



Communicating Care: Applying *Komunikasih* Theory in CSR Strategy

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ABSTRACT

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs often struggle to foster meaningful engagement due to a lack of empathetic, context-sensitive communication. This study examines how *Komunikasih* theory is implemented in the CSR program “Cares for Children” by Novotel Jakarta Cikini. Using a qualitative explanatory case study approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis, and analyzed with the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña. The findings show that key principles of *Komunikasih* (such as heartfelt intention, empathetic meaning-making, constructive messaging, compassionate delivery, positive media use, and affective impact) are consistently reflected in the program’s design and execution. The initiative addresses real community needs related to stunting through participatory communication and strategic media use, resulting not only in increased knowledge but also stronger trust and emotional connection with the community. Theoretically, this study extends CSR communication literature by demonstrating the relevance of *Komunikasih*’s theory in the hospitality sector. In practice, it highlights the importance of empathetic, transparent, and responsive communication for enhancing CSR effectiveness and community engagement.

Keywords

corporate social responsibility; CSR communication; empathic communication; hospitality industry; stakeholder engagement

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INTRODUCTION

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in contemporary business practice is no longer understood merely as philanthropic activities, but rather as part of an organization’s communication strategy to build social legitimacy and strengthen relationships with stakeholders (Yang & Basile, 2022). This paradigm shift positions CSR as an instrument for shaping reputation and public trust, making its effectiveness highly dependent on how the program is communicated to the public. Thus, communication serves not merely as a medium for publicizing activities but as a process of meaning-making that influences how the public assesses a company’s social commitment (Fatima, 2023).

The interconnection between CSR and communication has become increasingly significant in the hospitality industry. Unlike the manufacturing industry or the extractive sector, hotels operate directly within communities and engage in intensive interaction with their surrounding social environment (He et al., 2022; Kaur et al., 2022). This situation makes the social relationship between hotels and local communities a critical factor in ensuring the company’s operational sustainability. Therefore, CSR communication strategies in the hospitality industry serve as a relational bridge that can strengthen social acceptance and minimize potential community resistance (Alsheyab et al.,

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2023). When CSR messages are designed with context in mind and based on community needs, levels of public participation and acceptance tend to increase (Di Tullio et al., 2021).

The urgency of CSR communication becomes increasingly evident when implemented programs address public health issues, such as stunting. Stunting remains a challenge in national health development, as it affects the quality of human resources in the long term (Badan Kebijakan Pembangunan Kesehatan, 2022). This issue is not only related to medical factors but is also influenced by nutritional knowledge, parenting practices, socioeconomic conditions, and family access to information (Betania et al., 2024). In this context, social interventions implemented by companies through CSR programs can support efforts to improve community nutrition literacy, particularly among mothers and children (Adityaningrum et al., 2023).

However, the effectiveness of CSR programs in addressing health-related issues is determined not solely by the form of assistance or activities undertaken, but also by the quality of the accompanying communication. Communication coordination among companies, local governments, and beneficiary communities is crucial to ensuring that messages are accurately understood and that programs operate sustainably (Aversano et al., 2022). Communication that is dialogic and participatory fosters mutual understanding between the company and the community, so that the program is not perceived merely as a ceremonial activity but as a genuine expression of care (Di Tullio et al., 2021).

Several studies have confirmed that Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) communication plays a strategic role in building relationships between companies and stakeholders, particularly within the hospitality industry. In a study by Tao et al. (2024), the effectiveness of CSR communication in the hospitality industry was found to be significantly influenced by the alignment of messages with the audience's values and expectations (regulatory fit), thereby increasing customer engagement and willingness to support the company. These findings indicate that CSR communication is not merely informative but also persuasive and relationship-oriented. Wijaya (2016) also introduced the hospitality communication theory, which is essential in the hospitality industry. This applies not only when conducting service activities as the core business but also when implementing CSR programs, as hospitality communication emphasizes empathy and helpfulness.

In line with this, Chomvilailuk and Butcher (2023) found that integrating CSR communication into hotel marketing strategies can enhance corporate reputation and foster customer loyalty. This study confirms that CSR communication functions as an instrument for shaping public image and trust. However, the approaches used still tend to focus on results (outcomes), such as reputation and loyalty, without delving deeply into the underlying communication processes.

From a broader perspective, Font et al. (2012) highlight that CSR practices in the tourism and hospitality industries have evolved into a component of corporate sustainability strategies. CSR is positioned as a mechanism for gaining social legitimacy amid increasingly high public demands for corporate responsibility. Nevertheless, this research places greater emphasis on the general aspects of CSR policies and practices, without paying specific attention to the accompanying communication dimensions.

Meanwhile, Crane and Glozer (2016), in their conceptual review, emphasize that CSR communication is a crucial element in shaping stakeholders' perceptions of a company's social activities. Communication serves not only to convey information but also to construct meaning that determines how the public assesses the authenticity of CSR. However, this study remains conceptual and has not empirically examined the implementation of communication within a specific context.

Research by Ettinger et al. (2018) indicates that CSR communication via digital platforms plays a significant role in building perceptions of authenticity, particularly among small and medium-sized hotels. Digital media enables companies to reach a broader audience but also demands transparency and consistency in messaging. These findings underscore the importance of communication strategies in determining the success of CSR in the digital era.

Furthermore, Porcu et al. (2012) argue that integrated communication within an organization, including in the context of CSR, contributes to improved corporate performance. Consistent and coordinated communication can strengthen relationships with stakeholders and enhance the

effectiveness of message delivery. However, the focus of this research remains on the managerial aspects of communication rather than on its relational or emotional quality.

In a recent study, Kucukusta et al. (2019) found that CSR communication on social media still faces challenges, including message fragmentation and limited meaningful audience engagement. Although social media offers opportunities for two-way interaction, CSR communication practices remain dominated by a one-way, publication-oriented approach rather than by dialogue.

This aligns with findings from stakeholder engagement studies indicating that many organizations still employ top-down, non-participatory CSR communication strategies (Morsing & Schultz; Golob et al.). Such approaches tend to limit active public engagement and diminish the potential for building long-term, trust-based relationships. In other words, most CSR remains vertical in nature and lacks a horizontal dimension (Wijaya, 2007; 2012). Horizontal CSR tends to involve the community as initiators, actors, partners, and collaborators working together with the company to implement CSR programs.

In the Indonesian context, research by Citra et al. (2025) indicates that CSR functions as a strategic communication tool in building corporate reputation. However, this study still treats communication as a mere instrument for conveying messages, without exploring the empathetic or relational dimensions within the communication process.

Finally, Yikilmaz et al. (2025) assert that CSR significantly impacts stakeholder perceptions and organizational performance. However, this study emphasizes outcomes over the underlying communication process, leaving the social and emotional aspects of interaction in CSR communication largely unexamined.

Based on a review of previous research, several gaps can be identified that form a crucial foundation for this study. First, although CSR communication has been extensively studied in the hospitality industry, most research still focuses on strategic and instrumental aspects, such as reputation, customer loyalty, and organizational performance. This approach tends to view communication as a tool (instrumental view), rather than as a relational process involving social and emotional interactions between the company and the community.

Second, research on CSR communication in the digital era indicates that communication practices remain dominated by one-way communication approaches centered on information dissemination. Although the concept of dialogic communication has been introduced in the literature, its implementation in CSR practice remains limited, particularly in direct engagement with local communities.

Third, studies on empathy-based communication in the context of CSR remain relatively limited. Most research has not explicitly integrated the dimensions of empathy, compassion, and emotional connection into CSR communication strategies. Nevertheless, these aspects hold significant potential in building trust and fostering relational closeness between companies and the public.

Fourth, the use of *Komunikasih* Theory as an analytical framework in CSR communication studies remains very rare. Most previous studies have focused on positive corporate leadership, examined from a *Komunikasih* perspective (Wijaya & Amir, 2022), and on employer branding strategies through storytelling techniques in book publishing (Pursai, 2024). Another study examines public service advertising (PSA) using the *Komunikasih* theoretical framework (Fitmi et al., 2020). However, this theory offers a perspective that emphasizes sincere intent, empathetic meaning, compassionate message delivery, and affective impact in the communication process. The absence of studies applying this theory indicates a significant conceptual gap in the CSR communication literature.

Fifth, CSR research focusing on public health issues, particularly stunting, within the hospitality industry remains limited. Most hospitality CSR studies highlight environmental and sustainability aspects, while local community health issues have not been extensively explored as the primary focus of CSR programs.

Based on these gaps, this study aims to address them by analyzing the implementation of *Komunikasih* Theory in empathy-based CSR communication strategies within the “Cares for Children” program at Novotel Jakarta Cikini. This approach is expected to offer new insights into

understanding CSR communication not merely as an organizational strategy, but as a relational process that builds meaning, trust, and emotional engagement with the community.

In studies of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) communication, most research still positions communication as a strategic instrument oriented toward information dissemination, image building, and enhancing corporate reputation. This approach tends to be instrumental and has not yet fully accounted for the relational and emotional dimensions in interactions between companies and the community. However, in the context of CSR programs addressing social issues such as public health, the effectiveness of communication is determined not only by the clarity of the message but also by the communication's ability to foster empathy, trust, and emotional engagement with the community.

Therefore, a theoretical approach is needed that emphasizes not only the strategic aspects but also the humanistic aspects of communication. The *Komunikasih* theory developed by Wijaya (2014a; 2014b; 2015) offers an alternative perspective by placing empathy, compassion, and sincere intent at the core of the communication process. *Komunikasih* is understood as empathy-based communication that conveys positive emotional energy in the delivery of messages, thereby fostering better understanding and eliciting positive emotional responses between the communicator and the recipient. Communication from this perspective is sincere, selfless, and constructive, and is oriented toward the creation of harmonious social relationships.

Unlike conventional CSR communication approaches, which tend to be one-way and publication-oriented, the *Komunikasih* theory emphasizes a communicative process that is dialogic, relational, and oriented toward shared interests. This approach enables CSR communication to function not only as a tool for conveying messages but also as a means of building emotional closeness and trust between the company and the community. Thus, the Theory of *Komunikasih* is relevant to this study because it explains how CSR communication can have impacts not only informational but also relational and affective.

Within the framework of *Komunikasih* Theory, six main principles form the basis for analyzing the communication process (Wijaya, 2014a; 2015; Wijaya & Amir, 2022). The first principle is "*heartfelt intention and goal*," which refers to communication intentions and goals grounded in sincerity and a positive orientation toward others. Effective communication begins with good intentions, which are then reflected in the communicator's attitude, choice of words, and manner of delivering the message.

The second principle is a *constructive, selfless message*, crafted without self-interest. In communication, the message is designed with the recipient's circumstances and needs in mind, thereby fostering more empathetic and meaningful communication.

The third principle is *compassionate delivery and feedback*, which involves conveying messages and providing feedback with empathy and compassion. This approach fosters dialogic communication and minimizes the potential for conflict and misunderstanding in communicative interactions.

The fourth principle is *empathetic meaning-making*, which is the process of forming and interpreting messages that involves empathy from both the communicator and the recipient. In this process, both parties understand each other's perspectives, allowing communication to proceed in a more open and mutually respectful manner.

The fifth principle is *positive media use*, which refers to the responsible and constructive use of communication media. The media is used not only to disseminate information but also to foster positive communication and to avoid message distortion.

The final principle is *affective impacts*, which refers to the positive emotional effects resulting from the communication process, such as increased trust, closeness, and social engagement. In *Komunikasih*, success is measured not only by message comprehension but also by the quality of the emotional bond formed between the communicator and the recipient. A study on the #klikbiarselamat public service advertising campaign, organized by the Bandung city government, using the *Komunikasih* theory approach, demonstrated the campaign's success in persuading the public to wear helmets before riding, in a manner full of love and peace (Fitmi et al., 2020). Similarly, the study by Wijaya and Amir (2022) investigated Nutrifood's corporate communication program "Rumah Kedua" from the perspective of *Komunikasih* theory. The findings indicate that applying the

Komunikasih theory not only fosters positive leadership but also enhances employee loyalty and improves the company's reputation as a kind-hearted, caring organization for its employees and consumers.

The theory of *Komunikasih*, through its six dimensions and fundamental principles, provides a comprehensive analytical framework for understanding CSR communication as a process that is not only strategic but also relational and emotional. Therefore, the use of this theory in research is crucial for examining how CSR communication can build meaning, empathy, and sustainable social relationships between the company and the community.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative explanatory case study to understand how and why the principles of *Komunikasih* Theory are implemented in the communication strategy of the “Cares for Children” CSR program at Novotel Jakarta Cikini. This approach was chosen because the research focuses on contemporary phenomena in a real-life context and involves complex social interactions between companies and society (Yin, 2018). Based on Yin's (2018) classification of case study designs, this research falls under the *single-case-holistic design* category, as it focuses on a single main case, the “Cares for Children” CSR program, with a single unit of analysis being the communication strategy applied within that program.

Data collection was conducted using several techniques to achieve a comprehensive understanding. First, semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted in person with two key informants: Ms. Nelfa and Ms. Alfa, who served as committee members and program coordinators for the CSR initiative. The interviews were guided by open-ended questions aligned with the six dimensions of *Komunikasih* theory, allowing exploration of experiences, perceptions, and communication practices within the program. Each interview session lasted approximately 45–60 minutes and was documented through note-taking and audio recording to ensure data accuracy.

Second, observations were conducted digitally and textually by monitoring program implementation through activity documentation, social media content, and participant interactions during the event. These observations aimed to identify communication patterns occurring both directly and indirectly within the CSR program context.

Third, a document review was conducted by collecting secondary data from media publications, activity reports, and program communication materials. These documents were used to supplement and verify data from the interviews and observations.

Data analysis was conducted using the interactive analysis model by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2018), which involves three main stages. The first stage is data reduction, which is the process of selecting, simplifying, and grouping data based on the six dimensions of *Komunikasih* theory. The second stage is data display, in which the categorized data is organized into thematic narratives to facilitate interpretation. The third stage is conclusion drawing and verification, the process of identifying patterns, relationships, and meanings from repeatedly analyzed data.

To ensure the validity of the data, this study employed source and method triangulation. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from informants, documents, and observation results. Meanwhile, method triangulation was conducted by combining interviews, observations, and document analysis to obtain more valid and consistent results. This process aims to minimize bias and enhance the credibility of the research findings.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Overview of the CSR Program and Implementation Context

The “Cares for Children” CSR program, organized by Novotel Jakarta Cikini, is a social intervention focused on community empowerment through child health education. The program's primary focus is raising awareness about stunting prevention and ensuring balanced nutrition for toddlers in RW 03 Cikini. The selection of stunting as the program's theme was not a mere formality but was based on field findings on the prevalence of stunting in the area surrounding the hotel. This program involves various stakeholders, including PKK mothers, Posyandu cadres, village officials, and professionals in child health, namely Dr. Brenda Shahnaz, CBS, CIMI (Breastfeeding and

Complementary Feeding Counselor). This multi-stakeholder involvement demonstrates that the program was designed collaboratively; it was not implemented unilaterally by the company but rather integrated into the community's existing social structure.

From the interview results and activity documentation, several key findings emerge. First, the program successfully reached a diverse audience, ranging from young mothers to mothers with more extensive parenting experience to community members concerned about child health issues. Second, the primary activity format was educational workshops that conveyed information on nutrition, balanced diets, and strategies to prevent stunting. Third, the communication strategies employed a combination of digital and conventional media to ensure the message was widely and credibly conveyed.

The level of community engagement throughout the program was positive. Participants' active involvement in discussion sessions and sharing of experiences indicated that the activities were not one-sided. PKK mothers were not merely recipients of information but also served as agents of knowledge dissemination within their respective families. Thus, the program's impact extends beyond a single-day event and can spread through community social networks.

In addition to education, the program provided assistance in the form of height-measuring devices and baby scales for Posyandu, which previously had to borrow them from hospitals. This support is functional and sustainable, as it strengthens the capacity of community health services. These actions demonstrate that the program does not rely solely on symbolic communication but is also realized through concrete contributions.

Analysis Based on *Komunikasi* Theory Principles

Heartfelt Intention and Goal

The aspect of *heartfelt intention and goal* in this program can be analyzed through the process of formulating and implementing activity objectives. Based on interview results, the program initiative originated from identifying the community's real needs surrounding the hotel. Novotel conducted observations and dialogues with the RW 03 Posyandu committee to understand the health conditions of toddlers in the area. Through this process, cases of stunting requiring attention were identified.

The decision to focus on stunting demonstrates alignment between the program's objectives and the surrounding social and environmental context. Stunting is understood not merely as a medical issue, but as a problem with long-term impacts on children's physical and cognitive development. Therefore, education on balanced nutrition is viewed as a strategic preventive measure.

Interestingly, the program idea also emerged through an internal employee competition. This demonstrates that the value of social responsibility does not originate solely from top management but is also internalized within the organizational culture. Employee participation in formulating the idea reinforces the dimension of genuine intent, as the initiative stems from collective awareness rather than from managerial decisions alone.

Concrete steps taken to ensure the program's objectives stem from genuine intent include: conducting needs assessments, engaging in dialogue with the community, and involving competent professionals. The involvement of credible doctors in child health demonstrates a commitment to the quality of the information provided. This approach reinforces the impression that the program is not designed as a symbolic activity or for public relations purposes, but rather as a response to the community's actual needs.

These findings indicate that the formulation of the program's objectives is based on the community's real needs, not merely the company's symbolic agenda. This approach aligns with research indicating that community-driven CSR tends to generate greater social legitimacy than top-down CSR (Aversano et al., 2022). By involving Posyandu as a key partner, Novotel Jakarta Cikini demonstrates a participatory stakeholder engagement model,

Empathetic Meaning-Making

The process of *empathetic meaning-making* is evident in the way the company builds a shared understanding with the community before designing program messages. Novotel Jakarta Cikini does

not immediately determine the form of assistance or educational materials; instead, it first identifies needs through direct communication with the mothers at the Posyandu.

In interviews, it was explained that the need for height measurement tools and baby scales was identified as a shared priority. The fact that these tools were previously borrowed indicates limitations in facilities that affect the sustainability of Posyandu services. By addressing these needs, the company demonstrates sensitivity to local conditions.

During the workshop, meaning-making unfolded through dialogue. Participants were given space to share experiences regarding the challenges of feeding children, including strategies for dealing with picky eaters. This interaction demonstrates that the message was not constructed top-down, but rather through an equal exchange of experiences between professional experts and the community.

Additionally, the decision to distribute educational materials to mothers who are absent demonstrates a commitment to information accessibility. Thus, the program's impact extends beyond the single event, expanding through the sustained dissemination of knowledge.

The dialogic process during the workshop demonstrated the nature of participatory communication, in which the audience is not positioned as passive recipients. This pattern aligns with research on dialogic CSR communication, which emphasizes the importance of two-way communication in building trust and engagement (Di Tullio et al., 2021). Thus, the creation of meaning in this program stems not only from professional authority but also from the community's collective experience.

Constructive and Selfless Message

In terms of *compassionate delivery and feedback*, the *Komunikasih* approach used by Novotel Jakarta Cikini demonstrates sensitivity to the local social context. Messages are not conveyed unilaterally, but are preceded by coordination with local government officials, neighborhood leaders (RT/RW), and community figures. This step shows respect for existing social structures, while avoiding the impression that the program is an external intervention separate from the community.

Such an approach aligns with research on *stakeholder engagement* in CSR communication, which emphasizes that involving local stakeholders from the early stages of a program can enhance social legitimacy and strengthen community acceptance (Aversano et al., 2022). The involvement of local officials is not merely administrative but also symbolic, as it demonstrates that the company acknowledges the social authority and norms prevailing within the community. Transparency regarding the objectives of the activities helps reduce potential misunderstandings. In the context of a densely populated urban environment sensitive to social issues, a careful communicative approach is essential for maintaining trust.

The dimension of compassion in message delivery is also evident in the dialogic nature of the activities. Participants are not merely passive listeners but are given space to share their experiences, questions, and concerns. This creates a more egalitarian atmosphere and reduces the distance between the company and the community.

In managing feedback, the company demonstrates openness to community input, including proposals to develop food self-sufficiency programs. Responses to this input are not merely verbal but are considered as potential avenues for future collaboration. This approach demonstrates that communication does not end at the stage of information delivery but continues through adaptation and reflection.

Thus, *compassionate delivery and feedback* in this program serve as a mechanism to strengthen the relational bond between the company and the community, rather than merely conveying a one-way message.

Compassionate Delivery and Feedback

The aspect of *compassionate delivery and feedback* in the "Cares for Children" program is reflected in how Novotel Jakarta Cikini conveys messages in a persuasive, inclusive, and respectful manner toward the local social structure. Coordination with village officials and RT/RW leaders, and the use of community halls as activity venues, demonstrate that the company does not position itself as a dominant actor but rather as part of the existing social ecosystem. This approach indicates an

awareness that CSR communication cannot be separated from the social context in which the company operates.

From an organizational communication perspective, these actions can be understood as a form of *context-sensitive communication*—that is, communication that considers local norms, structures, and authorities before conveying a message to the public. Research on CSR and stakeholder engagement shows that involving local stakeholders from the early stages of program implementation can enhance social legitimacy and reduce community resistance (Aversano et al., 2022). By involving village officials and community leaders, Novotel Jakarta Cikini indirectly reinforces the perception that this program is a joint initiative rather than a top-down external intervention.

Transparency regarding the program's objectives—explicitly stated as health education activities, not merely ceremonial events or aid distribution—also plays a crucial role in building trust. In CSR communication literature, transparency is viewed as a key factor in reducing public skepticism regarding corporate motives (Fatima, 2023). When companies openly explain their objectives, targets, and the nature of their contributions, the public tends to view such activities as more authentic and credible. In this context, the *Komunikasih* approach adopted by Novotel Jakarta Cikini demonstrates awareness of the potential for negative perceptions often associated with CSR activities perceived as mere public relations.

The dimension of compassion in message delivery is also evident in the dialogic and non-preachy communication style. Professionals present educational materials, yet they still leave room for discussion among participants. This pattern aligns with the concept of *dialogic communication* in CSR, which emphasizes the importance of two-way communication in building long-term relationships with stakeholders (Di Tullio et al., 2021). In a dialogic approach, the audience is not positioned as passive recipients but as communication partners who possess local experience and knowledge.

Furthermore, the *feedback management* aspect of this program demonstrates an ongoing reflective process. Suggestions from the community regarding the development of the food self-sufficiency program are not ignored, but rather considered as potential areas for future collaboration. This response reflects an adaptive communication pattern in which the company not only conveys messages but also adjusts its strategies in response to community input. Research on community participation in social programs indicates that responsiveness to feedback is a key indicator of empowerment-oriented communication (Yang & Basile, 2022).

From a stakeholder theory perspective (Freeman, 1984), managing feedback in this manner demonstrates that the company recognizes the local community as a key stakeholder with the right to be heard. When community input is integrated into follow-up plans, the company–community relationship is no longer transactional but relational.

However, it is worth noting that this compassionate approach can also serve as a strategy for building corporate reputation. Research on CSR indicates that empathetic and participatory communication often positively impacts public image and trust (Han et al., 2024). Therefore, although this approach reflects the value of care, it cannot be entirely separated from the reputational implications the company may gain. In this context, the success of *compassionate delivery* lies not only in creating social impact but also in strengthening the company's position as a responsible social actor.

Overall, these findings indicate that the principles of *Compassionate Delivery and Feedback* in the “Cares for Children” program extend beyond purely emotional aspects; they are manifested in communication practices that are contextual, dialogic, responsive, and transparent. This approach reinforces the company's social legitimacy while fostering a more equitable space for interaction between Novotel Jakarta Cikini and the local community.

Positive Media Use

Regarding *positive media use*, the implemented communication strategy seeks to balance reach and credibility. Digital media such as Instagram are utilized to disseminate information quickly and visually. Reels and short-form video formats enable more engaging, shareable messaging, particularly for younger audiences and active social media users.

Additionally, live streams hosted by local community members demonstrate organic participation in disseminating information. This reinforces the impression that the company not only communicates the program but has also internalized it within the community.

Conventional media such as newspapers and news portals are used to provide external validation. Coverage by third-party media helps reinforce the program's credibility and minimizes the perception that the activities are solely for public relations purposes. This strategy demonstrates the company's awareness of the importance of long-term reputation and public perception management.

The controlled and targeted use of media also demonstrates caution in avoiding the visual exploitation of beneficiaries. Published content emphasizes education and solidarity rather than the exploitation of the community's social conditions.

The involvement of third-party media outlets, such as Kompas and Media Indonesia, provides external validation that can enhance the program's credibility. Previous research indicates that validation by independent media can strengthen perceptions of CSR authenticity and reduce public skepticism (Fatima, 2023).

Affective Impact

The *affective impact* of the "Cares for Children" program can be analyzed through changes in attitude, increased trust, and shifts in relational dynamics between Novotel Jakarta Cikini and the surrounding community. The program's impact is reflected not only in increased knowledge of nutrition and stunting prevention but also in the formation of more positive and sustainable social relationships. In other words, the program's outcomes extend beyond the cognitive dimension to the emotional and relational dimensions.

Research on CSR communication indicates that emotional impact is a key indicator of the success of corporate social programs. When the public perceives authentic care, perceptions of the company tend to shift from viewing it merely as a business entity to seeing it as part of the social community (Han et al., 2024). In this context, increased public participation in ongoing social activities—such as blood donation drives—serves as a concrete indicator that the relationships formed are not transactional but relational.

The increased trust built following the program's implementation also has strategic implications. The literature on *corporate trust building* notes that consistent alignment between a company's social messages and its concrete actions can strengthen legitimacy and facilitate long-term coordination with local stakeholders (Aversano et al., 2022). This is reflected in the streamlined permitting process and community support for the hotel's activities following the program. This trust does not emerge instantly but is the result of consistent, transparent, and participatory communication.

Emotional impacts can also be observed in the warm and inclusive atmosphere of the activities. Interactions between participants and the implementation team demonstrate interpersonal closeness that transcends the formal relationship between the company and the community. From an empathetic communication perspective, such an atmosphere results from a communication process that prioritizes acknowledging the audience's experiences and needs (Jin & Ikeda, 2024). When the audience feels heard and valued, emotional engagement increases, which in turn strengthens social bonds.

Furthermore, research on *CSR relational outcomes* indicates that the success of social programs is measured not only by direct outputs (e.g., the number of participants or aid provided) but also by changes in the quality of the relationship between the organization and the community (Di Tullio et al., 2021). In this case, the increased solidarity and citizen participation indicate that the *Komunikasih* efforts not only conveyed information but also fostered *a sense of belonging* to the social initiative.

Overall, the impact of this program can be categorized into three dimensions: informational (increased knowledge), relational (strengthened relationships), and affective (increased trust and solidarity). These three dimensions are interrelated and demonstrate that CSR communication grounded in empathy, collaboration, and consistency between messages and actions can generate social impacts that extend beyond short-term goals. This program demonstrates that when

companies align social values with authentic communication practices, community social cohesion can be strengthened sustainably.

However, it is critical to note that positive affective impacts can also provide reputational benefits for the company. In line with research on *strategic CSR*, increased public trust and emotional closeness often imply enhanced corporate image and legitimacy (Fatima, 2023). Thus, the affective impact in this program is not merely social but also carries strategic implications for the sustainability of the company's relationship with its environment.

The findings of this study indicate that the CSR communication implemented by Novotel Jakarta Cikini is dialogic, participatory, and empathy-based. These findings align with previous research affirming that effective CSR communication can enhance stakeholder engagement and trust (Aversano et al., 2022; Di Tullio et al., 2021). In the hospitality industry, Tao et al. (2024) and Chomvilailuk and Butcher (2023) also found that CSR communication improves customer relationships and corporate reputation.

However, this study reveals a significant difference compared to previous studies. Most prior research still positions CSR communication as a results-oriented strategy, such as improving corporate image and customer loyalty (Kaur et al., 2022; Yikilmaz et al., 2025). Meanwhile, the findings of this study indicate that CSR communication functions not only as a strategic tool but also as a relational process that builds shared meaning and emotional engagement with the community.

Furthermore, previous research indicates that CSR communication on social media remains dominated by a one-way approach (Kucukusta et al., 2019). Contrary to these findings, this study found that CSR communication in the "Cares for Children" program has adopted a dialogic approach through direct interaction with the community and active participant involvement in the communication process.

From an empathy perspective, the results of this study reinforce the findings of Jin and Ikeda (2024), who state that empathetic communication plays a crucial role in building stronger organizational relationships. However, this study offers a new contribution by demonstrating that empathy is not only present in interpersonal interactions but can also be systematically integrated into CSR communication strategies through the principles of *Komunikasih*.

Thus, this study not only confirms previous findings but also expands understanding of CSR communication by emphasizing the relational and affective dimensions that have previously received insufficient attention in the literature.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the development of CSR communication research by integrating *Komunikasih's* theory as an analytical framework. The research findings indicate that CSR communication can be understood not only as a message-delivery strategy but also as a relational process involving dimensions of empathy, shared meaning, and emotional impact. Thus, this study broadens the perspective of CSR communication (which has traditionally focused on instrumental aspects) into a more holistic framework by incorporating affective dimensions.

Furthermore, this study enriches the literature on organizational communication by demonstrating that empathy-based communication principles can be operationalized in practical contexts through CSR programs. This opens opportunities for future research to examine further the role of empathetic communication in other organizational contexts.

Practically, the findings of this study have implications for industry practitioners, particularly in the hospitality sector, indicating that the effectiveness of CSR programs is significantly influenced by the quality of communication employed. A communicative approach that is dialogic, participatory, and empathy-based has proven capable of enhancing community engagement and fostering long-term trust. Therefore, companies are advised not only to focus on implementing CSR programs but also on the accompanying communication strategies.

Furthermore, a balanced use of digital and conventional media, along with the involvement of local stakeholders from the planning stage, can serve as an effective strategy to enhance the social legitimacy of CSR programs. Thus, CSR communication designed with empathy and contextual sensitivity has the potential to generate more sustainable social impacts.

CONCLUSION

This study aims to analyze the implementation of *Komunikasih* Theory in the communication strategy of the “Cares for Children” Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) program organized by Novotel Jakarta Cikini. Based on the findings and discussion, it can be concluded that the principles of *Komunikasih*, namely, *heartfelt intention and goal, empathetic meaning-making, constructive and selfless message, compassionate delivery and feedback, positive media use, and affective impact*, are tangibly implemented and integrated into the program’s communication practices.

This program demonstrates that the formulation of communication objectives is not merely top-down but is grounded in the community's real needs, particularly regarding stunting in the area surrounding the hotel. The needs assessment process, conducted through dialogue and the active involvement of local stakeholders, reflects a participatory, contextual, and shared-interest-oriented communication approach.

Furthermore, the messages conveyed in this program are constructive and not driven by commercial interests, but rather focused on raising public health awareness and education. Transparency in communicating the program’s objectives, along with coordination with local authorities, contributes to building social legitimacy and public trust in the company.

In terms of message delivery and feedback management, communication takes place in a dialogic, open, and responsive manner to participants’ needs. This creates a more equitable space for participation between the company and the community, and enables a deeper exchange of meaning.

Furthermore, the program’s impact is evident not only in participants’ increased knowledge of nutrition and stunting prevention but also in the development of affective outcomes, such as heightened trust, engagement, and solidarity between the company and the community. This demonstrates that empathy-based communication plays a crucial role in building stronger, more sustainable relational bonds that ultimately support the overall success of the CSR program.

Theoretically, this study demonstrates that *Komunikasih* Theory can serve as a relevant and comprehensive analytical framework for evaluating CSR communication practices, particularly in the hospitality industry. This study also expands the scope of CSR communication research by emphasizing the importance of the empathetic, relational, and affective dimensions, which have received limited attention in the literature, which has tended to focus on strategic and instrumental aspects.

Practically speaking, the findings of this study have implications for industry stakeholders, particularly in the hospitality sector, indicating that the success of CSR programs is determined not solely by the type of activities or assistance provided but also by the quality of the accompanying communication. An empathetic, transparent, and participatory communication approach has proven effective in increasing community engagement and strengthening long-term trust. Therefore, companies are advised to integrate empathy-based communication principles into every stage of CSR programs, from planning and implementation to evaluation.

Thus, this study confirms that empathy-based CSR communication serves not only as an organizational communication strategy but also as a means of building meaningful and sustainable social relationships. This approach has the potential to generate broader social impacts, strengthen social cohesion, and enhance the company’s legitimacy in the public eye on a sustainable basis.

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