over again, they may lose some important and big investors in the future, and this will severely impact the continuity and the survival of the company.

Figure 3. Jasa Marga’s Stock Condition at the Time of Djoko Dwijono Corruption Announcement

15/03/2024	5.150	5.250	5.350	5.150	7,02M	-1.90%
14/03/2024	5.250	5.250	5.375	5.150	9,03M	0.00%

William Benoit (1997) created a concept of Image restoration called Image Restoration Theory. In his research he quoted “If the firm is not really to blame for the offensive act, this can be an important component of its response. As long as the audience thinks the firm is at fault, the image is at risk.”. The audience isn’t only a spectator in this day and age for businesses. They also act like a judge, especially for the reputation of a state-owned enterprise like PT Jasa Marga. We can see an example of this happening from Figure 2, where MBZ users shows their emotion through their platform about their experience on MBZ. There are many other users that show their disappointment about their experience cruising on MBZ. This is a direct threat to the company reputation.

Looking at how Jasa Marga handled and response to those mentioned crises from a communication perspective became a highly relevant research topic. But a solid research question must be asserted. How will the news media report Jasa Marga’s crisis communication, and what type of crisis communication did the media quoted from Jasa Marga? How would the researcher find these? This of course can be done by examining the communication type, and pattern from all relevant parties of the issues. That includes the general public, stakeholders, mainstream media, and undoubtedly Jasa Marga. Jasa Marga and other similar state-owned enterprise should understand the importance of crisis communication for the sake of their development, remembering that akin companies may be faced with a similar time of crisis in the future, and requires solution by communication.

1.2 Research Problem

Being positioned as one of the most prominent and looked upon companies that work in the construction field, and is responsible for many connectivity for the nation, Jasa Marga's crisis communication is a highly relevant topic worthy of research. However, previous research indicates that there is little exploration in the crisis communication of a state-owned enterprise. Most of the research that covers similar topics usually examines problems and issues that occur to a private owned enterprise. This is due to usually private owned company's products interacting directly with the lives of the people, such as the products mentioned in the background, cars and foods. Thus, attracting more recognition to be picked as a research topic.

Therefore, this gap in research topics indicates that there is a need to conduct further research and investigate the extent of how well a state-owned enterprise such as Jasa Marga managed their crisis communication.

1.3 Research Objective

It is still vague how a state-owned enterprise such as Jasa Marga tackle and handle issues they face from a communication standpoint. Analyzing how their strategies are linguistically, and narratively constructed across PT Jasa Marga's official communication materials, such as public statements, press release, or other media that covers the controversies could enlighten us more about how a state-owned enterprise move during the time of crisis.

1.4 Research Significances

1.4.1 Academic Significance

The majority of Indonesian studies about corporate communication tend to discuss more about product related failure or scandal. Where the analysis in the research focuses on infrastructure-based scandal that impacts the people at a larger scale. Thus, making this assessment of Jasa Marga crisis communication a new stepping stone to a new field of corporate external communication.

1.4.2 Practical Significance

State-owned enterprises such as Jasa Marga need to have an assessment of their performance. Whether it's from their internal governance or external parties. Either way, such companies need to have studies and criticism of their performance thus creating an outline and reference for their future projects. Risking making the same mistake will majorly affect the accountability and trustworthiness of the company. Thus, it is significant to give companies in the same field as Jasa Marga an insight of how to handle a crisis from a communication standpoint, and maintain a good reputation to the people

1.4.3 Social Significance

As the discussion revolves around the external communication of an infrastructure company, the social life of the people that use that infrastructure must be relevant. Because Jasa Marga is a state-owned enterprise, its communication practices represent how the state interacts with its citizens. The public that will use Jasa Marga's service should know how to respond to a company having a crisis. How should the public respond when a company lacks in their performance, how

to respond when companies such as Jasa Marga provide clarification and other responses through the media.

1.5 Theoretical Framework

1.5.1 State of The Arts

In writing this research, a couple of other research was used as a benchmark and reference to complete it. The referent research has similarities in terms of title, research topic, theoretical framework, and data collecting method, thus making them suitable for attributing to this research.

The first research would be a case study having the most similar discussion with this research, just with different companies to discuss. The case study is titled “Crisis communication failures: The BP Case Study”. Written by Daniel De Wolf, and Mohamed Mejri (2013). The research discourse about the oil spill that occurred on the 20th of April 2010. The company British Petroleum (BP) has been facing backlash from the public and also its stakeholders due to a deepwater horizon oil spill. Wolf and Mejri had in mind that BP has failed to handle the issue using their crisis communication. But Wolf and Mejri still beg the question, what communication failures occurred? and how those failures contributed to reputational damage, stakeholder distrust, and poor crisis outcomes. By using content analysis, guided by a theoretical grid drawn from crisis communication theories (SCCT, Image Restoration Theory, best practice frameworks), what they find is that BP had a total of seven major crisis communication failures. That includes the lack of planning or pre crisis planning, inconsistent, and non-empathetical response, overemphasis on reputation management instead of stakeholder care, untrained, and counterproductive spokesperson, poor stakeholder engagement, restrictive towards the media, and issues of dishonesty.

The government of Botswana is the majority shareholder in Botswana Development Corporation (BDC) and Botswana Railway (BR). They are responsible for crisis management and also the output of those management. They are crucial in the country's economy, because they provide financial assistance to investors with commercial projects. Similar to BDC, the BR is considered state owned. Sadly, their reputation has been flawed by many incidents such as train derailments, poor infrastructure and bad governance since the beginning of 1990's. This research is authored by Chedza Simon, Sian Rees, and Richard Thomas covering the country of Botswana, where they analyze how the Botswana Government and state-owned agencies use linguistic devices to protect their reputations using social media. Their research is titled "Behind the scenes: A critical discourse analysis of Botswana government power plays on Facebook during two post millennial state-owned organizational crises", and though the findings might not be the most favorable, it gets the job done. By using language manipulation on Facebook posts to shape crisis narratives, they ultimately achieve short-term power protection but fail to adopt dialogic best practice crisis communication. Each Facebook post from the government regarding this issue contains Lexical choice of words, generalized details about the crisis, power signaling titles, and also highlights of powerful individuals. This restricted stakeholder voice, reinforcing government control but missing opportunities for trust building, transparency, community involvement, and feedback based solutions. The researchers used Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as their choice of approach to the Facebook post, and Fairclough's three dimensional framework which includes micro, meso, and macro level of communication.

The third case came from PT Telkom, a state-owned enterprise and the largest telecommunication provider in Indonesia. The case was brought up by the people living in the city located in the Southern Papua region, Merauke. PT Telkom had caused an outage of internet service that affected the Merauke region. This disruption caused widespread public frustration and criticism because the outage

impacted not only personal communications but also business operations and government services. The study by Fifi Filia Sari and colleagues (2025), titled “Strategi Komunikasi Krisis PT Telkom dalam Mempertahankan Reputasi Perusahaan”, explores how the company navigated this communication breakdown and attempted to rebuild stakeholder confidence. Using a qualitative case study approach supported by interviews, documentation, and Miles & Huberman’s data analysis model, the research uncovers that PT Telkom initially used defensive communication, focusing on technical explanations and justifications rather than public empathy. As expected, the public outrage intensified, and Telkom was pushed toward a more accommodative communication strategy, employing transparency and apology messages to regain customer trust. To manage the flow of narratives in the press and social media, Telkom is similar to other state-owned corporations, where it relied heavily on centralized authority and corporate hierarchy in its messaging, which limited stakeholder engagement but maintained internal message discipline.

This next research was already mentioned in the research background, but is still relevant and is useful in the making of the theoretical framework of this research. A research done by Cavico and Mutjaba (2016) discussed a crisis faced by Germany’s most prestigious automaker, Volkswagen. In particular, the case of Volkswagen USA. In 2015, Volkswagen USA introduced their new diesel can model for the year. However, they managed to create one of the most shocking scandals in automotive history. The scandal was named “Dieselgate”. It became known that Volkswagen USA installed software for cheating on the tests for emissions in their cars. As a result, the cars were ‘emission regulated’, although, in reality, they could emit up to 40 times more nitrogen oxide than is permitted. The root causes of the crisis were associated with corporate greed, lack of ethical control, and unrealistic performance objectives created by the company's management. In other words, Volkswagen prioritized profits and market dominance in the sector of diesel vehicles over ethics, which led to their collapse

in terms of moral principles. After the scandal erupted, Volkswagen first tried to deny any responsibility for installing such a system and gradually admitted its existence once the evidence was presented. Thus, in conclusion, it should be stated that the present case demonstrates the ethical collapse of a major corporation.

Finally, but definitely not less important than others was the case from the field of aviation. The name of research paper in question was “Strategic Crisis Communication: Navigating Digital Complexity in Aviation Case Study” communication journal written by students of Telkom University and Gajah Mada University, Anisa Diniati, Aqida Nuril Salma, and Ayub Ilfandy Imran. The topic of this research can be described in terms of aviation organizations communication during crises within digital complexity. To get their results, the authors use strategic crisis communication assessment approach, incorporating case study method of research, digital media analysis, and comparative alignment with crisis communication practice framework. In this way they discover several important findings. One should keep in mind that misinformation spreads rapidly in case of aviation crisis situations causing anxiety and media pressure on aviation companies. Thus, there appears the need to monitor digital spaces and early response to all kinds of rumors. Control messages and keep credibility up. Furthermore, it is important to note the importance of stakeholders in aviation industry. Thus, stakeholder centered messaging can significantly improve situation. When communication was lacking empathy or clearness, stakeholders considered silences to be a sign of incompetence or negligence. To conclude, aviation companies should use integrated digital communication channels for rapid updates, consistent messaging, and to have broader stakeholders access.

All of these studies show a clear progression in crisis communication, particularly concerning organizational failures that endanger public scrutiny and reputational risk.

The BP oil spill scenario shows the impacts arising from the failure of organizations in managing crises with empathy, precision, and consistency in communication. Crisis communication mistakes such as deception and disregard for stakeholders affect organizations' ability to build trust. PT Telkomsel crisis communication proves that the government may be faced with the problem of being inconsistent and accountable in its communications. The Botswana scenario also exemplifies the use of communication by state-owned organizations to retain power through preferring storytelling to stakeholders. Aviation is another area where constant digital readiness becomes a necessity in modern times.

These previous research are a good foundation for analyzing crisis communication in Indonesian state-owned enterprises. They reveal an important gap of state-owned company balance messaging for responsibility, and operational assurance when faced with infrastructure crises being mediated by digital public pressure. Therefore, building on the theoretical learning and empirical patterns identified in previous studies, this research will analyse how Jasa Marga manages crisis communication during the MBZ controversies, especially through official statements, media responses, and digital communication practices.

1.5.2 Research Paradigm

Based on the book of Littlejohn and Foss (2017) titled 'Theories of Human Communication', Gibson Burrell and Gareth Morgan developed the Four Paradigms of Social Science, containing the paradigms of radical humanist, radical structuralist, interpretive, and functionalist. Each paradigm begins with different assumptions and standpoints about science, social science, and society, and each paradigm uses different tools for analysis. For this research, the Interpretive paradigm is most suitable. It aims to understand meaning and human experience through communication. Communication is a process of interpretation rather than persuasion, in which individuals construct understanding through symbolic

interaction, thus making reality subjective to each person and is very context dependent.

1.5.3 Research Theory

There are a lot of theories that could be utilized as the base to analyzed on Jasa Marga's crisis communication. One of the most prominent and known theories used in social science research is the Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT). It was developed by Dr. W. Timothy Coombs, and it helps organizations determine the most effective way to respond to crises based on their nature, cause, and perceived responsibility (Anderson Education, 2025).

According to (Claeys et al., 2010), SCCT considers three total types of crises, in their way they call it cluster. A large enterprise such as Jasa Marga should match their crisis communication strategies to the responsibility level that stakeholders attribute to the organization. There is the 'Victim Cluster', 'Accidental Cluster', and 'Preventable Cluster'. The more the organization is attributed and is responsible for the crisis, the more negative impact it might cause to the organization's reputation (Coombs, 1998). It is very crucial for Jasa Marga to know exactly where the position of their company really is at the moment of the crisis bombardment, to determine the best way out of the situation. Thus, SCCT in this research will help the author to classify how Jasa Marga responded to the MBZ crisis, particularly through diminish, rebuild, and bolster strategies that appear in their official statements. The preventable crisis framework might be the most relevant to PT Jasa Marga's MBZ Toll Road controversy, where infrastructure defects and corruption allegations positioned the company as directly responsible for the crisis.

As for the usage for this research however, SCCT needs to be explained in a deeper manner, as SCCT can be used for a wide range of methods. SCCT has

clustered Jasa Marga into the ‘Preventable Cluster’ of SCCT. Now, how will SCCT analyze the crisis communication form of Jasa Marga rhetorically?

Table 1. Timothy Coombs Crisis Response Strategies

<i>Deny</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Denial: Company rejects the existence of the crisis 2. Attack the Accusers: Company confront the person or group that claims the organization is in a crisis 3. Scapegoat: The company blames outside group or party for the crisis
<i>Diminish</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Excuse: Company minimize the organization’s responsibility for the crisis by denying any intent to do harm and/or claiming an inability to control events that led to the crisis 2. Justification: The company minimize the perceived damage caused by the crisis
<i>Rebuild</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Compensation: The company offer money or other gifts to victims of the crisis 2. Apology: Company accepts responsibility for the crisis and ask stakeholders to forgive them
<i>Bolster</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reminder: The company reminds their stakeholders about the goods that the company have done in the past 2. Ingratiation: Company thank stakeholders and/or praise stakeholders for their help during the crisis 3. Victimage: The company reminds their stakeholders that the company is also a victim in the crisis

1.6 Research Assumption

Infrastructure companies like Jasa Marga receive loads of complaints, not only about MBZ, but also all of their facilities all across the country. This is completely general, since the size of the land that Jasa Marga has covered for their projects are

massive and are bound to experience errors, misalignment, or minor failure in some components of their facility here and there. But in the case of MBZ, the number of negative comments and critics from the start of the construction until this day are quite concerning.

The researcher assumes that the level of attribution of responsibility given by the public to PT Jasa Marga in the MBZ Toll Road issue will influence the effectiveness of the crisis communication strategy chosen and executed by the company.

1.7 Conceptual Definition

1.7.1 Crisis Communication

Crisis communication is the strategic process through which organizations manage information, meaning, and relationships during times of reputational threat. According to Coombs (2007), crisis communication involves the organization's effort to protect its reputation by shaping public perceptions of responsibility and response. Verbal, visual, and digital messages are used to address stakeholder concerns, demonstrate accountability, and restore corporate image.

1.7.2 Crisis Response Strategy

Crisis response strategies are specific communication actions or messages used to manage stakeholder trust and mitigate reputational damage. As defined in the Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT), these strategies include the actions of 'Deny', 'Diminish', 'Rebuild', and 'Bolster', each selected according to the type of crisis and perceived organizational responsibility (Coombs, 2007).

1.7.3 Reputation

Reputation is understood as a collectively constructed perception of an organization's trustworthiness, credibility, and performance (Fombrun & Van Riel, 2004). It is not merely an internal discourse but a social judgment is made through discourse and stakeholder interpretation. In this study, Jasa Marga's reputation is the one at stake. Can Jasa Marga's crisis communication strategically protect or even enhance their reputation?

1.7.4 Image Restoration

Following up from reputation, image restoration refers to rhetorical and strategic efforts made by an organization to repair its reputation after a crisis or public wrongdoing. Benoit (1997) defines image restoration as the discourse of defense, including strategies such as 'Denial', 'Evasion of Responsibility', 'Reducing Offensiveness', 'Corrective Action', and 'Mortification'. This concept supports the understanding of how Jasa Marga wants to rebuild credibility through persuasion or apologetic messages, and how effective are they in terms of their reputation.

1.7.5 Discourse

Discourse refers to the use of language, imagery, and communication practices that produce meaning and social reality. Based on Fairclough's (1995) Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) reviewed by Fowler, R, discourse is viewed as a site where power, ideology, and institutional authority are constructed and maintained. It includes the textual, visual, and contextual features of Jasa Marga's communication that reflect its organizational stance and cultural identity.

1.7.6 Conceptual Framework

So how would those theoretical concepts be used to analyze data? This research includes two theories for its development. One main theory, in this case SCCT, and a supporting theory, Image Restoration Theory (IRT). The reason IRT is used in this research is because IRT emphasizes the rhetorical and communicative techniques used to repair organizational image following reputational damage. Each communication produced by Jasa Marga may be intended to rebuild their reputation. But is it really what their stakeholders catch? IRT analyzes how messages are constructed rhetorically to influence public perception. It provides a micro level perspective on communication content, examining how language and framing function to repair organizations image (Benoit W, 1997).

First introduced by William Benoit (1997), IRT identified 5 main strategies for an organization's communication to restore their reputation. Three of which are quite similar and tend to evade their responsibility as much as possible. A company could deny their responsibility, or shift it to other parties. They could also evade responsibility, meaning that they claim that they lack control of the crisis. Organizations could also reduce offensiveness, where they minimize their involvement by bolstering, differentiation, transcendence, or attacking accusers. The other two strategies are well suited if the company is strategizing towards positive restoration. Corrective action strategy, when an organization moves from only communication to actually repair or prevent recurrence, showing it to the stakeholders. Mortification of a company is less costly than corrective action. This is when a company admits their fault and asks for forgiveness. Less action, but strategically effective and ethical.

IRT complements SCCT by offering a deeper understanding of how crisis response strategies are articulated in PT Jasa Marga's official statements and communications. While SCCT identifies the overarching strategy cluster, IRT

helps interpret the rhetorical techniques embedded within those strategies.

1.8 Research Method

1.8.1 Research Design

This research uses a qualitative study design. Qualitative study design explores and gives deeper insights into real world problems. Qualitative research asks open-ended questions where answers are not easily put into numbers, such as “how” and “why”. (Tenny et al., 2022). The reason why a qualitative study is suitable for Jasa Marga’s MBZ cases is because the case explores phenomena such as experiences, attitudes, and behaviors. To add to that, a content analysis design enables the research to be analyzed within its real-life context, combining text, media, and institutional perspectives.

1.8.2 Data Collection Method

Jasa Marga tried their best in keeping their social media very positive, fun and informative to their stakeholders. This is a common thing for companies to do, as in today’s standard, social media is a part of a company’s identity and reputation record. The problem arises when a company such as Jasa Marga is charged with a case, a reputation threatening one. Stakeholders would go to the company’s official online platform to get firsthand information about the issue/s involving the company. This is arguably a good strategy to use, as it will show the company’s honesty and transparency towards their stakeholders. But on the other hand, this also shows that the company’s communication division did not keep the company’s image consistent, and possibly disrupt that image that has been built for over a couple, or even dozens of years.

Social media will not be the primary source of data collection for this research. Thus, this research refers to other media that Jasa Marga have their crisis communication recorded, the news media. The news media would be a perfect source of information, as they record and get their information from their own team of press and journalists that are present at the time of the crisis.

Although a very resourceful media, there are hundreds of media outlets that report local crises every single day. This leads to an overflowing of information, and this type of situation can sometimes lead to false news or ambiguous information. Thus, the news outlet that will be the source of information in this research will be according to a statistic released by goodstats.id, 10 most trusted Indonesian media in 2025 (Shahibah A, 2025). Let's not forget that Jasa marga also have their own media. More specifically, they have a website for their company that houses information and updates about their company. Jasa marga provided their stakeholder with a press release section in their website, and it will also be a source of data to complete this research.

For this research, the media chosen as the source of data will be based on the stats that Shahibah has posted on the internet about the most trusted news portal in Indonesia. The news portal would be detik.com, tempo.co, cnnindonesia.com, and tribunnews.com. There is a reason why four of these news portals are chosen, rather than the rest of the news portals in Shahiba's list. The data presented by Shahibah is somewhat awkward in that it only lists the most trusted media companies, not the specific media outlets they own. Though it may be similar between news portals of the same company, the researcher is trying to reduce as much oversight in data selecting as possible. Detik, Tempo, CNN Indonesia and Tribun have few branch news portals, it could even be said that some do not have branch news portals. This ensures that the data from that certain news portal is not framed and written differently because of the difference in editorial and press team.

Now that the media that will be the source of this research data have been selected, there should be the main method on how the data would be selected from each portal. To make the search equal and ‘apple to apple’, certain key words will be put on the search bar of every news portal. The key words used to search the data will be the same for each portal. Three main cases will be the crisis chosen for this research, that is the corruption case of MBZ, Infrastructure quality concerns that is tightly related to the corruption case, and the most well-known accident happened on MBZ, which is the 21 wheel rupture on MBZ. “*Kasus Korupsi MBZ*”, “*Kualitas Beton MBZ*”, “*21 Ban Pecah di MBZ*” will be the key words for each case respectively, as it covers the issue topics very well.

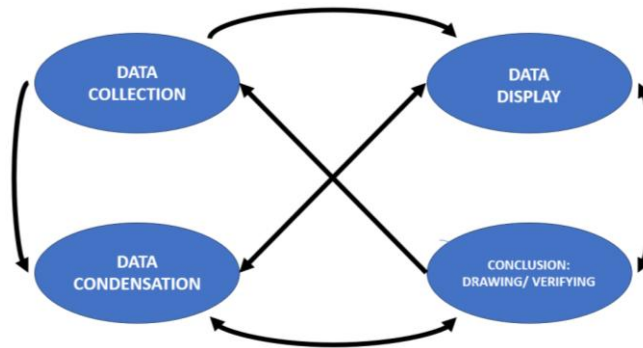
1.8.3 Data Analysis Technique

After a researcher has collected their desired data, then comes the time that those data will be processed and taken to a conclusion. This is where a researcher uses techniques to interpret the data they collected. The data in this research will be analyzed using a content analysis technique, combined with the Huberman and Mile (1994) interactive model. This model involves four concurrent activities to take a conclusion, which are: Data Collection, Data Display, and Data Condensation.

Data collection will be done by researching and deciding news reports that include Jasa Marga’s communication when the MBZ crisis hits. The news outlet chosen will be based on the data of the most trusted news outlet of Indonesia, 2025. The next step after, is to display those data into one database, for a more efficient analysis. After all of the news report has been displayed, comes the next step of research, which is data condensation. Each and every form of narrative and direct quotation found, which comes directly from the representative of Jasa Marga will be categorized using a code that will be later determine in the research. The code in mind represents the detail and information that the research could absorb. For

this research, all data will be placed, categorized, and explained in a spreadsheet. The last stem of the research is to decide and take conclusion from the analysis. The conclusion will be Jasa Marga's pattern of crisis communication during the MBZ controversies.

Figure 4. Huberman and Miles' Model of Qualitative Data Management



1.8.4 Research Instrument

Still referring to the Huberman and Miles interactive model, the data needs a kind of platform or media in which they will be displayed and later condensed. For that purpose, this research will utilize a framework called 'Coding Matrix'. Another concept originated from Huberman and Miles' work, who introduced matrices as a systematic way to organize and display qualitative data. They described matrices as visual tools that arrange information in rows and columns to reveal patterns, relationships, and themes across cases or categories.

In this research, coding matrices will be constructed using categories derived from Coombs (2007) Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT), which then will separate Jasa Marga's responses into four main strategies: 'Deny', 'Diminish', 'Rebuild', and 'Bolster'. Each of Jasa Marga's official communications and related media reports will be analyzed and coded according

to these categories. The data were then arranged in a matrix adapted from Miles and Huberman’s (1994) format to compare across communication types and stakeholder reactions.

SCCT provides strategies that companies can use when faced with a reputation threatening crisis. However, when examining multiple data from various platforms and different communication media tools, there needs to be a supporting coding category that would help SCCT define the crisis communication pattern. That is the Meaning-making. Meaning making in qualitative study is the iterative, interpretive process of analyzing data to understand how participants construct, understand, and assign significance to their experiences (Hunter, et la 2002). In this research, the meaning making will be categorized to multiple codes such as the table below. IRT, as a supporting theory, will also be used as a code category for analyzing data in this research.

Table 2. Dataset Codes

News Detail	Case: They type of MBZ case Jasa Marga is faced (Corruption case, Infrastructure quality case, technical case)
	Publisher: Which news outlet does the news article sourced from
	Date: The date of communication published
	Context: What is the news article broadcasting and quoting in the crisis
	Crisis Phase: (Pre-escalation, Peak, Post- peak)
	Communication Media: they type of media Jasa marga use to reach out to the news outlet (Press release, Press conference, etc)
	Spokesperson: The person who delivers the crisis message to the public

	<p>Quotation: the quotation of message from Jasa marga</p> <p>Appearance: Where the message appears (headline, all over the article)</p>
SCCT Detail	<p>SCCT Strategy: (Deny, Diminish, Rebuild Bolster)</p> <p>Strategy Details: Explanation of each strategy used in the case</p>
Meaning Making Features	<p>Attribution of Responsibility: What is the level of responsibility does Jasa Marga put on themselves when faced with a crisis</p> <p>Severity Framing: How severe do Jasa Marga think the issue is</p> <p>Tone: Communication tone during the time of communication</p> <p>Legitimation Tactics: How is the claim valid</p> <p>Action Orientation: What promise does Jasa Marga mention, or refuse</p> <p>Audience Construction: to whom Jasa Marga aims this message</p> <p>Temporal Positioning: has is Jasa marga position them sleeve in the time of the crisis</p> <p>Silence and Omission: What other things that are not mentioned that should have been</p>
IRT Detail	<p>IRT Strategy: (Denial, Evading responsibility, Reduce Offensiveness, Corrective action, Mortification)</p>