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**THE MEDIATING EFFECT OF CHARISMATIC LEADERSHIP  
COMMUNICATION AND ORGANIZATIONAL CREDIBILITY IN THE  
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CRISIS RESPONSIBILITY AND PERCEIVED  
ORGANIZATIONAL REPUTATION**



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## Abstrak

Berdasarkan teori komunikasi krisis situasional (SCCT), kajian ini memfokus kepada jenis krisis yang boleh dielakkan dan kesannya ke atas reputasi organisasi. Walaupun SCCT telah digunakan dalam penyelidikan komunikasi krisis secara meluas, teori ini masih terbatas dalam menerangkan potensi pengaruh-pengaruh lain terhadap reputasi organisasi. Untuk merapatkan jurang ini dan juga untuk memperkayakan sorotan karya tentang reputasi organisasi dalam sektor awam, kajian ini membangunkan model perantara untuk mendalami penyelidikan dalam reputasi organisasi awam. Model perantara kajian ini mengintegrasikan pemboleh ubah tanggungjawab krisis, komunikasi kepimpinan berkarisma dan kredibiliti organisasi dalam rangka kerja teoritikal SCCT. Objektif utama kajian ini adalah untuk menentukan kesan perantara komunikasi kepimpinan berkarisma dan kredibiliti organisasi terhadap hubungan antara tanggungjawab krisis dengan tanggapan terhadap reputasi organisasi. Model perantara ini diuji menggunakan model persamaan berstruktur dengan data yang diperolehi daripada 368 penjawat awam dari dua buah organisasi di Malaysia. Model perantara yang diuji menunjukkan mekanisma dinamik komunikasi kepimpinan berkarisma dan kredibiliti organisasi berfungsi sebagai separa perantara dalam hubungan antara tanggungjawab krisis dan tanggapan terhadap reputasi organisasi yang ber krisis. Hasil kajian ini membuktikan kesahan model perantara yang dicadangkan dalam kajian ini. Secara empirikal model perantara yang disahkan ini boleh dijadikan panduan instruktif kepada organisasi dan peneraju sektor awam dalam menangani krisis dan reputasi organisasi. Kajian ini menyediakan sumbang saran tentang peranan utama komunikasi kepimpinan berkarisma dan kredibiliti organisasi dalam proses reputasi organisasi. Implikasi praktikal kajian ini mencadangkan peneraju krisis harus mempraktikkan komunikasi kepimpinan berkarisma dan meneguhkan kredibiliti organisasi untuk mengurangkan kesan krisis terhadap reputasi organisasi. Yang lebih penting, hasil kajian menunjukkan komunikasi kepimpinan berkarisma dan kredibiliti organisasi menyumbang kepada reputasi organisasi secara jelas telah membawa kedua-dua konstruk ke tempat terpenting dalam pengurusan reputasi organisasi.

**Kata Kunci:** Komunikasi kepimpinan berkarisma, Kredibiliti organisasi, Reputasi organisasi, Tanggungjawab krisis dan Teori komunikasi krisis situasional

## Abstract

Based on the situational crisis communication theory (SCCT), this study focuses on the preventable crisis type and its impact on organizational reputation. Even though the SCCT has been widely used in crisis communication research, the theory still has its own limitations in explaining factors that could potentially affect the reputation of an organization. This study develops a mediation model by integrating crisis responsibility, charismatic leadership communication and organizational credibility in the SCCT theoretical framework. The main objective of this study is to determine the mediating effect of charismatic leadership communication and organizational credibility in the relationship between crisis responsibility and perceived organizational reputation. Based on the mediation model, nine hypotheses are tested using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with the data obtained from a sample of 368 employees of two selected public organizations in Malaysia. Research findings confirm positive and significant relationships between all constructs in this study. The tested mediation model also indicates that the dynamic mechanisms of charismatic leadership communication and organizational credibility partially mediated the relationship between crisis responsibility and perceived organizational reputation during a crisis. These findings validate the proposed model in this study. Empirically, the mediated model established can serve as an instructive guide for both public organizations and corporate leaders in managing crises and reputations. This study contributes to further establishing the SCCT and posits key attributes in the organizational reputation processes. A practical implication of the findings suggests that a leader should engage in charismatic leadership communication and strengthen organizational credibility to mitigate the impact of a crisis on organizational reputation. As a conclusion, the findings have placed the dynamic mechanism of the research constructs at the forefront of managing organizational reputation.

**Keywords:** Crisis responsibility, Charismatic leadership communication, Organizational credibility, Organizational reputation, Situational Crisis Communication Theory

## **Dedication**

To all of my friends who taught me the true meaning of friendships, some of whom had gone through the same path together, and some who had not, but were always there; some who had shared insightful ideas, and some who simply care. Especially for Minn, Dib, Azie, Aziah, Zai & Echah, I am thankful for your whole-hearted emotional and moral support.

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## List of Publication and Conferences

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### Conferences

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2. Post-graduate Conference, 22 June 2015. Holiday Villa, Alor Setar, Kedah.



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## List of Abbreviation

AGFI	Adjusted Goodness of Fit
AMOS	Analysis of Moment Structure
AVE	Average Variance Extracted
C.R	Critical Ratio
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
CFI	Comparative Fit Index
Chisq	Discrepancy Chi Square
Chisq/df	Chi Square/Degrees of Freedom
CR	Composite Reliability
EFA	Exploratory Factor Analysis
EMP	Empathy
ENT	Enthusiasm
GFI	Goodness of Fix Index
MACC	Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission
NFI	Normed Fit Index
PNFI	Parsimony Normed Fit Index
RMSEA	Root Mean Square of Error Approximation
SD	Standard Deviation
SE	Standard Error
SEM	Structural Equation Modeling
SMC	Squared Multiple Correlation
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
SRMR	Standardized Root Mean Square Residual
SRW	Standardized Regression Weight
TLI	Tucker Lewis Index
TOC	Task-oriented Communication
VIF	Variance Inflation Factor

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Public or government organizations have long been associated with having unfavorable reputations (Waeraas & Moar, 2015; Carpenter & Krause, 2012). For decades, they have been portrayed as incompetent, inefficient, rigid, indulge in too much red tape and bureaucracy. These negative perceptions are associated with the government's reputation which is reflected in constant criticism such as being unreliable and not having a customer service orientation. This has resulted in the decline of public support for government and public organizations or agencies (Kennedy, 2009). To worsen this situation, a 'bad' reputation and stakeholders' distrust may signal a lack of legitimacy in public sector organizations (Luoma-aho & Makikangas, 2014). Fortunately, current research in public organizational reputation has indicated that public entities are becoming more cognizant with the value of a favorable reputation and have begun to put an interest in improving and protecting their reputation. These concerns are expressed in terms of actions taken to implement measures to nurture, maintain, and protect their reputation. As a result, a great deal of research has been dedicated to public organizational reputation in recent years.

A wide range of scholarly interests in this area focuses on the issues and criticisms concerning the problem of reputation management which threatens public organization's reputation. Among the issues and challenges are those concerning public safety, which involves matters of life and death, and other situations that directly affect citizens, such as general elections and public policies, which rely on trust from the public (Liu, Horsley, & Yang, 2012). To further address issues in today's increasingly complex organizations, scholars have also focused on issues such as political legitimacy (Houston & Harding,

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