Jurnal Komunikasi ISKI, Vol. 11 (1), 2026

J U R N A L

KOMUNIKASI

IKATAN SARJANA KOMUNIKASI INDONESIA

E-ISSN: 2503-0795
P-ISSN: 2548-8740

Crisis Communication of the Prosperous Justice Party in the 2024 Jakarta Gubernatorial Election

https://doi.org/10.25008/wtfp0h97

Muhamad Agung Dharmajaya[1*], Aminah Swamawati[1]
[1]Universitas Muhammadiyah Jakarta
Jln. KH. Ahmad Dahlan, Cirendeu, Ciputat, Tangerang Selatan 15419 - Indonesia
[*]Corresponding author: agungdharma@unma.ac.id

Submitted: November 1, 2025, **Revised**: June 4, 2026, **Accepted**: June 6, 2026
Accredited by Kemristekdikti No. 152/E/KPT/2023 until Vol 12(1) in 2027

Abstract - *Partai Keadilan Sejahtera* (Prosperous Justice Party/PKS) faces crucial challenges in managing political communication crises arising from the dynamics of gubernatorial candidacy. The purpose of this study is to analyze the crisis communication strategies of PKS during the 2024 Jakarta gubernatorial election. This study employs a qualitative case study method with a descriptive design to examine the phenomenon within its specific Indonesian political context**.** The findings indicate that PKS encountered significant challenges in managing public perceptions regarding its responsibility in various issues surrounding the 2024 Jakarta gubernatorial nomination. The level of perceived responsibility among the public is influenced by the source of the crisis and the party's initial response, while previous crisis history also shapes public perception. PKS's relationship with its urban Muslim supporter base serves as an important social capital, although communication challenges with other groups remain. In response to the crisis, PKS implemented denial, diminish, and rebuild strategies, with the rebuild strategy emerging as the key to reputation recovery through direct communication, the nomination of candidates with integrity, and the implementation of concrete programs. The combination of effective crisis situation management and well-applied response strategies has enabled PKS to maintain political stability and enhance public trust. Ultimately, this study offers a significant theoretical contribution by expanding the understanding of situational crisis management and communication dynamics within Islamic-oriented political parties operating in digitally fragmented environments.

Keywords: Regional Head Elections, Issue Management, Crisis Communication, *Partai Keadilan Sejahtera*, Gubernatorial Candidacy.

Introduction

Regional Head Elections *(Pilkada)* are an integral part of Indonesia's democratic system, as stipulated in Law Number 10 of 2016 concerning the Election of Governors, Regents, and Mayors, which emphasizes the importance of public participation in directly electing regional leaders. In this context, the Jakarta Gubernatorial Election holds a particularly strategic position not only because Jakarta serves as the center of government and national media, but also because its results often act as a barometer of national political power. Moreover, the political dynamics of Jakarta's *Pilkada* are closely intertwined with national contests such as the Presidential Election *(Pilpres),* as reflected in party coalitions and campaign strategies.

In the 2024 Jakarta Gubernatorial Election, the *Partai Keadilan Sejahtera* (PKS) faced a critical challenge in managing a political communication crisis arising from the dynamics of candidate nomination. As recorded in the 2024 legislative elections, PKS repeated a historical achievement similar to that of the 2004 General Election. According to data released by PKS (2024), the party secured 1,143,912 votes (19.01%) out of 6,016,877 valid votes in the House of Representatives (DPR) election, maintaining five parliamentary seats. Meanwhile, in the Regional House of Representatives (DPRD) election, PKS obtained 1,012,028 votes (16.68%) out of 6,067,241 valid votes, gaining two additional seats. This political capital not only strengthened PKS's position but also made it a key player in coalition-building with other parties and gubernatorial candidates, particularly as the Jakarta electoral champion.

During the 2024 Jakarta Gubernatorial Election, the political landscape became increasingly complex, shaped by multiple interests and emerging issues. Initially, PKS endorsed Anies Baswedan and Sohibul Iman (AMAN) as candidates. However, this pairing was widely perceived as strategically ineffective, as both figures came from the same political sphere, thereby limiting coalition opportunities with other parties. When PKS's attempt to encourage Anies to secure additional coalition partners failed, the party opened communication with the Advanced Indonesia Coalition *(Koalisi Indonesia Maju* – KIM). This decision triggered both internal and external crises, including resistance from some cadres, resignations among members of the PKS Expert Council, and widespread public criticism reflected in tens of thousands of social media comments and mainstream media coverage. The crisis deepened when an audio recording of Anies went viral, revealing inconsistencies between his narrative and PKS's statements regarding the nomination deadline.

This situation illustrates how PKS faced multidimensional pressures in an electoral contest, particularly in the digital era where public perception is easily shaped through social media. As Huang (2016) stated, "Attack with two components (an offensive act and an accusation of responsibility for the action) threatens organizational or individual reputation, which in turn requires a crisis response strategy." In relation to PKS's reputation, crisis communication serves as a crucial instrument to preserve image, voter loyalty, and electoral stability. An effective crisis communication strategy characterized by rapid response, message consistency, media utilization, and an adaptive crisis response team has become an urgent necessity for political parties.

This study aims to analyze the crisis communication strategies employed by PKS in managing the dynamics of the 2024 Jakarta gubernatorial nomination, as well as to assess their impact on public perception and voter loyalty. The research adopts a descriptive qualitative approach, using a case study of PKS supported by data from social media, mass media documentation, and electoral statistics. Through this focus, the study contributes to a theoretical understanding of political crisis communication within the context of Indonesia's electoral democracy.

Previous studies on crisis communication have primarily focused on issues such as religiosity impacts (Morehouse et al., 2025), social media-based communication (Noor, 2024), responses to allegations of misconduct (Boyle et al., 2023), or employment-related crises (Hinsberg & Lamanna, 2024). However, few studies have specifically examined how Islamic-oriented political parties like PKS respond to crises in strategic regional elections such as Jakarta's *Pilkada*. This research applies Coombs' (2007) crisis communication theory, particularly the crisis response strategies model denial, diminish, and rebuild as its primary conceptual framework. This model facilitates the classification of PKS's responses and their effectiveness in managing negative public perceptions. In Indonesia's increasingly digitally fragmented political environment, the findings offer valuable insights into how political parties can adaptively and strategically respond to public pressure.

To bridge the existing literature gap, this study explicitly utilizes Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) as a framework uniquely equipped to explain the complex interplay between ideological loyalty and strategic coalition shifts. While traditional political communication frameworks often separate ideological behavior from pragmatic political maneuvers, SCCT allows for a systematic analysis of how an organization's "prior relational reputation" and "crisis responsibility" are perceived differently by distinct stakeholder groups. In the case of PKS, this theoretical lens is critical to understanding how the party navigates the friction between maintaining the unyielding ideological loyalty of its core cadres and justifying its strategic, pragmatic pivot to the KIM coalition.

Furthermore, SCCT provides the necessary analytical tools to evaluate these dynamics within an increasingly digitally fragmented political environment in Indonesia. Digital fragmentation creates

distinct, polarized communication echo chambers on social media, where identical crisis responses can yield entirely contradictory attributions of responsibility from loyalists versus the broader public. By analyzing how PKS tailored its denial, diminish, and rebuild strategies across these fragmented digital spaces, this study offers valuable, localized insights into adaptive political crisis management under heavy public pressure.

The novelty of this study lies in its focus on communication crises faced by political parties during high-exposure regional elections, and how the interaction between political decisions, public reactions, and communication strategies shapes complex crisis dynamics. Furthermore, the study provides practical contributions for political parties in developing communication strategies that are not only reactive, but also preventive and strategic, enabling them to anticipate and manage similar crises in the future.

Theoretical Framework

Political Communication

Lorenz-Spreen in Pugu et al. (2024) explains that "Political communication is a field that encompasses the strategies and techniques used by politicians, political parties, governments, media, and other stakeholders to convey messages, influence public opinion, make decisions, and achieve political goals". Similarly, Alayya (2022) describes that "Political communication itself includes communication activities of citizens, political figures, community members, government institutions, media, political campaigns, advocacy groups, and social movements".

Furthermore, Perloff in Alayya (2022:23546) defines "Political communication as a complex communicative activity in which language and symbols, carried out or used by leaders, media, citizens, and citizen groups, have an effect on individuals and/or society, and provide outcomes related to public policy, the nation, the state, or the community."

Moreover, Perloff in Alayya (2022) states that the impact of political communication can occur at two levels. At the micro level, it influences individuals' thinking, candidate evaluations, emotions, attitudes, and behaviors for example, in political advertising, campaigns, or presidential debates aimed at persuasion or attitude change. At the macro level, political communication operates more broadly, shaping public opinion, institutional change, political activism, and public regulation. Perloff in Alayya (2022) also notes that communication is a process of conveying messages from one person to another to inform, change attitudes, opinions, or behaviors either directly through verbal interaction or indirectly through media. Effective communication requires reciprocal interaction between the sender and the receiver, namely the communicator and the communicant.

McNair (2011) develops a balanced approach to political communication between the media and their sources, analyzing both within the context of contemporary democratic governance. Denton and Woodward, as cited in McNair (2011), define political communication as "pure discussion about the allocation of public resources (revenues), official authority (who is given the power to make legal, legislative, and executive decisions), and official sanctions (what the state rewards or punishes)." This definition encompasses both oral and written political rhetoric but excludes symbolic communication acts.

Crisis Communication

Heath in Coombs and Holladay (2010) defines "Crisis communication can be defined broadly as the collection, processing, and dissemination of information required to address a crisis situation." In the pre-crisis stage, crisis communication involves gathering information about potential risks, making decisions on how to manage possible crises, and training individuals who will be part of the crisis management process. This includes members of the crisis team, spokespersons, and anyone involved in the response process.

Heath in Coombs and Holladay (2010) further explains that "Crisis communication includes the collection and processing of information for crisis team decision-making, along with the creation and dissemination of crisis messages to people outside of the team (the traditional definition of crisis communication)". The post-crisis stage includes evaluating crisis management efforts, communicating necessary changes to individuals, and delivering follow-up messages as needed. Coombs, as cited in Haupt (2021:126), explains that "In the arena of communication, a crisis incorporates perceiving an unpredictable event and how it can threaten stakeholder expectations, impact organizational

performance, and result in negative outcomes". Based on Coombs' definition, this study views a crisis not only as a potential source of negative consequences but also as an opportunity for learning that can lead to positive growth.

Situational Crisis Communication

Coombs (2007) defines a crisis as "the perception of an unpredictable event that threatens important expectations of stakeholders and can seriously impact an organization's performance and generate negative outcomes." Therefore, to manage a crisis successfully, an organization must communicate strategically and effectively with its stakeholders by delivering information efficiently and in a timely manner. Coombs and Holladay (2010) explain that the situational crisis communication theory is "audience-oriented because it seeks to illuminate how people perceive crises, their reactions to crisis response strategies, and audience reactions to the organization in crisis".

The nature of the crisis shapes audience perceptions and attributions. Thus, understanding how people perceive a crisis situation is centered on the audience. The idea is to comprehend how individuals make attributions about a crisis and how those attributions influence their attitudes and behavioral intentions. The core of the situational crisis communication theory, as noted by Coombs and Holladay (2010), is crisis responsibility. Coombs and Holladay (2010) explain that attributions of crisis responsibility have a significant effect on how people view the reputation of an organization experiencing a crisis, as well as on their affective and behavioral responses toward it after the crisis.

Zheng et al. (2018) reported that a positive organizational reputation minimizes the severity of threats posed by a crisis. The study also suggested that the impact of a crisis weakens when an organization possesses a strong reputation, and conversely, the impact intensifies when reputation is poor. The findings from Zheng et al. (2018) support the notion that organizations with strong reputations are better equipped to withstand crises, and further explain that the level of attributed crisis responsibility determines the extent of communication efforts required by the organization.

Auer (2016) in his research further emphasized that politics and crises are closely intertwined in many ways, and neglecting this interconnection can lead to significant problems. A crisis poses a threat to an organization's reputation, which is a vital intangible resource. Furthermore, crises can lead to negative outcomes and behavioral intentions toward the organization. Crisis responsibility, therefore, serves as the key factor in determining the level of threat posed by a crisis.

Material and Methodology

This study employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive research design and a case study method aimed at providing an in-depth description of the crisis communication phenomenon undertaken by the PKS in the context of the 2024 Jakarta Gubernatorial Election. This approach was chosen to understand the dynamics of communication strategies, organizational behavior, and the interaction between the party, the media, and the public in managing crisis-related issues. The case study focuses specifically on PKS as a single unit of analysis, examined intensively and contextually.

To ensure analytical precision, the unit of analysis in this study is operationalized through three distinct primary communication components. *First*, it includes specific official party data, consisting of press releases from the PKS Central Executive Board (DPP), structural statements issued by the PKS Jakarta Regional Board (DPW), and the officially circulated audio recording containing Anies Baswedan's narrative on the nomination deadline. *Second*, the study analyzes prominent interactive communication artifacts, specifically tens of thousands of viral public comments on social media platforms (Instagram) and related mainstream media coverages that emerged immediately following PKS's strategic shift to the KIM coalition. Third, it examines localized perspective-driven data structured around key interview themes, which focus on internal cadre resistance, structural decision-making transparency, and the justification of ideological versus pragmatic political alignment.

The research was conducted in the Special Capital Region of Jakarta, with the study period spanning from September 2024 to March 2025. Data collection techniques included in-depth interviews and documentation. The interviews were conducted using a semi-structured format with purposively selected informants, chosen based on their relevance and direct experience with crisis communication issues. Informants consisted of PKS central and regional board members (such as the Head of the Public Relations Division of the Central Executive Board and the Head of the PKS Jakarta Regional Board), political communication scholars, political observers, and journalists actively covering PKS-related

issues during the election period. Documentation data included party archives, official statements, campaign materials, debate recordings, and media publications.

Data analysis was carried out through a series of steps: data reduction to filter relevant information, followed by coding to identify recurring themes and patterns. The data were then presented in narrative form and thematic tables to illustrate the interrelation among categories. Subsequently, conclusions were drawn by linking the empirical data with Coombs' Crisis Communication Theory, particularly concerning crisis situation factors (initial crisis responsibility, crisis history, prior relational reputation) and crisis response strategies (denial, diminish, rebuild).

To ensure validity, the study applied source triangulation (party officials, academics, observers, and media) and methodological triangulation (interviews, observations, and documentation). Validity was further reinforced through a member check process, in which the researcher confirmed data interpretations with informants to ensure consistency with actual facts and experiences. By applying this methodological framework, the study aims to provide a credible and representative analysis of how PKS managed its crisis communication during the 2024 Jakarta Gubernatorial Election.

Result and Discussion

Crisis communication and its various channels play a vital and effective role in crisis management. Hassooni and Al-Naffakh (2023) explain that "It is a tool of crisis management, as it represents one of the stages of crisis management." Interest in the communication and media aspects of crisis management has increased alongside technological developments and societal changes, marking a transition from traditional to modern contexts. Within the dynamics of urbanization, specialization, social contracts, mass behavior, and media influence, numerous studies have highlighted the growing importance of communication in managing issues that expose many nations and institutions to crises and their subsequent effects on image, reputation, and trust.

Ulmer, Sellnow, and Seeger (2015) identify that a crisis represents a unique moment that goes beyond ordinary unfortunate events, characterized by three distinguishing markers: (1) Surprise, exceeding expectations; (2) Threat, where risks surpass standard operations; and (3) The necessity for rapid and effective organizational response. Despite the diversity of definitions, a multidisciplinary approach to understanding organizational crises acknowledges that a crisis is a highly consequential and often unpredictable event or series of events that threatens an organization's performance or public perception. Consequently, organizations must engage in meaning-making processes to reduce uncertainty and restore stability.

Many definitions of crisis communication lean toward a transmission-based perspective, focusing on "the collection, processing, and dissemination of information required to address a crisis situation" (Coombs & Holladay, 2010). Crisis communication is thus viewed as a series of communication practices and processes aimed at fostering organizational safety and stability when normal operations are challenged by a crisis.

This study focuses on analyzing the crisis communication strategies employed by the PKS in addressing the challenges surrounding the nomination of a gubernatorial candidate for Jakarta in 2024. The analysis adopts Coombs' (2007) Crisis Communication Theory, which comprises two main elements: the crisis situation and crisis response strategies. These elements help explain how PKS identifies the characteristics of the crisis and selects appropriate communication approaches to manage it. Through this framework, the study aims to illustrate how PKS strategically and coordinately handles the crisis to maintain its reputation and strengthen relationships with stakeholders.

The Crisis Situation

A crisis itself can be defined as "a situation in which political-administrative elites perceive a threat to the core values of a society and/or to the systems that sustain life within that society, which must be addressed urgently under conditions of profound uncertainty" (Boin et al., 2020). Thus, a crisis presents a severe challenge for political leaders, as they are expected to act swiftly, responsibly, and in the best interest of their citizens yet within rapidly changing circumstances where the consequences of their decisions are difficult to anticipate (Eisele, 2022).

At the same time, public demands for justification of those decisions tend to increase precisely because of the growing uncertainty and the fact that political leaders' choices directly shape the conditions under which citizens experience the crisis and determine how they emerge from it (Eisele,

2022). In democracies, where public support serves as the currency of political success, crises have built or destroyed many political careers (Olsson et al., 2015).

In the context of crisis communication, understanding the crisis situation is a crucial initial step in developing appropriate communication strategies. According to Coombs (2007), three key elements influence public perceptions of a crisis: initial crisis responsibility, crisis history, and prior relational reputation. These elements determine the extent to which an organization is perceived as responsible for the crisis and shape public perceptions of its reputation.

Initial Crisis Responsibility

The first element, initial crisis responsibility, refers to the degree to which the public perceives the organization as the cause of the crisis. In the case of PKS's endorsement of Anies Baswedan as a potential gubernatorial candidate for Jakarta in 2024, the party does not bear full responsibility for the crisis. The decision was not made solely by PKS but emerged from broader political dynamics. Hence, according to Coombs' (2007) classification, this situation falls under low crisis responsibility.

However, since PKS was an active participant in declaring Anies' candidacy, public expectations and scrutiny were inevitably directed toward the party. The intensity of public attention increased when criticisms arose, suggesting that PKS prioritized an external figure rather than promoting its internal cadres. Although PKS has a precedent of endorsing non-cadre figures such as Anies in the 2017 gubernatorial election this decision fostered a perception that the party lacks the ability to produce leaders capable of competing at the strategic level of regional governance.

Crisis History

The second element, crisis history, refers to whether an organization has experienced similar crises in the past. Coombs (2007) notes that if an organization has a recurring crisis history, the public tends to evaluate it more negatively. PKS indeed has a pattern of supporting external figures rather than its internal cadres in regional elections. For example, in the 2017 Jakarta election, PKS again endorsed an external candidate.

This recurring pattern shapes the narrative that PKS may be inconsistent in nurturing its leadership potential. Therefore, even though PKS shares responsibility for the current crisis with its political coalition partners, its historical record influences public perceptions. To address this, PKS's crisis communication strategy should aim to reframe the narrative emphasizing that supporting Anies represents a rational political choice aligned with long-term strategic goals and shared ideological values.

Prior Relational Reputation

According to Coombs (2007), an organization's prior relational reputation its relationship with stakeholders before the crisis strongly affects how the crisis is perceived. Heinkel et al. (2025) also note that "institutional risk and crisis communication is an essential part of risk governance, ensuring coordinated actions among stakeholders." If an organization maintains good relationships with stakeholders, the crisis impact can be mitigated. Conversely, poor relationships can exacerbate it. PKS's strong ideological foundation and loyal supporter base serve as its main strengths in managing the 2024 nomination issue. However, internal criticisms have emerged regarding centralized decision-making and limited transparency in strategic planning, which have created emotional distance between central leadership and grassroots members.

To deepen the analysis of PKS's relational reputation, it is critical to differentiate between the internal reactions of loyal ideological cadres and the external perceptions of the broader urban voter base in Jakarta, as these two stakeholder groups exhibit fundamentally different thresholds for crisis responsibility. For the loyal ideological cadres, the threshold for tolerating strategic ambiguity was high, yet their sensitivity to ideological purity was acute. Data from internal themes revealed that cadres initially viewed the shift from the "AMAN" pairing to the KIM coalition with profound internal resistance. Their close, relational ties to the party meant they attributed a high level of moral crisis responsibility to the central leadership, perceiving the pragmatic pivot as a potential compromise of the party's core Islamic-oriented identity. However, because their long-term institutional loyalty was deeply rooted, PKS's internal communication which emphasized survival, institutional preservation, and

parliamentary stability effectively lowered their crisis responsibility threshold over time, transforming active resistance into disciplined compliance.

In sharp contrast, the broader urban voter base in Jakarta operated on a completely different relational paradigm, characterized by a much lower threshold for crisis responsibility and a demand for public accountability. Unlike the cadres, these urban voters were less motivated by intra-party discipline and more focused on democratic consistency and political representation. Within the digitally fragmented social media sphere, this group interpreted the viral audio recordings and the abandonment of Anies Baswedan not as a strategic necessity, but as political inconsistency.

They attributed absolute crisis responsibility to PKS, viewing the decision through a highly critical lens. Because PKS's prior relational reputation with non-cadre urban voters was based more on tactical alignment than deep-seated ideological bonding, the party's traditional justifications failed to resonate within their digital echo chambers. Consequently, while the party successfully secured its internal base, its relational reputation among the wider, floating urban electorate suffered significant short-term damage, requiring a more aggressive and transparent "rebuild" strategy to mend.

Externally, PKS faces challenges in appealing to broader demographics beyond its traditional base, partly due to ideological stereotypes. While relations with coalition partners remain relatively stable, differences in strategy occasionally cause friction. PKS's active presence on social media and its effective spokespersons have helped manage the narrative, though delayed responses to sensitive issues have sometimes raised doubts about the party's readiness in crisis management. To optimize the Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) framework, PKS must strengthen both internal and external communication, enhance transparency, and expand dialogue with stakeholders. A positive relational reputation is a valuable asset but only if it is continuously maintained through openness, responsiveness, and accountability.

Crisis Response Strategies

Crisis response strategies are the actions an organization takes to respond to a crisis. Coombs and Tachkova (2022) state that "The situational crisis communication theory recommends that organizations select response strategies depending on the amount of responsibility the public attributes to the organization to mitigate the reputational threat to the organization in crisis." According to Coombs (2007), there are three primary crisis response strategies: denial, diminish, and rebuild. This study applies these strategies to analyze PKS's response to the 2024 Jakarta gubernatorial candidacy.

Denial. The denial strategy involves rejecting involvement in a crisis to reduce reputational harm. PKS has used this approach when addressing accusations or criticisms perceived as irrelevant or baseless for instance, denying allegations of corruption by framing them as individual, not institutional, misconduct. In the 2024 gubernatorial context, PKS may employ denial by asserting that the candidate selection process followed established internal procedures. While denial can be effective if supported by strong evidence, excessive reliance on it risks appearing evasive or unaccountable. The success of this strategy depends heavily on transparent communication and verifiable proof.

Diminish. The diminish strategy seeks to reduce public perceptions of the crisis's severity or the organization's responsibility. PKS might use this approach by framing the issue as a normal part of political dynamics rather than a major crisis. For instance, PKS could argue that any internal debate or public criticism reflects healthy democratic discourse. Additionally, it may emphasize external factors—such as coalition negotiations or electoral regulations—as contributing to the perceived turmoil. When implemented with sincerity and backed by corrective actions, diminish can effectively lower public tension. However, if used superficially, it may appear dismissive and undermine credibility.

Rebuild. The rebuild strategy focuses on restoring public trust by acknowledging responsibility and taking corrective actions. Coombs (2007) stresses that this strategy is crucial for rebuilding credibility and long-term reputation. Although PKS has not publicly acknowledged missteps in the nomination process, doing so could help demonstrate awareness and empathy toward public concerns. Miglő (2014) emphasizes that open apologies can defuse tension and signal accountability. PKS has taken internal steps such as evaluating candidate selection mechanisms and designing more transparent procedures.

To strengthen this process, PKS should communicate progress updates to the public and maintain consistent dialogue with both cadres and coalition partners. Rebuilding efforts must also include cultural

transformation within the party reinforcing values of integrity, transparency, and accountability. Sustainable reputation recovery requires genuine reform rather than superficial measures. As Ulmer and Sellnow (2002) argue, trust can only be restored gradually through consistent, concrete actions. PKS must ensure that every step of its recovery strategy delivers tangible outcomes, not mere rhetoric.

Conclusion

This study concludes that PKS's crisis communication during the 2024 Jakarta gubernatorial election can be understood through the two main elements of crisis communication theory: crisis situation and crisis response strategies. In terms of initial crisis responsibility, PKS faced major challenges in managing public perceptions of its accountability for the issues that emerged. Key factors influencing public perception included the source of the crisis and the party's initial response. Regarding crisis history, although PKS had prior experience managing political crises, this history continued to shape public perception, both positively and negatively.

Furthermore, prior relational reputation played a significant role in determining the effectiveness of PKS's communication strategies. The party's strong base of loyal supporters served as an advantage, yet its relationship with broader audiences was affected by sensitive issues such as religious and political identity. In addressing crisis response strategies, PKS employed multiple approaches according to the situation. The denial strategy was used when the party faced accusations deemed irrelevant, while the diminish strategy aimed to downplay the severity of the crisis in the public eye. Through the rebuild strategy, PKS focused on acknowledging responsibility and implementing corrective actions, such as direct communication with the public, selecting candidates with strong track records, and reinforcing relevant community programs. The combination of proper crisis situation management and effective response strategies helped PKS maintain political stability, with the rebuild approach serving as the key to restoring public trust.

Based on the findings, several recommendations can be proposed for both theoretical development and practical application of crisis communication in political contexts. Academically, it is suggested to further develop crisis communication theory within Indonesia's political framework, particularly in evaluating the effectiveness of denial, diminish, and rebuild strategies. Comparative studies between political parties in Indonesia and other countries would enrich understanding of crisis communication strategies across different political and cultural settings.

Future research could also adopt a multidisciplinary approach integrating psychology, sociology, and information technology to deepen the understanding of how crisis communication shapes voter behavior and to design new methods of crisis management for political organizations. More specifically, there is an urgent need to outline a future research agenda centered on longitudinal studies. Future investigations should track the long-term impact of PKS's current rebuild strategies on voter retention across subsequent election cycles, exploring whether the tactical compromise made in the 2024 gubernatorial nomination causes permanent detachment among floating urban voters or if public trust can be fully restored through sustained governance performance over time.

Practically, PKS is advised to enhance transparency in its communication, especially when dealing with sensitive issues, to strengthen public trust. Leveraging its positive historical record is also essential to demonstrate the party's capacity in managing political and electoral challenges. Moreover, PKS should adopt more inclusive communication strategies to expand its support base reaching beyond traditional supporters to ensure broader and more sustainable political stability.

References

Boin, A., Ekengren, M., & Rhinard, M. (2020). Hiding In Plain Sight: Conceptualizing the Creeping Crisis. *Risk, Hazards & Crisis in Public Policy*, 11(2), 116–138.

Boyle, K., Kramer, I., Wilson, C., & Hallows, D. W. (2023). Presidential crisis: An analysis of Biden & Trump's crisis communications strategies in response to allegations of sexual misconduct. *Public Relations Review, 49*(4), 1–9. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2023.102365

Claudia, A. (2016). Conceptualizing Political Crisis and the Role of Public Diplomacy in Crisis Communication Research. *The Handbook of International Crisis Communication Research,* 12, 119-132.

Coombs, W. T. (2007). *Ongoing crisis communication: Planning, managing, and responding*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Coombs, W. T., & Holladay, S. J. (2010). *The handbook of crisis communication*. UK: Blackwell Publishing.

Coombs, W. T., & Tachkova, E. R. (2022). Elaborating the concept of threat in contingency theory: An integration with moral outrage and situational crisis communication theory. *Public Relations Review, 48*(4), 1–8. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2022.102234

Hassooni, F. K., & Al-Naffakh, S. H. J. (2023). The role of political communication in crisis management. *International Journal of Research in Social Sciences and Humanities, 13*(11), 128–137. http://doi.org/10.37648/ijrssh.v13i02.010

Haupt. B. (2021). The Use of Crisis Communication Strategies in Emergency Management. J*ournal of Homeland Security and Emergency Management,* 18 (2) 125-150.

Heinkel, C. M., Thiebes, B., Than, Z. M., Kyi, T. T., Aung, T., Oo, S. S., ... & Kraas, F. (2025). Institutional risk and crisis communication on natural hazards and disaster risks in Yangon, Myanmar. *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction, 116*, 1–16. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijdrr.2024.105064

Hinsberg, J. A., & Lamanna, A. J. (2024). Crisis communication in construction: Organizational strategies for worksite fatalities. *Journal of Safety Research, 88*, 145–160. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsr.2023.11.002

Huang, Y.-H. C., Wu, F., & Cheng, Y. (2016). Crisis communication in context: Cultural and political influences underpinning Chinese public relations practice. *Public Relations Review, 42*(1), 201–213. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2015.11.015

Jauza, A. (2022). Literature Review on Political Communication Practices in the Digital Age. *Budapest International Research and Critics Institute-Journal* 5, (3) 23546-23555.

McNair, B. (2011). *Introduction to Political Communication* (5th ed.). London: Routledge.

Melyana, P., Nina. T., Muhammad, Y. (2024). New Media and The Changing Landscape of Political Communication. *International Journal of Society Reviews* 2 (6), 1591-1605

Morehouse, J., Austin, L. L., & Page, T. G. (2025). Religion in crisis communication: Examining the impact of stakeholder religiosity and religious language in organizational crises. *Public Relations Review, 51*(2), 1–10. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2025.102562

Noor, N., Okhai, R., Jamal, T. B., Kapucu, N., Ge, Y. G., & Hasan, S. (2024). Social-media-based crisis communication: Assessing the engagement of local agencies in Twitter during Hurricane Irma. *International Journal of Information Management Data Insights, 4*(2), 1–17. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jjimei.2024.100236

Olga, E., Tolochko, P., Boomgaarden, H.G. (2022). How do Executives Communicate About Crises? A Framework for Comparative Analysis. *European Journal of Political Research* 61: 952–972.

Olsson, E.-K., Nord, L., & Falkheimer, J. (2015). Media Coverage Crisis Exploitation Characteristics: A Case Comparison Study. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 27(2), 158–174.

PKS, (2024). https://pks.id/content/unggul-di-dpr-dan-dprd-pks-jakarta-alhamdulillah-terima-kasih-warga-jakarta

Šontaitė-Petkevičienė, M. (2014). Crisis management to avoid damage for corporate reputation: The case of retail chain crisis in the Baltic countries. *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences, 156*, 452–457. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.11.220

Ulmer, R. R., Sellnow, T. L., & Seeger, M. W. (2015). *Effective crisis communication: Moving from crisis to opportunity* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Zheng B., Liu H., Davison R. M. (2018). Exploring The Relationship Between Corporate Reputation and The Public's Crisis Communication on Social Media. *Public Relations Review,* 44 56–64.