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## **Value-Based Crisis Management in Islamic Boarding School: a Model for Restoring Public Trust and Institutional Resilience**

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### **Abstract**

Research in crisis management has predominantly focused on corporate and secular organizations, providing a limited understanding of how Islamic educational institutions manage crises and restore public trust. This study examines crisis typologies, crisis management strategies, and the role of religious values in crisis governance at Pondok Pesantren Darul Amin in Southeast Aceh. A qualitative case study approach was employed, with data collected through in-depth interviews with pesantren leaders, teachers, parents, and complemented by document analysis. The findings reveal three interconnected crisis typologies: internal crises that escalate into the public sphere; perception-based crises that are amplified through digital media; and structural crises that arise from changing societal expectations. Crisis responses are implemented through transparent communication, corrective actions, institutional learning, and the integration of the values of amanah, taqwa, ikhlas, and ukhuwah. This study proposes a Value-Based Crisis Management Model, demonstrating that religious values can function as strategic governance mechanisms that shape crisis responses, trust restoration, and institutional resilience. This extends the scope of conventional, communication-centered crisis management frameworks.

**Keywords:** Crisis Communication, Islamic Boarding School, Public Trust, Institutional Resilience, Amanah-Based Leadership

## A. INTRODUCTION

In an increasingly dynamic social and educational environment, Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) are confronted with challenges that extend beyond educational management and religious instruction. The rapid development of digital communication technologies has transformed the way information is produced, shared, and received by the public, leaving educational institutions more exposed to public scrutiny and reputational risk. Crises stemming from internal incidents, external allegations, or public dissatisfaction can escalate rapidly through social media and online networks, generating widespread public attention and potentially undermining the institution's legitimacy. National reports indicate that educational institutions remain vulnerable to various forms of reputational crisis, including issues related to violence, governance, and accountability. Data released by the National Commission on Violence Against Women (Komnas Perempuan, 2025) and the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (Kementerian PPPA, 2026) suggest that educational institutions continue to receive public complaints and social criticism, which can directly affect stakeholder trust. Consequently, the ability of educational institutions to anticipate, manage, and recover from crises has become a strategic requirement for educational institutions to maintain public trust and ensure their long-term sustainability.

As one of the most influential Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia, *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools) possess distinctive characteristics that set them apart from secular educational organizations. These institutions' institutional identity is deeply rooted in religious tradition, moral authority, communal relationships, and deeply embedded values that guide educational and management practices. The ethical foundation of organizational life is constituted by values such as *amanah* (trust), *taqwa* (piety), *ikhlas* (sincerity), and *ukhuwah* (brotherhood). These values shape interactions among leaders, teachers, students, parents, and the wider community. These values have the potential to function not only as religious principles but also as strategic resources for managing institutional challenges, including crises. Previous studies have emphasized that public trust is a crucial organizational asset that can be seriously compromised during crises situations (Bachmann et al., 2015; Sharma et al., 2022). Therefore, crisis management in Islamic boarding schools requires an approach that integrates managerial effectiveness with religious and moral legitimacy as the foundation of institutional credibility.

The importance of effective crisis management has been a subject of extensive discourse in organizational studies and communication research. The Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT), as developed by Coombs (2007, 2023), posits that crisis response strategies must align with the nature of the crisis and stakeholders' attribution of responsibility. Similarly, the Image Repair Theory proposed by Benoit (2014) highlights the importance of organizational recognition, corrective action, and accountability in restoring a damaged reputation. These theories provide valuable insights into how organizations can respond strategically to crises and rebuild stakeholder trust. However, both frameworks were primarily developed in the context of corporate, governmental, and secular organizations, emphasizing effective communication and reputation management as primary crisis response mechanisms.

Despite the rapid expansion of the crisis management literature in recent years, extant studies have predominantly centered on corporate organizations, public institutions, and higher education settings, particularly in Western contexts and during global crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic (Choi et al., 2025; Miao et al., 2025; McNamara, 2021). Consequently, there has been limited scholarly attention paid to understanding how faith-based educational institutions manage crises in culturally and religiously embedded environments. Moreover, contemporary crisis management theory offers limited explanations regarding the role of religious authority, moral legitimacy, and values-based governance in shaping organizational responses during crises. Existing studies on Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) generally focus on educational management, leadership, and institutional development. Conversely, there has been a paucity of research investigating crisis typologies, crisis governance, and trust restoration. Consequently, the relationship between religious values and crisis management practices in Islamic educational institutions remains under-explored theoretically.

This research gap becomes even more relevant in the Indonesian context, where Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) are expected to preserve religious traditions and to respond adaptively to the growing demands for transparency, accountability, educational quality, and public engagement. Crises affecting these schools often involve complex interactions between internal organizational issues, public perceptions amplified through digital media, and changing societal expectations of educational institutions. This complexity requires a crisis management framework that goes beyond conventional communication strategies and incorporates institutional values as an integral part of the organization's

response. Therefore, it is crucial to understand how Islamic boarding schools integrate religious values in crises in order to develop contextually relevant approaches that can strengthen institutional legitimacy and public trust in contemporary society.

In response to this gap, this study examines the crisis management practices of the Darul Amin Islamic Boarding School in Southeast Aceh. The study will examine the typology of crises the school has encountered, the strategies it has used to manage those crises, and the role of religious values in restoring public trust. Using a qualitative case study approach, the study aims to provide a contextual understanding of crisis governance within an Islamic educational institution. Furthermore, the study proposes a Values-Based Crisis Management Model, which conceptualizes religious values not merely as ethical principles, but also as strategic governance mechanisms influencing crisis interpretation, organizational response, trust restoration, and institutional resilience. Theoretically, this study contributes to the existing crisis management literature by integrating moral legitimacy and faith-based institutional values into conventional crisis management frameworks. In practice, these findings offer strategic insights to educational leaders and policymakers who wish to strengthen the resilience of their institutions and maintain sustained public trust in Islamic educational organizations.

## **B. RESEARCH METHODS**

This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study design to examine crisis management practices and the restoration of public trust at the Darul Amin Islamic boarding school in Southeast Aceh. A qualitative case study is appropriate for gaining an in-depth understanding of contemporary phenomena within a real-life context. Specifically, it allows researchers to explore the interaction between crisis events, organizational responses, and religious values embedded within the Islamic boarding school environment (Yin, 2018). This approach enables researchers to explore the complexities of social, cultural, and institutional dynamics that cannot be adequately explained by quantitative measures alone (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). The Darul Amin Islamic Boarding School was purposely selected because of its experience managing institutional challenges and restoring public trust. This makes it a relevant and informative case for examining values-based crisis management practices in Islamic educational institutions.

Data were collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews and document analysis. The semi-structured interview format allowed for the

exploration of participants' experiences, perceptions, and interpretations of crisis events, organizational responses, and the trust-restoration process (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). Participants were purposely selected based on their direct involvement in crisis management activities and their understanding of institutional responses. To enhance the diversity of perspectives, snowball sampling was also used to identify additional participants recommended by the initial informants (Patton, 2015). The study participants' profiles are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Profile of Research Participants

<b>Code</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Role in the Study</b>
<b>Informant 1</b>	<i>Pesantren</i> Leader	Policy maker and crisis decision-maker
<b>Informant 2</b>	Vice Leader	Institutional coordination and crisis response
<b>Informant 3</b>	Teacher/ <i>Ustadz</i>	Implementation of internal crisis management
<b>Informant 4</b>	Teacher/ <i>Ustadzah</i>	Student supervision and communication process
<b>Informant 5</b>	Parent of Student	Stakeholder perspective on trust restoration

Table 1 shows that the participants represented both internal and external stakeholders of the Islamic boarding school. This composition allowed the study to capture diverse perspectives on the emergence of the crisis, institutional responses, and the process of rebuilding public trust. Although the number of participants was limited, qualitative case study research prioritizes the richness and depth of information over statistical representation. Participants were therefore selected based on their relevance to the phenomenon under study and their ability to provide detailed insights into crisis management practices in the context of an Islamic boarding school.

The collected data were analyzed using the procedures proposed by Miles et al. (2014), which include data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. Interview recordings were transcribed verbatim and combined with documentary evidence before undergoing open coding and thematic categorization. Throughout the analysis process, Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) (Coombs, 2007, 2023) and Image Repair Theory (Benoit, 2014) served as analytical frameworks for interpreting crisis typologies, organizational responses, and trust restoration mechanisms. Inductive coding was also used to allow new themes related to religious values and practices specific to the pesantren to emerge from the empirical data. The trustworthiness of the findings was ensured through source triangulation, method triangulation, and member checking (Lincoln et al., 1985). Furthermore, researchers maintained reflective awareness by documenting analytical decisions and continuously comparing interpretations to minimize subjective bias and enhance the credibility of the findings.

### C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

#### 1. Typology of Multidimensional Crisis

The research conducted at Pondok Pesantren Darul Amin in Southeast Aceh revealed that the crisis is multifaceted and can be classified into three closely interrelated dimensions. These dimensions reflect the complex challenges that traditional Islamic educational institutions faced in the modern era, exacerbated by the dynamics of the digital landscape. To clarify the analysis's structure and facilitate understanding of the findings, Table 2 systematically summarizes the classification of crisis typologies, their characteristics, sources, and response strategies.

Table 2. Crisis Typology, Response Strategies, and Value Base

<b>Crisis Typology</b>	<b>Key Characteristics</b>	<b>Sources of Crisis</b>	<b>Response Strategy</b>	<b>Impact on Trust</b>
<b>Internal Crisis Escalates</b>	Internal problems become public consumption (e.g., disciplinary violations)	Internal institutions	Direct clarification, internal evaluation, and strengthening of coaching	Temporary decline and recovery through corrective action
<b>Perception-Based External Crisis</b>	Unverified information shapes public opinion	Social media and community	Proactive communication, formal clarification, and issue monitoring	Highly fluctuating, depending on response speed
<b>Structural Crisis (Public Expectations)</b>	Nonconformity with modern demands (e.g., transparency and innovation)	Social change	System reform and service quality improvement	Gradual decline if not responded to

As shown in Table 1, the crisis phenomenon within Islamic boarding schools stems from organizational incidents, external social constructs, and broader structural changes. These findings suggest that crisis management in Islamic educational institutions requires a multidimensional approach that can address both factual issues and perceptual challenges.

First, an internal institutional crisis that escalates to public attention is at the core of the problems faced. This crisis originates from problems arising within the pesantren itself, but it accelerates and disseminates when information about it becomes public. Specific examples include disciplinary and ethical violations among students, such as fights, alleged abuse of authority by older students, and more serious security and nurturing issues. Additionally, the issue of education and

teaching quality that is no longer relevant to current demands is part of a latent internal crisis with long-term consequences. As one of the informants stated:

*“The problem with students does exist because it is a place many young people are gathering. However, when the problem is leaked to the outside and then exaggerated on social media, the impact is not only on the students involved, but also on the good name of the pesantren”* (Informant 1).

This statement clearly shows that a crisis is determined not only by the severity of the event itself, but also by how it is received, interpreted, and disseminated in the public sphere. This phenomenon aligns with Coombs's (2023) view that crisis escalation is often triggered by slow or inadequate organizational responses to the dissemination of information, especially in the digital era. Caled and Silva (2022) found that digital media accelerates the spread of crisis narratives, both accurate and unverified, through virality mechanisms and real-time distribution. This demands that organizations respond quickly and adaptively based on effective communication strategies.

Second, external crises based on public perception are a crucial dimension originating from outside the pesantren school that has a significant impact on the institution's image and reputation. Often, these crises are not based on thoroughly verified facts, but rather on the social construction of circulating information. The rapid development of social media has accelerated the escalation of this kind of crisis. Unverified information and biased opinions (Anderson et al., 2018) can quickly form negative public perceptions before organizations have a chance to provide accurate, comprehensive clarifications, and incorrect information (Vosoughi et al., 2018) can further exacerbate the situation. The issue of violence in education is a widespread public concern and one of the most sensitive examples of an external crisis. *“Sometimes people believe information circulating online before hearing a clarification from the Islamic boarding school. The biggest challenge is correcting public assumptions after negative perceptions have formed.”* (I3)

According to national data from the National Commission on Violence Against Women (2025) and the Ministry of PPPA (2026), violence against children in educational institutions remains a significant concern. In the context of pesantren, even unconfirmed reports can trigger fear and resistance among the wider community. This is in line with the findings of Choi et al. (2025), who showed that nonprofit organizations, including religious educational institutions, are particularly vulnerable to reputational crises due to social issues developing rapidly

and widely in the public sphere. This crisis confirms that pesantren's reputation depends not only on good internal conditions but also on the organization's ability to manage rapidly developing and often uncontrollable dynamics of information and public perception.

Furthermore, research shows that misinformation in crises seriously threatens an organization's reputation and can worsen a crisis's impact if not handled quickly and appropriately. (Jin et al., 2020). Additionally, social media has transformed the crisis communication landscape. Massive and rapid flows of information can surpass organizational control, demanding a proactive and strategic response (S. Y. Lee, 2020). These findings confirm that, in the digital age, ineffective crisis communication has the potential to significantly lower public trust, even on unverified issues.

Third, the crisis resulting from changes in public expectations is structural and develops gradually. As a traditional Islamic educational institution with strong historical roots, pesantren is now faced with the increasing demands of modernity. These demands include transparency in management, accountability to the public, and innovation in learning methods and curricula. The pesantren's inability to be transparent, particularly regarding financial management, decision-making, and educational services, has the potential to significantly erode public trust. *"Parents today expect religious education, transparency, security, quality assurance, and modern educational services. These expectations continue to rise every year."* (15)

In this context, organizational transparency is closely related to trust and credibility in the eyes of stakeholders, thus becoming a key element in maintaining institutional legitimacy (Schnackenberg & Tomlinson, 2016). Additionally, transparency has evolved into a strong social norm in modern society that shapes public expectations of organizations (Christensen & Cornelissen, 2015). Therefore, organizations' failure to meet demands for openness and accountability impacts public perception and can undermine the legitimacy and sustainability of institutions. Thus, adaptation and innovation are necessary not only for technical reasons, but also for strategic reasons in order to maintain the relevance of institutions during evolving social dynamics.

In an increasingly competitive educational landscape, pesantren must maintain their traditional values while integrating modern approaches to their curricula, learning methods, and educational facilities. If pesantren are perceived as unable to adapt to the times, they may be stigmatized as lagging, which can slowly erode the trust of students' parents and the community. Crises in this area do not

always manifest as open conflict or intense media scrutiny but rather through decreased public interest, fewer new registrants, and increased criticism of educational service quality. Therefore, a crisis of public expectations can be categorized as a latent crisis impacting the sustainability of pesantren. Sun's (2025) research highlights that universities face similar challenges managing their reputations amid changing public expectations post-pandemic, demanding adaptation in governance and public narratives.

## 2. Crisis Management Strategies at Pondok Pesantren Darul Amin

To address various types of crises, Pondok Pesantren Darul Amin, an Islamic boarding school in Southeast Aceh, has adopted conventional crisis management practices and implemented strategies deeply rooted in religious and institutional values. This approach reflects the institution's efforts to maintain authenticity while responding to contemporary social dynamics. One of the most prominent strategies is direct and transparent communication. Interviews with Islamic boarding school leaders revealed that communicating with parents and the surrounding community is a top priority whenever a crisis occurs. One informant explained:

“When a problem arises, we immediately invite parents to meet with the Islamic boarding school management. We explain what happened, what actions have been taken, and what preventive measures will be implemented. We don't want parents to rely solely on social media for information because misunderstandings can easily arise” (Informant 1).

Similarly, another informant emphasized the importance of openness and dialogue in maintaining public trust: “The most important thing is not to withhold information. Parents deserve an explanation because they have entrusted us with their children. Through direct dialogue, many misunderstandings can be resolved before they become bigger problems” (Informant 2). These findings suggest that Islamic boarding schools prioritize face-to-face communication to reduce uncertainty and prevent rumors from escalating. This approach aligns with the principle of two-way communication, which is considered more effective than one-way communication for building long-term, trust-based relationships (Ben-Ner et al., 2011; Eller, 2016).

Furthermore, regularly disseminating information through circulars, official announcements, and communication channels involving parents demonstrates the institution's commitment to transparency and accountability. Several informants explained that formal communication is routinely used to ensure stakeholders

receive accurate, balanced information. One participant stated: “We regularly distribute official announcements through parent communication groups and written circulars so that every family receives the same information directly from the institution (Informant 3). In the digital age, Islamic boarding school leaders recognize the importance of monitoring public discourse and responding to misinformation on social media. According to one administrator, “Social media can spread information very quickly. Therefore, we continuously monitor issues related to the Islamic boarding school and provide clarification whenever inaccurate information begins to circulate” (Informant 2).

These findings suggest that the Darul Amin Islamic Boarding School's crisis communication strategy extends beyond traditional channels to include digital engagement. Transparency enables stakeholders to access accurate, timely, and balanced information, which minimizes speculation and distortion of information (Schnackenberg et al., 2021; Schnackenberg & Tomlinson, 2016). However, interviews also revealed a structural challenge: the absence of a dedicated crisis communication team. Consequently, communication responsibilities remain concentrated among senior administrators, which could limit the speed and consistency of responses during crises. These findings support the argument that crisis communication effectiveness is largely determined by organizational messaging timeliness, accuracy, and consistency (Nisbet & Kotcher, 2009).

Beyond communication strategies, the Islamic boarding school emphasizes corrective and preventive actions based on moral responsibility. Informants consistently reported that each crisis is followed by an internal evaluation, enhanced oversight mechanisms, and strengthened institutional regulations. As one participant explained: “After every incident, we conduct an internal evaluation. We identify weaknesses, strengthen oversight, and improve procedures to prevent similar situations from happening again” (Informant 4).

Another informant highlighted the importance of continuous capacity building. “Training for teachers and staff is important because prevention is always better than dealing with a crisis after it occurs. We strive to continuously improve our human resources” (Informant 1). These findings suggest that crisis management at Darul Amin Islamic Boarding School extends beyond short-term image restoration to encompass long-term institutional improvement. From the perspective of image repair theory, such initiatives constitute corrective actions that contribute to both reputation restoration and the prevention of future crises (Benoit, 2014). These actions are credible because they are substantive and

observable, allowing stakeholders to assess the organization's commitment through concrete actions rather than mere symbolic statements. Therefore, corrective actions grounded in moral responsibility strengthen institutional legitimacy and public trust through sustained commitment to systemic improvement.

Table 3. Dimensions and Implementation of Crisis Management Strategies at Pondok Pesantren Darul Amin

Strategy Dimension	Form of Implementation
Direct and transparent communication	Face-to-face meetings with parents of students, open dialogue, and explanations of crises
Dissemination of formal information	Circulars, official announcements, and communication media for guardians of students
Digital communication and public clarification	Clarification through social media, monitoring, and responding to emerging issues
Corrective action based on moral responsibility	Evaluation of internal procedures, strengthening the coaching system, and sanctions
Prevention and strengthening of human resource capacity	Continuous training and improving the quality of human resources
Integration of religious values in crisis response	Application of the values of <i>amanah</i> , <i>taqwa</i> , and <i>ikhlas</i> in every decision-making

As shown in Table 3, the crisis management strategy at Darul Amin Islamic Boarding School was implemented comprehensively through direct and transparent communication, formal information dissemination, digital engagement, corrective actions, and preventive institutional development. A hallmark of this approach is integrating religious values such as trustworthiness, piety, and sincerity into every decision. As one of the boarding school leaders emphasized: *“Every decision we make during a crisis must be guided by trustworthiness and piety. We are accountable not only to the community but also to God.”* (I1) These findings suggest that crisis management within the boarding school is a moral and spiritual endeavor as well as a managerial process. Integrating religious values strengthens the ethical foundation of the organization's response, contributing significantly to the restoration of institutional legitimacy and sustained public trust.

### 3. Integration of Religious Values

One of the most significant findings of this study is that religious values function as strategic foundations that guide crisis management practices at Pondok Pesantren Darul Amin, not merely as ethical principles. The values of *taqwa* (piety), *amanah* (trustworthiness), *ikhlas* (sincerity), and *ukhuwah* (brotherhood) influence how leaders interpret crises, develop responses, communicate with stakeholders, and implement corrective actions. Rather than relying solely on procedural

mechanisms, pesantren crisis management is embedded in a moral framework that emphasizes accountability to society and God. This value-based orientation distinguishes pesantren crisis governance from conventional organizational approaches, which primarily focus on technical and managerial considerations.

*Taqwa* emerged as a moral foundation that encourages honesty, transparency, and ethical decision-making during crises. Informants consistently emphasized that every institutional response should reflect moral accountability and adherence to Islamic principles. As one pesantren leader explained: “*When facing a crisis, we must remain honest, even if the truth temporarily damages the institution's image. Concealing facts only creates larger problems in the future. Our responsibility is not only to society, but also to Allah*” (Informant 1). Another informant made a similar point: “*Taqwa reminds us that every decision has consequences. Therefore, transparency becomes an obligation rather than merely a communication strategy*” (Informant 3). These findings suggest that transparency is viewed as a religious obligation rather than an organizational necessity. This perspective is consistent with previous studies showing that public trust during crises is strongly influenced by perceptions of organizational integrity and transparency (Y. Lee & Li, 2021). In this context, integrity goes beyond professional competence to represent a consistent commitment to moral values in organizational communication and action.

The second identified value is *amanah*, the core principle of responsibility and accountability. Informants emphasized that the trust placed in them by parents and the community creates a moral obligation to respond quickly, appropriately, and substantively to every emerging issue. According to one participant: “*Parents have entrusted their children to us. Therefore, whenever a problem occurs, we cannot ignore it or delay action. Amanah requires us to respond immediately and responsibly*” (Informant 2). Another respondent stated: “*Every policy we implement during a crisis is based on the understanding that we are safeguarding the trust of many people. This trust must be protected through concrete action*” (Informant 4). These findings suggest that *amanah* operates as an internal accountability mechanism driven by ethical awareness rather than external pressure. This aligns with previous research indicating that organizations that emphasize moral responsibility and accountability tend to maintain higher levels of stakeholder trust during crises (Isa’di et al., 2025; Nurkhin et al., 2024; Gafur et al., 2021). Consequently, *amanah* strengthens perceptions of organizational commitment, responsibility, and concern for stakeholder welfare.

The value of *ikhlas* (sincerity) is also important in fostering psychological resilience among institutional leaders and staff when they confront criticism and public pressure. Informants described sincerity as the ability to accept criticism constructively and focus on institutional improvement rather than solely protecting the institution's reputation. One participant explained: *"Criticism is not always pleasant, but we try to accept it sincerely and use it as material for self-evaluation. If there are weaknesses, they must be improved rather than defended"* (Informant 3). Similarly, another informant noted: *"Being sincere helps us to remain calm and focus on solutions instead of reacting emotionally to accusations or criticism"* (Informant 1). These statements suggest that *ikhlas* promotes a learning-oriented rather than a defensive response. This approach aligns with contemporary crisis management literature, which suggests that organizations that emphasize learning, adaptation, and continuous improvement are more successful in restoring trust and reputation than those that adopt defensive communication strategies (Tachkova & Coombs, 2022). Therefore, sincerity significantly contributes to developing an adaptive and reflective organizational culture.

Furthermore, the value of *ukhuwah* (brotherhood) fosters empathetic and relationship-oriented communication between the pesantren and its stakeholders. Informants described how these familial relationships among leaders, teachers, students, and parents become essential social resources during times of uncertainty. As one respondent stated: *"We treat parents as part of our extended family. During difficult situations, communication is carried out with empathy and mutual respect so that trust can be maintained"* (Informant 5). Another participant added: *"Internal solidarity among teachers and administrators is very important because crises cannot be handled individually. Cooperation and mutual support help us overcome challenges together"* (Informant 2). These findings demonstrate that *ukhuwah* strengthens social cohesion and facilitates collaborative problem-solving during crises. This result is consistent with studies emphasizing the importance of social capital, collective values, and community cohesion in enhancing organizational resilience and recovery (Visave & Aldrich, 2025). Consequently, *ukhuwah* functions as both a religious value and a strategic resource that supports effective crisis response and sustainable trust restoration.

The pesantren approach is distinguished from conventional organizational crisis management by its integration of religious and moral values into every stage of corrective action and decision-making. The principles of *amanah* and *maslahah* serve as the ethical foundation for institutional policies, ensuring that crisis

responses are evaluated in terms of not only effectiveness, but also moral consequences and collective welfare. These principles support the concept of social capital, which emphasizes the importance of trust, shared norms, and social networks in strengthening organizational resilience (Visave & Aldrich, 2025; Aldrich & Meyer, 2015). They also reflect Stewardship Theory, which posits that organizational leaders are motivated by values and the long-term interests of stakeholders (Heim et al., 2026; Madison et al., 2016). Thus, transparent communication, substantive corrective actions, and religious values combine to form a distinctive, value-based crisis management approach that effectively restores public trust and strengthens institutional resilience in the pesantren context.

#### **4. Restoration of Public Trust in Pondok Pesantren Darul Amin**

The findings of this study suggest that public trust was restored at Pondok Pesantren Darul Amin through consistent interaction between symbolic actions rooted in religious values and substantive actions reflected in institutional improvements, rather than through communication strategies alone. Informants emphasized that public trust gradually returned when stakeholders observed clear alignment between the pesantren's statements, moral commitments, and corrective measures. One parent explained:

“What convinced us to continue trusting the pesantren was not only the leaders' clarification, but also the visible improvements made afterward. We could see that the pesantren had taken the problem seriously was trying to prevent it from happening again” (Informant 5).

Similarly, a member of the pesantren management stated: “Public trust cannot be restored through words alone. Every explanation given to parents must be accompanied by concrete actions, evaluation, and continuous improvement” (Informant 2). These findings suggest that trust restoration is a gradual and dynamic process requiring consistency between organizational communication and institutional behavior. This result supports Sharma et al. (2022), who argue that post-crisis trust recovery depends on effective communication and congruence between organizational statements and observable actions. In the context of Islamic boarding schools, stakeholders evaluate institutional credibility through crisis responses and the institution's willingness to undertake meaningful reforms and demonstrate accountability.

A distinctive characteristic of trust restoration in Pondok Pesantren Darul Amin is the central role of religious values as sources of moral legitimacy. Values

such as amanah (trustworthiness), taqwa (piety), ikhlas (sincerity), and ukhuwah (brotherhood) function as operational principles that guide decision-making and organizational behavior, not merely as ethical ideals. One informant stressed: “Every policy taken during a crisis must be based on trust because parents have entrusted their children to us. We are accountable to society and to Allah” (Informant 1). Another participant noted: “The values taught in the Islamic boarding school guide us when facing difficulties. Transparency, responsibility, and sincerity are not just communication techniques, they are obligations” (Informant 3).

These findings reinforce the argument that restoring trust in Islamic educational institutions is closely linked to moral accountability and value-based governance. According to Dusuki (2008), Islamic governance emphasizes ethical responsibility, justice, and accountability as integral components of organizational legitimacy. Hassan and Syafri Harahap (2010) also argue that stakeholder trust in Islamic institutions is strengthened when governance practices consistently reflect religious and moral values. Therefore, the restoration of trust in an Islamic boarding school context is influenced by both managerial effectiveness and the perceived integrity of organizational values.

The findings also show that the governance structure of Islamic boarding schools significantly contributes to restoring public trust. The moral authority of the kiai and the strong social bonds within the pesantren community establish a foundation of legitimacy, facilitating stakeholder acceptance of corrective actions. As one parent noted, “We trust the leadership because they have always been close to the community and have demonstrated responsibility for many years. That trust helps us remain confident, even during difficult situations” (Informant 5).

This finding aligns with Dhofier's (2011) explanation that the kiai plays a pivotal role in pesantren culture, serving as a religious authority and moral leader whose legitimacy stems from exemplary conduct and community trust. Similarly, Mastuhu (1994) emphasizes that the organizational life of Islamic boarding schools is built upon the values of sincerity, obedience, responsibility, and communal solidarity. Consequently, trust restoration within Islamic boarding schools is inextricably linked to the credibility of leadership and the strength of social relationships within the institution.

The study also highlights the importance of Islamic leadership in rebuilding public confidence. Informants consistently describe leaders as prioritizing consultation, fairness, transparency, and collective welfare when responding to

crises. One participant explained: “Whenever a serious issue emerges, decisions are discussed collectively. The leaders listen to teachers, staff, and parents before determining the best course of action” (Informant 4).

This leadership practice reflects the principles of Islamic leadership proposed by Beekun and Badawi (1999). These principles emphasize justice, consultation (*shura*), accountability, and stewardship. Similarly, Alserhan (2017) comments that Islamic leadership derives legitimacy from moral conduct and service to stakeholders rather than from formal authority alone. The findings suggest that leadership credibility significantly influences stakeholder perceptions of sincerity and commitment, thereby accelerating the restoration of trust following a crisis.

Another important factor identified is the role of social capital and community engagement in strengthening institutional resilience. The relational nature of Islamic boarding school governance encourages continuous interaction between leaders, teachers, students, parents, alumni, and surrounding communities. These relationships create networks of trust that mitigate reputational damage and facilitate collective recovery efforts. This observation corroborates Lukens-Bull's (2005) assertion that Islamic boarding schools function as both educational institutions and moral communities, where social relationships and trust are vital institutional resources. Furthermore, Isbah (2020) and Tan (2014) emphasize that contemporary Islamic boarding schools depend on their ability to maintain public legitimacy while adapting to changing societal expectations. Therefore, restoring public trust should be understood as a process of reaffirming institutional credibility and social legitimacy.

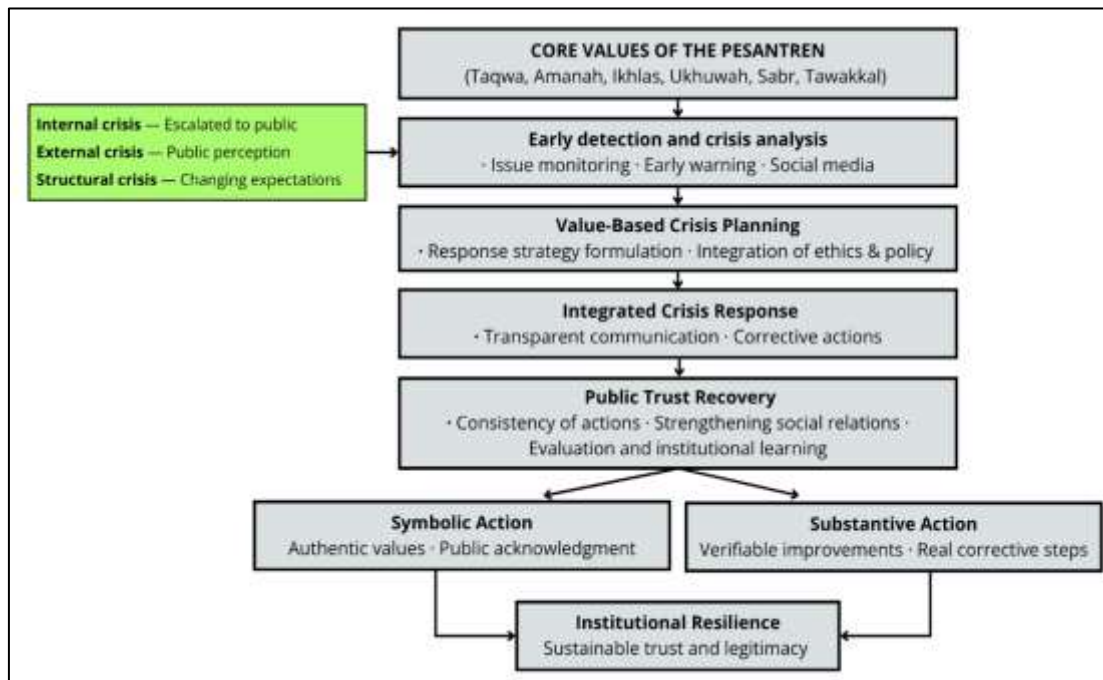


Figure 1. Value-Based Crisis Management Model in Islamic Boarding Schools

This study integrates empirical findings and theoretical perspectives to propose a Value-Based Crisis Management Model consisting of five interconnected dimensions: (1) religious and institutional values as foundational principles; (2) crisis detection and interpretation; (3) value-based crisis planning; (4) an integrated crisis response involving transparent communication and corrective actions; and (5) the restoration of sustainable trust through evaluation and organizational learning. Religious values serve as antecedent mechanisms that shape how crises are interpreted, how decisions are made, and how stakeholders are engaged throughout the crisis management process.

The model also shows that transparent communication and substantive corrective actions link religious values with stakeholder trust. While communication strategies help reduce uncertainty and misinformation, trust can only be restored when stakeholders observe concrete evidence of organizational improvement. Consequently, public trust emerges from the alignment of value-based commitments with organizational practices, not from communication efforts alone.

The outcome of this process is strengthened institutional resilience. Unlike conventional crisis management frameworks, which primarily emphasize communication effectiveness, the proposed model highlights the importance of

moral legitimacy, Islamic governance, leadership credibility, and social trust as strategic factors in successful crisis recovery. This finding contributes to the existing literature on crisis management by showing that the effectiveness of crisis responses in Islamic educational institutions is strongly influenced by religious values embedded in organizational culture and governance structures. Consistent with Azra (2012), the sustainability of Islamic educational institutions hinges on administrative competence and the preservation of moral legitimacy and social relevance amid changing societal conditions. Thus, the proposed model offers a contextual framework for understanding crisis governance in Islamic boarding schools and provides practical guidance for strengthening institutional resilience and fostering sustainable public trust in contemporary Islamic educational organizations.

#### **D. CONCLUSION**

This study shows that crisis management in Islamic boarding schools goes beyond traditional communication and reputation repair strategies. The findings reveal three interconnected types of crises faced by Pondok Pesantren Darul Amin: internal institutional crises that escalate into the public sphere, perception-based crises amplified through digital media, and structural crises resulting from changing societal expectations. The pesantren addresses these challenges through transparent communication, corrective actions, continuous institutional learning, and preventive capacity-building measures. Furthermore, crisis governance is fundamentally shaped by the integration of religious values, such as *amanah*, *taqwa*, *ikhlas*, and *ukhuwah*. These values guide decision-making, stakeholder engagement, and organizational responses during crises. These values function as both ethical principles and practical mechanisms for maintaining legitimacy and restoring public trust.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the literature on crisis management by expanding communication-centered approaches to include moral legitimacy, religious authority, and value-based governance in Islamic educational institutions. The proposed Value-Based Crisis Management Model illustrates how religious values influence crisis interpretation, response formulation, trust restoration, and institutional resilience. In practice, the findings provide pesantren leaders and educational policymakers with guidance for developing crisis governance systems that integrate managerial effectiveness with religious and ethical commitments. However, this study is limited to a single case and a small sample size, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings. Future research is encouraged to

conduct comparative studies across different pesantren settings, employ mixed methods, and empirically test the applicability of the proposed model in broader Islamic educational contexts.

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