

# The Role of Crisis Leadership and Organisational Learning in Social Media Crisis Preparedness

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## Abstract

The proliferation of social media has fundamentally changed organisational crisis landscapes, achieving unprecedented vulnerabilities. The social media crisis management market, valued at USD 1.88 billion in 2023, is expected to grow at significant rates. Despite this investment and demand for speed, organisations are still open to rapid reputational damage. Thus, the development of technological scale has far exceeded the development of existing response capabilities, and teams find themselves under disproportionate pressure. The aim of this study was to examine how crisis leadership competencies influence social media risk mitigation in organisations, and to explore whether competitor crisis analysis strengthens organisational preparedness for social media crises. The specific research objectives were, to analyze the relationship between specific anticipatory crisis leadership competencies and the depth and formality of organizational learning processes following competitor crisis analysis. To evaluate the mediating role of organizational learning in the causal pathway between crisis-led competitor analysis/pre-mortem exercises and the implementation of measurable, proactive changes to social media crisis strategy. To quantify the correlation between crisis leadership-facilitated pre-mortem simulations and objective metrics of decision-making performance in simulated or real social media crisis events. The study methodology was quantitative with a positivist research philosophy. The study sample was 150 participants. Primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire. Data was analysed using SPSS version 25. Ethical considerations were observed in the study. Results show that Pre-mortem analysis was the most significant predictor of crisis preparedness ( $\beta = .336, p < .001$ ). A positive effect was also significant with crisis leadership competencies ( $\beta = .279, p = .001$ ). Organisational learning was positively and statistically significantly correlated with crisis preparedness ( $\beta = .209, p = .030$ ). The Study concluded that crisis leadership competencies have a strong impact on organisational preparedness. Practically, the findings are of significance to organisations who would want to enhance their crisis preparedness capacity.

**Keywords:** Crisis Leadership, Social Media, Crisis Management, Organizational Learning, Pre-mortem Analysis, Crisis Preparedness.

## INTRODUCTION

The proliferation of social media has fundamentally changed organisational crisis landscapes, achieving unprecedented vulnerabilities. With more than 5.22 billion global users (DataReportal, 2024), organisations are facing amplified risks where negative information can reach viral levels in minutes. The social media crisis management market, valued at USD 1.88 billion in 2023, is expected to grow at significant rates (GMI Insights, 2024) and shows the scale at which the challenge occurred. Furthermore, 34% have expectations of responses given within 30 minutes, and 90% have transparency in restoring trust (Threecolts, 2023); first-hour responses increase trust by 85% (SurveySparrow, 2025). Despite this investment and demand for speed, organisations are still open to rapid reputational damage. Thus, the development of technological scale has far exceeded the development of existing response capabilities, and teams find themselves under disproportionate pressure and raise questions as to whether speed is prioritising meaningful accountability or superficial reassurance.

The velocity and unpredictability of social media crisis escalation present significant challenges for contemporary organisations. The dissemination of information across platforms is alarming and breaks the traditional corporate response paradigms (Cai et al., 2022). The real-time pressures generated by algorithmic mechanisms and user-generated content on a viral scale force enterprises to take the standards of crisis response to a new level (Nuortimo et al., 2024). For example, the American Eagle 2025 campaign of "Great Jeans" controversy illustrates how marketing can quickly turn into a cultural hot spot that attracts millions of negative responses (Manuel & Inskip, 2025; Yang, 2025). The stakeholders are dependent on electronic word-of-mouth as a tool to assess companies, and negative interactions result in significant reputational losses (Chowdhury and Chowdhury, 2024). Once a dominant negative narrative forms online, it becomes extremely difficult to redirect the conversation.

A social media crisis has far-reaching financial and reputational implications that are beyond publicity harm. Such incidences often result in a change of leadership, loss of market value and deterioration of stakeholder trust in the long run. Corporate reputation is an essential resource that shapes the attitudes and actions of stakeholders, and crisis can change its course radically (Nuortimo et al., 2024; Blajer-Gołębiewska, 2021). For example, the departure of Astronomer Inc. CEO Andy Byron after a viral clip of him kissing a cam camera exemplifies the instant leadership backlash of executive misconduct (Hilling, 2025; Picchi, 2025). Therefore, a social media crisis can put organisations at multidimensional risk where visibility, as opposed to intent or control, is the primary cause of reputational and strategic damage, and the notion of attention being easily translated into brand value or resilience is challenged (Marketing Week, 2025).

### *Research Aim*

The aim of this study was to examine how crisis leadership competencies influence social media risk mitigation in organisations, and to explore whether competitor crisis analysis strengthens organisational preparedness for social media crises.

### *Research Objectives*

1. To analyze the relationship between specific anticipatory crisis leadership competencies (e.g., sensemaking, issue-selling) and the depth and formality of organizational learning processes following competitor crisis analysis.
2. To evaluate the mediating role of organizational learning in the causal pathway between crisis-led competitor analysis/pre-mortem exercises and the implementation of measurable, proactive changes to social media crisis strategy.
3. To quantify the correlation between crisis leadership-facilitated pre-mortem simulations and objective metrics of decision-making performance (speed and quality) in simulated or real social media crisis events.

### *Research Hypothesis*

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Leadership positively influences organisational learning

**H<sub>2</sub>:** Organisational learning positively influences crisis preparedness.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Social Media and the Changing Nature of Organizational Crisis*

In the contemporary digital landscape, crises no longer remain confined to traditional media cycles; instead, they spread rapidly across social media platforms where information circulates instantly among large networks of users. Majority of social media studies have demonstrated that reputational damage could escalate within minutes as users shared, reshared, and amplified negative information across digital channels (Beldad and von Rosenstiel, 2023; Hamidi et al., 2023; Islam et al., 2021).

The study by Lee and Romdhane (2025) found evidence that digital monitoring tools allow organisations to identify problematic narratives early and engage stakeholders before crises escalate. However, the study by Yilmaz, (2024) challenged this optimistic view by demonstrating that the algorithmic structure of social media platforms often places organisations in a structurally disadvantaged position. As a result, even timely organisational responses may struggle to compete with rapidly spreading negative narratives (Hadijah 2025; Langaro et al., 2024; Shankar and Tewari, 2025; Wilk et al. 2025; Yadav, 2024).

Social media platform affordances further intensify crisis propagation. Features such as retweets, reposts, and algorithmically recommended content accelerate the spread of negative sentiment and create what scholars describe as “virtual echo effects,” where online communities reinforce similar viewpoints (Dhar and Bose, 2022; Huan et al., 2024). These echo chambers magnify reputational damage by amplifying criticism and reinforcing stakeholder perceptions of organisational wrongdoing. Consequently, viral user-generated content can overshadow corporate disclosures and official crisis communication.

Accordingly, Jahng (2021) observed that inaccurate or misleading information can trigger crisis perceptions even when claims lack credibility. In such circumstances, organisations must address legitimate stakeholder concerns while simultaneously correcting misinformation circulating online. Consumers increasingly rely on electronic word-of-mouth to interpret organisational failures. Wang et al. (2021) found that stakeholders often form crisis judgments based on online discussions and peer-generated content rather than official corporate communication. This shift in information consumption patterns requires organisations to consider how crisis narratives evolve within social media communities rather than focusing solely on traditional media messaging (Dhar and Bose, 2022; Huan et al., 2024).

Further synthesis of the literature shows that there is a convergence and critical tensions on how the scholars conceptualise the social media-driven crisis dynamics. Although the research is unanimous about faster reputational harm caused by platform affordances due to the quick dissemination and amplification of information (Beldad and von Rosenstiel, 2023; Hamidi et al., 2023), the study of the efficacy of organisational response is significantly split. On the one hand, Lee and Romdhane (2025) highlight strategic usefulness of digital monitoring and early engagement, and they suppose that by intervening in time, it is possible to lessen the escalation. Contrarily, Yilmaz (2024) and future studies (Hadijah, 2025; Langaro et al., 2024) claim that the prioritisation of high-engagement content algorithmically favours organisations, that is, even quick reactions can be impaired by the emotional appeal of user-generated storeys. Such incongruity is attributable to contextual and boundary conditions: the effectiveness of organisational response seems to be dependent on the type of a crisis (e.g. preventable or accidental), the nature of a platform (e.g. X/Twitter vs Tik Tok) and the credibility/reputation of an organisation.

Moreover, although the impact of an echo-chamber and electronic word-of-mouth is well known as an enforcer of crisis perception (Dhar and Bose, 2022; Huan et al., 2024), as Jahng (2021) and Wang et al. (2021) note, there is an important nuance to it: stakeholders might pay more attention to peer discussion than official information, meaning that false information may be the cause of crises by itself. It means that the speed of escalation of the crisis is not only predetermined but also, by the narrative legitimacy in online communities. In general, the literature indicates that social media crises are regulated by a complex of factors and technological and social and organisational approaches, the effectiveness of the response is limited by platform logic, trust in the stakeholders and the character of the causing situation.

### *Crisis Leadership and Proactive Crisis Preparedness*

In the literature, Lehtonen (2025) defines crisis leadership in terms of a leadership-as-practice approach which, according to the author, leadership in crisis is not a quality of individual leaders but a product of organizational interactions. In this perspective crisis leadership is a process that is socially constructed by communicating, coordinating and also shared sense making. This view is in contrast to the previous traditional leadership models which laid greater stress on the hierarchical decision-making structures.

The study by Sott (2025) highlights the role of adaptive leadership during times of crisis, a leader is supposed to have the capacity to change their strategy dynamically as the circumstances change. Flexibility, experimentation, and learning are other essential leadership competencies that adaptive leadership theory emphasizes in times of crisis.

Whereas Lehtonen (2025) is more specific on the collective leadership processes, Sott (2025) is more concerned with individual leadership ability. These contrasting views put more emphasis on a wider discussion in the field of crisis leadership literature in the question of whether successful crisis management should rely on organizational frameworks or personalized leadership qualities.

Crisis leadership is also mainly centered on communication. According to Gigliotti (2025), communication in leadership plays a big role towards organizational preparedness and resilience in times of crisis. The study found that leaders who are open and consistent in communicating with the stakeholders have a higher chance of keeping them trustful and aligning internal efforts.

Further, Harris (2025) broadens the crisis leadership debate by discussing crisis leadership in educational institutions in times of crisis like pandemics. It is argued in the study that distributed leadership structures enhance organizational resilience because they enable decision-making power to be distributed among various actors. It is comparable to that of Lehtonen (2025) that views leadership as practice; however, it contrasts with that of Sott (2025) that focuses on personal leadership flexibility. The research results of Harris indicate that the effectiveness of crisis leadership can be determined not only by leadership competencies, but also by institutional governance structure.

In comparison, the analyzed literature is united by the value of the adaptable approach, communication, and cooperative leader designs in crises. Nevertheless, they lose track in terms of theoretical focus. Others emphasize on the level of the competency of individual leadership (Curnin et al., 2025; Sott, 2025), and some emphasize on the processes of collective leadership (Harris, 2025; Lehtonen, 2025). All these divergent views indicate that crisis leadership can be most appropriately described as a multidimensional concept that integrates the organizational and personal abilities. Critical review of the literature on crisis leadership demonstrates that, on the one hand, there is convergence on adaptation and communication, whereas on the other, there is severe theoretical difference on the location of effective leader. Process-based approaches, including Lehtonen (2025) and Harris (2025) frame and understand crisis leadership as a shared socially created practice, in which distributed decision-making contribute to enhanced organisational resiliency. Competency-based methods, in contrast, focus on the capabilities of individual leaders especially in adaptability, flexibility and quick strategic changes (Sott, 2025; Curnin et al., 2025). Although the two streams admit that communication is a crucial factor (Gigliotti, 2025), the differences are based on whether the leader is gifted with it or it is an organisational process that emerges. These discrepancies have been assumed to be due to differences in contexts: literature based in more complex and decentralized systems is more likely to be better associated with distributed leadership models, whereas leadership in contexts of more hierarchical initiatives and time-sensitivity crisis contributes to literature on decisive leaders making quick moves. In addition, they are also influenced by the methodological differences between qualitative case-based studies and leadership competency frameworks. More importantly, the boundary conditions occur around organisational structure, type of crisis, and institutional maturity.

### *Organisational Learning and Crisis Resilience*

Organisational learning has emerged as a critical mechanism for developing crisis resilience, yet significant debate exists regarding the transferability of lessons between organisations. Evenseth, et al. (2022) found evidence through a systematic review that learning is in, from, and toward crisis, implying that anticipatory learning is necessary to be prepared for crisis while Schneider (2024) claims that the current technological progress allows organisations to learn through benchmarking, experimentation, and environmental scanning.

Nevertheless, there are still significant obstacles to inter-organisational learning; dissimilarity of resources, goals, and situational diversity prevents the successful transfer of knowledge between companies (AlMujaini et al., 2021). Further, while some studies (Chen & Zheng, 2022; Li & Wang, 2022; Maclean et al., 2023) indicate that organisational learning is an important factor in increasing dynamic capabilities and performance, others (Duchek, 2020) reveal that the established best practices might not be appropriate to address new crisis scenarios.

However, the study by Khoa and Huynh (2024) focused on the contribution of knowledge-driven teamwork to improve organizational learning ability. According to Khoa and Huynh (2024), collaborative knowledge sharing by teams improves their capability to solve complex problems and fit within volatile environments. Khoa and Huynh (2024) focused on the knowledge processes at the team level. These contrasting views depict the multi-level concept of organizational learning.

Wen (2025) also adds to this debate by discussing communication networks in organizations. Within the crisis preparedness framework, the well-developed communication systems can enable organizations to recognize threats emerging and respond to them faster. Nevertheless, communication networks can be effective only based on organizational culture and management practices. The study by Shivers (2025) brought the cultural aspect to organizational learning by studying the nature of organization culture in crisis preparedness. This research posits that companies that have learning oriented cultures have a higher propensity to actively undertake proactive crisis

preparedness and planning exercises. Shivers (2025) argues that the organizations that put learning and continuous improvement as priorities can adapt to crises better than others.

Nizamidou (2026) offers a wider view of organizational crisis management, which implies that there should be proactive strategies to solve crises in the workplace. The research points to the necessity of incorporating learning processes into the crisis management systems so that the organizations could be able to maintain their crisis response systems constantly.

The critical synthesis of the organisational learning literature indicates that there is a general consensus that learning occurs to improve the crisis resilience on the one hand, but on the other hand, external inconsistencies are evident on the way and the place in which learning is the most effective. Whereas Evenseth et al. (2022) and Schneider (2024) focused on the strategic importance of anticipatory and technologically enabled learning (e.g., benchmarking and environmental scanning), other researchers also point to the fact that there are structural constraints that restrict the extrapolability of such learning to other organisations (AlMujaini et al., 2021). The latter strain is also manifested in the gap between the studies that locate an organisational learning as a source of dynamic capabilities and enhanced performance (Chen and Zheng, 2022; Li and Wang, 2022; Maclean et al., 2023) and the ones, including Duchek (2020), that warn against the over-reliance on the established best practises in new crisis conditions. Such discrepancies can be attributed to contextual and temporal influences especially the difference between normal and unique crises where prior knowledge can either facilitate quick action or limit the adaptive process. Also, the literature is fragmented at different levels of analysis: Khoa and Huynh (2024) focus on the foreground knowledge processes at the team level, but Wen (2025) and Shivers (2025) highlight the organisational-level enablers, including communication networks and learning culture. It implies that whether the process of learning is effective depends on alignment on a micro and macro levels.

### *Pre-Mortem Analysis as a Tool for Crisis Preparedness*

Pre-mortem analysis is a new method of enhancing crisis preparedness. This technique involves teams to think that a project or strategy has been a failure and then it tries to discover the possible causes of such failure. Klein (2021) showed that pre-mortem analysis lowers the level of overconfidence in planning processes because it prompts the participants to question the assumptions made and risks. On the same note, Bettin et al. (2022) observed that pre-mortem exercises enhance risk-identification by encouraging the teams to take into account the external factors, including stakeholder behaviour and environmental uncertainty.

The idea behind pre-mortem analysis is comparable to the process in place in financial stress testing. The financial stress tests are done to mimic unfavorable economic situations in a bid to expose inherent flaws within the institutions. Eisenbach et al. (2022) described the use of such tests as a way of assisting organisations to know their weak points before crises arise. The pre-mortem analysis serves the same purpose, as organisations can simulate possible failures and work around contingency plans. Besides the better risk identification, pre-mortem analysis also increases the team dynamics and the quality of planning.

Critical literature review indicates that many people agree that pre-mortem analysis is effective in increasing risk awareness and minimizing cognitive bias, though there are inconsistencies in the extent and mechanism of the effectiveness. Klein (2021) places pre-mortem more as a tool of debiasing that reduces overconfidence at the individual and team cognition level, but Bettin et al. (2022) offer it an even greater value of a risk scanner at the system level, emphasizing its capacity to reveal external uncertainties, including reactions of stakeholders and environmental volatility. Simultaneously, Eisenbach, Kovner and Lee (2022) place quite comparable reasoning in financial stress testing, focusing on quantitative and model-driven simulation, as opposed to pre-mortem exercises, which are more qualitative and participatory.

These differences indicate a fault line of inconsistency on whether pre-mortem can be viewed as a behavioural intervention or a strategic risk management tool. This difference can be attributed to a disciplinary approach namely behavioural decision theory against financial risk modelling and methodology. Notably, the effectiveness of pre-mortem analysis is determined by the boundary conditions. Its influence is probably more on complex uncertain environments in which risks are unclear and cannot easily be modeled quantitatively, but less on highly regulated or data rich contexts in which formal stress testing can be better.

### *Identified Research Gaps*

The current literature on crisis management during this digital era underscores the growing importance of social media in the exponential growth and magnification of organisational crisis. Nevertheless, there is still a major research gap on the proactive organisational ability that would be needed to curb or avert such crises before they get out of control. Most of the research that has been done concentrates more on reactive communication approaches that organisations adopt when a crisis has already happened as opposed to proactive preparedness measures, which can make organisations more susceptible to social media crisis management and anticipation. Specifically, the researchers

have failed to explore the role of leaders in decoding external crisis indicators and translating them into internal organisational learning mechanisms which eventually result in preparedness. Absence of systematic approaches to inter-organisational learning brings ambiguity over how insights related to crisis can be translated to practical preparedness approaches.

### Conceptual Framework



(Source: Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2023)

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

## METHODS

### Research Design

In this study, the research design chosen was the quantitative one, as it sought to test the relationship between crisis leadership competencies and social media crisis preparedness (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2023). Quantitative research aims at gathering numerical data and statistically analysing it to discover patterns among variables (Creswell and Creswell, 2017). The research design was a cross-sectional survey which entailed the gathering of data at one time among the respondents. Cross-sectional surveys are conducted by researchers to examine the associations between variables in a particular population without the need to monitor the changes over time (Bell et al., 2022). This design enabled the study to explore the role of crisis leadership competencies in the social media crisis preparedness among professionals who handle organisation communications roles, risk management roles and leadership roles.

The survey design suited the research due to the fact that it allowed the researcher to collect the data of a relatively large number of respondents in a relatively efficient way and standardised the responses. Surveys can also be used to statistically test theoretical relationships that are based on available literature (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2023). By so doing, the study was able to test the hypothesis based on how organisational learning and role of crisis leadership in alleviating the risks involved in social media crisis.

### Research Philosophy

Research philosophy describes beliefs about the ways of knowledge development and interpretation in research (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2023). This research philosophy was a positivist research philosophy. Positivism also presupposes that reality is independent of people and that a researcher can measure and analyse this reality with the help of objective and scientific techniques (Junjie and Yingxin, 2022).

Positivist scholars (Ali et al., 2021) focus on measurable phenomena and use empirical evidence in order to establish connections between variables in a theoretical manner. This method of philosophy is close to quantitative studies as it aims at quantifying variables, testing hypotheses, and determining cause-and-effect relationships based on statistics (Gamage, 2025).

Positivism supports objectivity and reduces the bias of the researcher by utilizing structured tools and statistical methods (Saunders et al., 2023). In this way, the reliability and validity of the results were enhanced and allowed the study to produce generalisable results about crisis preparedness in organisational settings.

### *Sampling Technique*

Sampling is the process of choosing a small group of people out of a bigger population in order to reflect the traits of the said population. The sampling method used in this research was the simple random sampling (Sarker and AL-Muaalemi, 2022), which was the best method to use since every individual of the population of interest had the same probability of being chosen.

The probability sampling methods increase the representativeness of the sample and minimize sampling bias (Saunders et., 2023). The study was able to select participants randomly, which enhanced the chances that the sample represented the traits of professionals working in the sphere of crisis management and organisational leadership.

This was also supported by simple random sampling as the quantitative study requires representative samples to reach valid conclusions as the research was statistical in nature. The approach guaranteed that the data obtained gave a neutral estimate of the correlation between crisis leadership competencies and crisis preparedness through social media.

### *Target Population*

The target population is the total population of people, which a researcher wants to investigate (Weyant, 2022). In this study, the target population was the professionals working in the field of organisational leadership, communication management, crisis management, and risk management.

These individuals were the corporate managers, communication experts, PR practitioners, and risk management officers operating in organisations that extensively use the social media sites in communication with stakeholders. These individuals are active in activities involving the crisis monitoring, communication strategy, and decision-making in organisations in crisis situations (Bell et al., 2022).

### *Sample Size*

Sample size is defined as the amount of participants that will be chosen among the target population and will be involved in the study (Saunders et., 2023). A correct sample size should be determined since it determines the reliability and statistical validity of research results.

In this study, the researcher used 150 respondents who were chosen as a sample of the target population. It is widely believed by researchers that this is a sufficient sample size to be used in quantitative survey research in an attempt to statistically analyze the relationship between variables (Creswell and Creswell, 2018).

### *Data Collection*

The research used a structured questionnaire in gathering primary data. Questionnaires are among the most popular data collection tools when it comes to quantitative research since, in this type of research, researchers can efficiently collect standardized information by using multiple respondents at once (Sharma et al., 2023).

The questionnaire contained closed-ended questions that were aimed at quantifying variables of crisis leadership competencies, organisational learning practices, and social media crisis preparedness. The questionnaire was constructed on the basis of concepts that were identified in the literature review by the researcher. The respondents evaluated their degree of agreement with different statements in a five-point Likert scale, which includes strongly disagree, strongly agree.

The researcher sent the questionnaire via the internet through online survey systems. Online collection of data presented a number of benefits, among which was greater accessibility by respondents, high rates of response, and efficient management of data (Saunders et., 2023). The digital distribution approach was also consistent with the research interests in the field of social media and digital communication space.

The researcher conducted a pilot test on a small sample or sample size of the participants to test the questionnaire in terms of clarity, reliability and validity before administering the entire questionnaire to the population. Pilot testing assists in revealing ambiguous questions and the instrument effectively measures the target constructs (Creswell and Creswell, 2018).

### *Data Analysis*

Data obtained was analysed through statistical analysis techniques. Data analysis involved organising, summarizing and interpreting numerical data in order to find out relationships between variables. The analysis was conducted using Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS V25) software by the researcher (Ramdani, Hilmiyah and Indriyani, 2025). The analysis process was broken into a number of steps. First, the researcher performed descriptive statistical analysis in order to generalize demographic attributes of respondents and give the picture of the data.

The frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations were used as descriptive statistics. Second, correlation analysis was employed by the researcher to investigate the extent and the direction of the relationship between crisis leadership competencies and crisis preparedness using social media. Correlation is used to establish the nature of relations between variables as either negative or positive (Saunders et al., 2023).

Lastly, the researcher used regression analysis to test the two hypothesised relationships of leadership competencies and social media risk mitigation. The regression analysis enabled the researcher to establish that crisis leadership competencies had a significant predictive value on organisational preparedness towards the social media crisis (Magembe, 2025). These statistical methods helped the study test the theoretical correlations found in the literature review and give empirical results of the role of crisis leadership and organisational learning in social media crisis preparedness.

### *Ethical Considerations*

Ethics are important in making sure that the research does not infringe on the rights, dignity, and privacy of the participants. To ensure integrity and protection of the participants against harm, researchers should adhere to ethical standards (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). Informed consent was also maintained in the study as the participants were given a clear explanation of the research purpose, nature of their participation and their right to abandon the study at any time.

The questionnaire was completed by the respondents who willingly participated in the research. Anonymity and participants confidentiality were also secured by the researcher. No personally identifiable information was gathered in the study and the researcher analysed the responses in aggregate form so that the identification of individual participants was not possible.

Also, the study ensured that the data obtained was safely stored and was not utilized in any other way. The researcher did not commit any manipulation or misrepresentation of data in terms of analysis and reporting.

## **RESULTS**

### *Participant Demographics (n=150)*

Table 4.1: Participant Demographics

<b>VARIABLE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>FREQUENCY (n)</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE (%)</b>
<b>Job role of Participants</b>	Social Media Management	44	29.3
	Senior Executive / Leadership	35	23.3
	Risk / Crisis Management	26	17.3
	Marketing / Digital Marketing	24	16.0
	Corporate Communications / PR	20	13.3
	Other	1	0.7
<b>Organization Sector</b>	Private Sector	64	42.7
	Public Sector / Government	62	41.3
	Media / Communications	12	8.0
	Consulting / Advisory	5	3.3
	Other	1	0.7

Majority of the participants are in social media management (44=29.3%), followed by senior executive/leadership (35=23.3%) then Risk/Crisis Management (26=17.3%) followed by Marketing/digital marketing experts (24=16%) and corporate communications/PR (20=13.3%).

### Organization Size

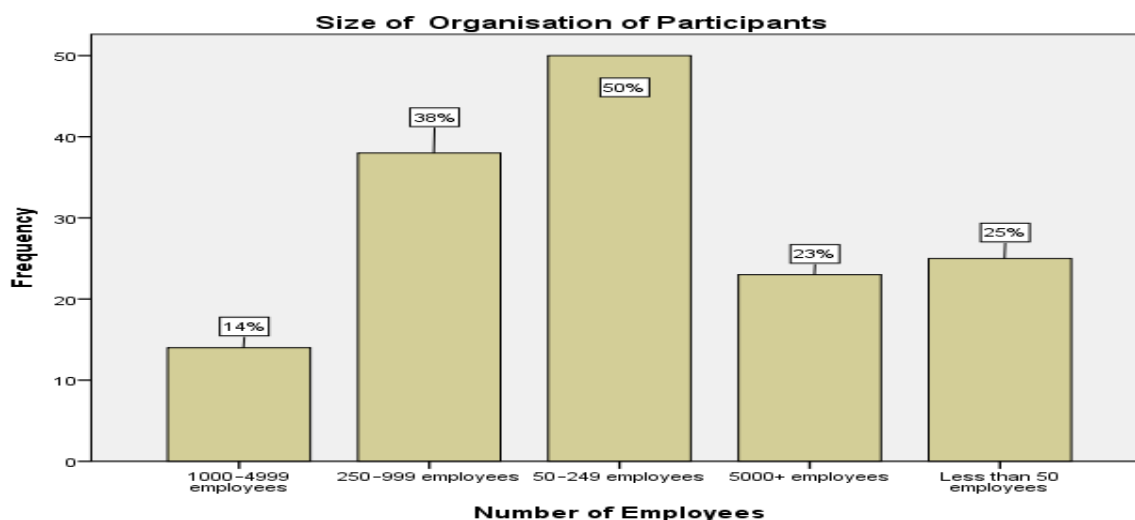


Figure 2: Organization Size

### Descriptive Statistics

#### Descriptive statistics for Crisis Leadership Competencies

Table 4.2: Descriptive statistics for Crisis Leadership Competencies

Statement	Std. Deviation	Mean	N
Senior leaders in my organisation actively monitor emerging social media risks.	1.308	0.213	150
Leadership encourages early identification of potential reputational threats.	1.427	2.73	150
Our leadership demonstrates strong decision-making under crisis pressure.	1.383	2.56	150
Leaders communicate clearly and transparently during crises.	1.379	2.62	150
Leadership promotes proactive planning for social media crises.	1.427	2.52	150
Senior management supports investment in crisis preparedness training.	1.262	2.47	150
Leaders encourage collaboration across departments during crisis planning.	1.327	2.42	150
Leadership promotes a culture where potential risks can be openly discussed	1.313	2.43	150

The descriptive statistics in Table 4.2 reveal that the respondents portrayed moderate to low levels of crisis leadership competencies within the organisation in general. The majority of mean scores lie between 2.42 and 2.73 which imply that the respondents are either disagreeing or neutral on whether there exist effective leadership practises in handling social media crisis.

In particular, leadership that promotes early warning of reputational threats ( $M = 2.73$ ) was best rated, which means that it is comparatively more effective in predicting threats before they happen. It is then succeeded by obvious and open communication in crisis ( $M = 2.62$ ) and decision-making under pressure ( $M = 2.56$ ), which implies the fact that some leadership functions can be found, however, they are not deep-rooted.

Nevertheless, the means score was lower in such domains as cross-departmental collaboration ( $M = 2.42$ ) and promotion of open risk discussion ( $M = 2.43$ ), which implies the lack of strengths in the promotion of a collaborative and psychologically safe space of crisis preparedness. Likewise, the investment level in crisis preparedness training ( $M = 2.47$ ) is low and indicates a low level of organisational support of long-term crisis preparation.

The standard deviations are relatively large (1.26 to 1.43) which indicates that there is a lot of variability in the responses which translates to the fact that there is a lack of consistency in the leadership practises in organisations or among respondents.

*Descriptive statistics for Organisational Learning from Competitor Crises*

Table 4.3: Descriptive statistics for Organisational Learning from Competitor Crises

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>N</b>
Our organisation regularly analyses crises experienced by competitor organisations.	1.299	2.62	150
Lessons from competitor crises influence our social media communication strategies.	1.237	2.35	150
Our organisation conducts structured reviews of external crisis cases.	1.262	2.51	150
Competitor crisis incidents are discussed internally to improve preparedness.	1.246	2.46	150
We adapt our communication strategies based on lessons learned from other organisations' crises.	1.292	2.19	150
Leadership encourages benchmarking against competitor crisis responses.	1.252	2.51	150
Learning from external crisis cases contributes to improvements in our organisational policies.	1.372	2.36	150

Findings in Table 4.3 indicate that competitive crisis organisational learning is weak, and not a regular activity. The majority of mean scores are between 2.19 and 2.62: this means that there is a tendency of the respondents to disagree or be neutral meaning that there is less systematic learning of their external experiences of crisis. The scoring of regular analysis of competitor crisis ( $M = 2.62$ ) and structured reviews ( $M = 2.51$ ) are relatively higher, which points out that a portion of organisations are involved in primitive scanning and reflection of the external environment. Equally, benchmarking ( $M = 2.51$ ) is also reflected as leadership encouragement, which reveals a moderate view of the value of learning of fellow people.

Nevertheless, lower scores on the measures of adapting communication strategies in accordance with the foreign lessons ( $M = 2.19$ ) and the process of lesson integration in the policies ( $M = 2.36$ ) point to the significant gap between the knowledge acquisition and its further application.

The standard deviations (between 1.24 and 1.37) suggest that there is a significant degree of variability in the responses, which implies that organisations are different in the way they deal with learning processes. In general, the results suggest that the organisational learning is mostly reactive, decentralised, and not institutionalised sufficiently to be effective in enhancing the crisis preparedness.

*Descriptive statistics for Pre-Mortem Simulations and Crisis Preparedness*

Table 4.4: Descriptive statistics for Pre-Mortem Simulations and Crisis Preparedness

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>N</b>
Our organisation conducts scenario planning for potential social media crises.	1.314	2.53	150
Crisis simulation exercises are conducted to test response capability.	1.252	2.50	150
Teams discuss possible reasons why a crisis response plan might fail.	1.183	2.43	150
Pre-mortem analysis helps identify weaknesses in crisis planning.	1.262	2.47	150
Simulation exercises improve coordination among teams during crisis situations.	1.333	2.26	150
Pre-mortem exercises influence updates to organisational crisis response strategies.	1.469	2.49	150

The results in Table 4.4 show that the pre-mortem simulation and practices of crisis preparedness are still there but not well developed and not always deeply ingrained in organisations. The average scores of 2.26 to 2.53 indicate that the respondents tend to be inclined towards disagreement or neutrality, which indicates a lack of institutionalisation of proactive strategies of preparedness through simulation based approaches.

Relatively better mean scores of scenario planning ( $M = 2.53$ ) and crisis simulation exercises ( $M = 2.50$ ) indicate that there are certain organisations that have only started to undergo structured strategies of anticipating social media crises. Equally, the impression that pre-mortem analysis assists in establishing weaknesses ( $M = 2.47$ ) shows that an increased awareness of the usefulness of anticipatory risk assessment instruments is emerging. But this awareness does not seem to come well to pass. It is interesting to observe how low the score of team coordination improvement

was with the help of simulations (M= 2.26) and the incorporation of pre-mortem results into strategy updates (M= 2.49) which indicates areas of essential implementation gaps. This implies that in spite of the possibility of simulation activities, the applied activities are not well utilised to promote organisational learning, coordination, or strategic adjustment and, therefore, limit their overall efficacy.

The standard deviations are rather big (between 1.18 and 1.47) which suggests that there is a high degree of variance between organisations, meaning there is not the same level of adoption and maturity of pre-mortem practices across all organisations. This inconsistency supports the perception that preparedness by simulation is situational and not yet universalised in different organisations.

### *Descriptive statistics for Crisis Response Performance*

Table 4.5: Descriptive statistics for Crisis Response Performance

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>N</b>
Our organisation can respond quickly to emerging social media crises.	1.382	2.36	150
Crisis response decisions are made efficiently during high-pressure situations.	1.350	2.30	150
Our organisation’s crisis responses are based on structured planning rather than improvisation.	1.365	2.30	150
Our organisation is well prepared to manage viral social media crises.	1.221	2.23	150

Findings in Table 4.5 suggest that performance of crisis response is not high and is associated with poor organisational preparedness to respond to social media crises. The mean scores (M=2.23-2.36) indicate that the respondents are inclined to disagree or stay neutral indicating the weaknesses in the main aspects of crisis response capabilities. The mark for the ability to react to new social media crises promptly (M = 2.36) is rather high and indicates that there are certain organisations that are more or less responsive, but it is not a powerful mark that is firmly established. Similarly, the scores on efficiency in making decisions under pressure (M = 2.30) and dependability on the use of a structured plan over improvisation (M = 2.30) reveal the presence of formal crisis response mechanisms although they do not always work and are not always fully developed.

The minimum mean result of being well prepared to deal with viral social media crises (M = 2.23) indicates a significant deficiency in the organisational capability to deal with high impact and fast growing digital crisis. This implies that simple response mechanisms could be in place, but the organisations are not adequately prepared to respond to the speed and magnitude of viral online cases. The standard deviations are relatively large (1.22 and 1.38), suggesting a high level of variability in the respondents, as there are differences in the performance of crisis response in organisations.

### **Correlation Analysis**

Table 4.6: Pearson Correlations among Study Variables (N = 150)

<b>Variable</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
Leadership	-			
Organisational Learning	.73***	-		
Pre-mortem Analysis	.62***	.72***	-	
Crisis Preparedness	.64***	.66***	.66***	-

*Note.* \*\*\* $p < .001$  (two-tailed). All correlations are statistically significant.

Pearson Correlations between Study Variables are shown in table 4.10. All the variables had strong relationships, positive, and statistically significant relationships. Leadership (r = .64) was in a positive relationship with crisis preparedness in organisational learning (r = .66) and pre-mortem analysis (r = .66), which means that the higher these aspects, the higher the preparedness one may expect.

## Regression Analysis

### *Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Crisis Preparedness*

Table 4.7: Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Crisis Preparedness (N = 150)

<b>Predictor</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>SE B</b>	<b>β</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>VIF</b>
Constant	0.058	0.183	-	0.317	.751	-
Leadership	0.298	0.090	0.279	3.321	.001	2.23
Organisational Learning	0.239	0.109	0.209	2.192	.030	2.86
Pre-mortem Analysis	0.364	0.089	0.336	4.076	<.001	2.15

Table 4.11 presents the regression results. A multiple linear regression was performed to test the degree to which crisis leadership key skills, organisational learning, and pre-mortem analysis forecast crisis preparedness. The regression model was found to be significant,  $F(3, 146) = 56.42, p < .001$  indicating that the data was well fitted by the model. The proportion of variance in the crisis preparedness explained by the model was significant with  $R^2 = .537$  and Adjusted  $R^2 = .527$  indicating that the predictor variables are able to explain about 53.7% of crisis preparedness variation.

Analysis of the independent predictors indicated that the three independent variables contributed statistically to the model. Pre-mortem analysis became the most significant predictor of crisis preparedness ( $\beta = .336, p < .001$ ), implying that those organisations that are more active in their simulation and scenario planning ended up being more prepared in relation to social media crisis preparedness. A positive effect was also significant with crisis leadership competencies ( $\beta = .279, p = .001$ ), which implies that proper leadership practises are critical in making organisations more prepared. Also, organisational learning was positively and statistically significantly correlated with crisis preparedness ( $\beta = .209, p = .030$ ), but its effect size was relatively lower.

The Multicollinearity diagnostics did not reveal that regression assumptions have been violated since none of the predictors showed improvements in Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) greater than the recommended limit of 5 which verified that the predictors were independent of each other.

## Model Diagnostics Statistical findings

### *Multicollinearity Test*

Table 4.8: Multicollinearity Test Results

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Collinearity Statistics</b>	
	<b>Tolerance</b>	<b>VIF</b>
Leadership	0.448	2.23
Organisational Learning	0.350	2.86
Pre-mortem Analysis	0.466	2.15

The tolerance values of all the predictors are within the range of 0.350 to 0.466, as shown in Table 4.12 which is significantly larger than the standard 0.10 accepted to be the minimum threshold in a model and indicates that all of the predictors have unique variance to the model. On the same note, the values of the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) of 2.15 through to 2.86 are very small compared to a critical value of 5, indicating that multicollinearity is not an issue.

Based on the predictors, organisational learning has the highest VIF (2.86) and the lowest tolerance (0.350), meaning that it is comparatively better correlated with all other independent variables, although this is also rather weak. Conversely, pre-mortem analysis has recorded the lowest VIF (2.15) indicating that it is the most independent variable in the analysis.

*Model Fitness Test*

Table 4.9: Model Fitness Test ANOVA Results

		ANOVA <sup>a</sup>				
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	92.440	3	30.813	56.422	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	79.734	146	.546		
	Total	172.173	149			

a. Dependent Variable: Preparedness\_Mean  
 b. Predictors: (Constant), Premortem, Leadership, Learning

The ANOVA results in Table 4.13 indicate that the regression model provides a good fit for the data. The independent collectively explain a significant portion of the variation in organizational performance. Given the high F-statistic (56.422) and the p-value of 0.000, we can confidently conclude that the model is statistically significant and suitable to examine the specific contributions of each independent variable.

**DISCUSSION**

The results of this study give solid empirical evidence to the suggestion that crisis leadership, organisational learning, and pre-mortem simulations are key factors that determine the social media crisis preparedness, but the extent of their application is uneven and in most cases not well developed.

*Crisis Leadership and Preparedness*

The findings indicate that crisis leadership competencies positively and significantly affect crisis preparedness with leadership becoming a significant predictor of the regression model. This is in line with previous studies by Lehtonen (2025) and Gigliotti (2025) that demonstrate crisis leadership as a key component of organisational coordination, communication in times of crisis. The positive correlation in this study supports that strong leadership helps to identify risks at an early age, make under-pressure decisions, and communicate clearly, which are also crucial during the process of handling fast-moving social media crises.

The mean scores in the leadership indicators are rather low, which implies that closely in practice these competencies are not well entrenched in organisations. The finding somewhat does not comply with more optimistic assumptions of the literature that organisations are becoming more adaptively led (Sott, 2025). One of the possible reasons is the contextual differences: unlike in theoretical models where the organisational systems are usually mature, the latest results indicate that most organisations are run with disjointed leadership arrangements and an underdeveloped preparedness culture, and thus, the practical implications of the competencies of leadership are restricted.

*Organisational Learning and Crisis Preparedness*

The analysis additionally shows that preparedness is a positive predictor of organisational learning of competitor crises that is in line with existing studies that underline the importance of learning in developing dynamic capabilities (Chen and Zheng, 2022; Li and Wang, 2022). The high correlation and regression value affirms that the organisations that practise external benchmarking, crisis analysis and knowledge sharing are in a higher position to predict and handle crisis.

The descriptive findings however suggest the absence of systematic institutionalisation of such types of learning processes especially in the area of translating the insights into strategic or policy adjustments. This contributes to the fact that according to Duchek (2020) learning off past events does not necessarily translate into efficient preparedness, particularly in the new or dynamically changing crisis situations like social media platforms.

The disconnect between the perceived significance of learning and its sparse application in practice can be explained by the organisational issues, such as the absence of formal learning systems, insufficient leadership, and the inability to absorb the knowledge supplied by outside sources into the company. This creates a vital disparity between learning knowledge and the application of knowledge that limits the success of the organisational learning in the process of promoting resilience.

### *Pre-Mortem Simulations and Crisis Preparedness*

The results have shown that crisis preparedness is best predicted by pre-mortem simulations, which implies that scenario-based and proactive strategies have a key role to play in improving organisational preparedness. This aligns with Klein (2021) and Bettin et al. (2022), who believe that the pre-mortem analysis enhances the identification of risks by provoking assumptions and predicting failures. Nevertheless, the fact that the predictive impact of pre-mortem practices is fairly high but the mean scores are relatively low suggests that pre-mortem practices are not common and uniformly used. This is indicative of an absence of theoretical acknowledgment and real life implementation.

Although simulation-based preparedness is generally promoted as a best practice within the literature, the results imply that a lot of organisations do not have the resources or expertise, or organisational culture to implement such strategies comprehensively. The low scores on the coordination and strategy updates, also, suggest that the pre-mortem exercises could be performed independently and be not a part of a larger organisational learning and decision-making. This confirms the perception that pre-mortem analysis can only be effective when conducted on the basis of organisational integration and follow-through, as opposed to being adopted.

### *Crisis Response Performance*

The research also concludes that the general performance of crisis responses is relatively poor, and the respondents revealed that they were not capable of responding promptly, making effective decisions, and dealing with the viral social media crises. This is unlike literature where it is assumed that organisations are becoming more sophisticated in managing digital crises (Huan et al., 2024; Dhar & Bose, 2022).

One of the major lessons that come out of the results is that the lack of preparedness is directly correlated with the deficiencies of leadership practices, learning, and simulation. That is, organisations with weak leadership frameworks, which do not institutionalize learning, and do not make good use of simulation tools, are less well equipped to respond to the crisis.

The variability is also high when comparing the responses, which is another indication of crisis preparedness being very situational and it depends on the size of the organisation, industry and resources at hand. This is consistent with contingency views in the literature which state that organisational and environmental conditions influence the effectiveness of crisis management.

Collectively, the results contribute to a multi-dimensional and integrative perspective of crisis preparedness leadership, learning, and simulation practices interrelate to influence organisational preparedness. Though individual variables have their own influence towards preparedness, their collectivity effect is much more substantial, as it is demonstrated by the high explanatory capacity of the regression equation ( $R^2 = 0.537$ ). Nevertheless, the research also reveals the presence of an essential gap in implementation: whereas all these factors are theoretically properly developed, their practical implementation is rather scarce and unequal. This implies that the problem that organisations have is not ignorance but instead the absence of organisation, organisational commitment and capability building.

The results can be generalized to the existing literature by showing that although crisis leadership, organisational learning, and pre-mortem simulation are empirically viable predictors of social media crisis preparedness, their performance depends on the organisational environment, the quality of implementation, and the connection with the larger strategic process. This underlines why organisations should stop being fragmented and consider a holistic and systems based approach to crisis preparedness.

### **Linking findings and discussion to the research questions/objectives**

***Research Objective 1: To analyze the relationship between specific anticipatory crisis leadership competencies (e.g., sensemaking, issue-selling) and the depth and formality of organizational learning processes following competitor crisis analysis.***

The results are very positive signs of a strong and positive relationship between crisis leadership and organisational learning as indicated by the high level of correlation ( $r = .73$ ,  $p = .001$ ). This implies that an organisation with greater leadership competencies, specifically, the early recognition of risks, communication, and proactive planning tendencies is more inclined to take part in formal learning processes as a result of competitor crisis.

The descriptive findings however indicate that leadership competencies and organisational learning practices are moderately low and irregularly practiced, which indicates that though leadership enables learning, the extent and the formalisation of these learning processes are limited. It follows that anticipatory leadership capacity, including sensemaking and issue-selling, can be conceptual but not operationalized enough to be used to facilitate institutionalized, systematic learning systems. Thus, the results partially achieve the aim since the relationship was confirmed, but also indicate the gap in the quality and maturity of the learning processes.

***Research Objective 2: To evaluate the mediating role of organizational learning in the causal pathway between crisis-led competitor analysis/pre-mortem exercises and the implementation of measurable, proactive changes to social media crisis strategy.***

To test the mediating effect of organizational learning in the causal relationship between crisis-induced competitor analysis/pre-mortem exercises and the execution of quantifiable, proactive responses to social media crisis strategy. The findings indicate that organisational learning has a moderated major mediation. Organisational learning has a positive relationship with pre-mortem analysis ( $r = .72, p < .001$ ), crisis preparedness ( $r = .66, p = .001$ ), as well as is a strong predictor in the regression equation ( $\beta = .209, p = .030$ ). This implies that the mechanisms of learning are a significant channel through which the anticipatory practices (e.g., competitor analysis and simulations) determine the preparedness outcomes.

Nevertheless, there is a critical weakness in the descriptive results: organisations are weak in terms of an actual translation of learning into actionable strategy updates, especially those relating to communication strategy adaptation and policy lesson embedding. This implies that although learning processes do exist and they are statistically relevant to preparedness, they are undermined by ineffective implementation and minimal integration into the strategy decision making processes. As such, the results endorse the mediating input of organisational learning but suggest organisational barriers such as lack of formalisation, inadequate leadership reinforcement, and inadequate knowledge-to-action transformation as restraining the mediating input of organisational learning.

***Research Objective 3: To quantify the correlation between crisis leadership-facilitated pre-mortem simulations and objective metrics of decision-making performance (speed and quality) in simulated or real social media crisis events.***

These results are highly valid to this aim and indicate that pre-mortem simulations are not only considerably correlated with crisis preparedness ( $r = .66, p < .001$ ) but are the best predictor in the regression model ( $\beta = 0.336, p < .001$ ). Since the crisis preparedness in this research assumes the aspects of speed, efficiency, and organized response of the decision-making, these findings suggest that the organisations practicing pre-mortem simulation are more likely to perform the decision-making efficiently and effectively.

Also, the significant correlation between crisis leadership and pre-mortem practices ( $r = .62, p < .001$ ) indicate that leadership acts as an enabling factor in facilitating preparedness in the form of simulation. This helps in arguing that anticipatory practices based on leadership improves the quality and responsiveness in decision making in the case of crisis.

However, both simulation practices and crisis response performance have relatively low mean scores, showing that these benefits are not realised in practice to any extent. This makes an essential boundary condition: even though pre-mortem simulations substantially enhance decision-making performance, their effectiveness depends on their regular practice, organisational dedication, and the inclusion as the part of larger crisis management frameworks.

### *Overall Synthesis*

Throughout all three of the objectives, the results are consistent; that is, crisis leadership, organisational learning and pre-mortem simulations are correlated and contribute to social media crisis preparedness together. Although the statistical findings show the existence of strong relationships and predictive effects, descriptive evidence suggests that these processes are not so developed and integrated into organisational practise yet. This shows that the major problem is not the lack of these capabilities, but rather a lack of depth, integration and performance thus supporting the need of more holistic and institutionalized response to crisis preparedness.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

This research aimed to investigate how crisis leadership and organisational learning contribute to improving the preparedness to social media crises, especially that of anticipatory aspects, including competitor crisis analysis and pre-mortem simulation. The results are also highly empirical to the general research purpose as they have shown that crisis leadership, organisational learning, and pre-mortem simulations are important and connected factors of crisis preparedness, yet their application is not evenly distributed among organisations.

Among the main outcomes of the research, one should mention that crisis leadership competencies have a strong impact on organisational preparedness, especially, by providing the opportunity to identify, communicate, and coordinate risks early. Nevertheless, although leadership was also determined to be a statistically significant predictor, descriptive findings indicated that these competencies are not deeply rooted in practice indicating a discrepancy

between theoretical expectations and organisational realities. According to this study, pre-mortem simulations proved to be a more powerful indicator of organisational crisis preparedness, with the active, situation-oriented strategies being the most important in enhancing organisational preparedness. Organisations who practiced more simulation exercises were rated higher in terms of better preparedness results especially in regard to the speed and structure of decision making. The adoption levels of the practices are however low implying that their potential is not fully exploited. On the whole, the results highlight that the three factors are not independent of each other, but rather they need to be combined and integrated in order to be efficient in social media crisis preparedness.

## **CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE**

Regarding the contribution to knowledge, this research study is a step forward in the literature because it provides a combined empirical model that makes connections between crisis leadership, organisational learning, and pre-mortem analysis in the situation of social media crises. Although the research has been done before suggesting these constructs separately, this study shows that they interact and are complementary to one another, thus, helping to understand crisis preparedness in a more holistic manner. The research also has the advantage of providing empirical data on the mediating value of organisational learning, as well as pointing out its constraints in practice, thereby contributing to theory arguments on the use of knowledge and organisational resilience.

Practically, the findings are of significance to organisations who would want to enhance their crisis preparedness capacity. To start with, crisis leadership capabilities, specifically the ones pertaining to anticipatory thinking, cross-functional coordination, and communication, need to be developed and institutionalized. Second, organisations can go beyond the ad hoc learning and design systematic ways of learning and applying lessons of competitor crisis to internal strategies and policies. Third, the high predictive capabilities of pre-mortem simulations imply that organisations ought to invest into frequent scenario planning and simulation exercises which should not only be done but also be systematically incorporated into the decision-making processes. The combination of these measures is likely to assist organisations to shift towards crisis management strategies that are more proactive than reactive.

The study has a number of limitations. Cross sectional research design does not permit causal attribution of variables. Also, self-reported information can lead to bias in response especially when evaluating organisational practice and performance. It is also not possible to consider contextual factors in the study including the size of organisations, industry variations, or available resources, and these factors might affect crisis preparedness. Also, despite the research capturing the perceived preparedness, it fails to incorporate the objective performance measures of actual crisis scenarios, which would give an effective evaluation of organisational capabilities.

A longitudinal design should be used by future studies to discuss the limitations because it should investigate the process of crisis preparedness development over time and depending on the actual crisis occurrence. Further, the study can be expanded in the future to examine the position of the organisational culture, digital maturity, and technological capabilities as moderation variables in crisis preparedness. Industry and geographical comparative studies would be useful in the further clarification of the contextual effects and the formation of more generalisable knowledge.

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## **Author's Contributions**

Patrick Mulwa played a pivotal role in conceptualizing the research framework. His expertise in Management and Leadership shaped the overarching research questions and guided the study's direction. Additionally, Patrick Mulwa led the design of the study methodology and oversaw the data collection process. His hands-on involvement ensured the robustness of the data gathered.

Patrick Mulwa also took the lead in drafting of the manuscript into a cohesive narrative. His expertise in research write-up ensured clarity and precision in communicating the research methods, results, and conclusions. Additionally, Patrick Mulwa played a crucial role in the review and editing process, incorporating feedback from all editors to refine the final manuscript.

## **Ethics**

The study was approved by the Institutional Ethics Committee, UGSM Monarch Business School.

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