

## A Conceptual Model of Islamic Educational Leadership for Managing Constructive Conflict and Strengthening Quality Culture in Madrasahs

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### Abstract

Leadership practices in many educational settings remain largely authoritarian, limiting the effectiveness of constructive conflict management and hindering the development of an inclusive, quality-oriented institutional culture. This study aims to analyze the leadership practices of madrasah principals in conflict management, reconstructing the meaning of the concept of "giving in does not mean losing" within the framework of constructive conflict management. The research used a qualitative approach with a case study design conducted in a public Islamic elementary school. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation, and analyzed using an interactive model. The findings indicate that conflict in madrasahs is multidimensional, encompassing policy, interpersonal, and communication conflicts. Leadership practices based on Islamic values are realized through a "giving in" strategy characterized by active listening, emotional regulation, empathy, and strategic compromise. Constructive conflict management is achieved through a collaborative resolution process that prioritizes mutual understanding and shared goals. Internalization of values-based leadership increases teacher commitment and supports continuous improvement in the quality of learning. This study contributes to the development of values-based educational leadership theory and offers practical insights for madrasah management aligned with global educational and institutional development agendas. It is recommended that future research expand this model to different educational contexts and include quantitative validation to strengthen its generalizability.

**Keywords:** Islamic Educational Leadership, Constructive Conflict Management, Value-based Leadership, Quality Culture

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## INTRODUCTION

Educational institutions, particularly Islamic elementary schools (*madrasah ibtdaiyah*), play a strategic role in shaping students' intellectual, moral, and spiritual foundations in increasingly complex global contexts (Busahdiar et al., 2023; Fikriyah et al., 2024; Kartika et al., 2023). This role is closely aligned with global development agendas such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially SDG 4 on quality education and SDG 16 on peaceful and inclusive institutions, which emphasize the importance of both educational excellence and organizational harmony (Saini et al., 2023; Tao & Tao, 2024). However, the growing complexity of educational organizations—driven by institutional demands, stakeholder diversity, and accountability pressures—has intensified the emergence of conflicts within schools. In practice, conflicts arise not only from structural and policy differences but also from interpersonal dynamics and communication breakdowns among

school members (Fathih et al., 2021; Islamiah & Maulidiah, 2024; Salabi, 2023). While conflict is theoretically recognized as a natural and potentially constructive organizational phenomenon, in reality it is often perceived negatively and managed ineffectively. This discrepancy between theoretical understanding and practical application highlights a critical issue in educational leadership. Therefore, examining how conflict is conceptualized and managed within madrasahs becomes essential to understanding broader challenges in achieving both organizational effectiveness and educational quality.

The literature on educational leadership and organizational behavior has extensively discussed conflict as an inherent and unavoidable element of institutional life. Coviello and DeMatthews (2021) argue that increasing organizational complexity inevitably leads to more frequent and multifaceted conflicts, particularly in educational settings characterized by high interaction and shared responsibilities. Furthermore, Ertürk (2022) conceptualize conflict as a dual-nature phenomenon that can be either destructive or constructive depending on how it is managed. Constructive conflict management (CCM) has emerged as a dominant paradigm, emphasizing dialogue, collaboration, and mutual problem-solving as mechanisms for transforming conflict into organizational learning opportunities (Aggrawal & Magana, 2024; Mirsafian et al., 2023; Winardi et al., 2022). Recent studies also highlight the importance of communication, trust-building, and emotional intelligence in fostering productive conflict resolution. Despite these theoretical advancements, much of the literature remains rooted in secular and managerial perspectives, often neglecting the integration of ethical, spiritual, and value-based dimensions of leadership. Consequently, there is a growing need to contextualize these theories within culturally and religiously grounded educational systems such as madrasahs.

In the context of madrasah education, organizational dynamics are shaped not only by administrative structures but also by deeply embedded religious values and social norms. Madrasahs function as both educational institutions and moral communities, where leadership is expected to reflect Islamic ethical principles such as humility (*tawadhu'*), patience (*sabr*), and reconciliation (*islah*) (Gilouri & Shafiezadeh, 2034; Khalili et al., 2023; Mukhlis et al., 2022). These values influence how leaders interact with teachers, staff, students, and parents, particularly in situations involving conflict. However, the integration of these values into practical leadership strategies remains inconsistent and often underdeveloped. In many cases, leadership practices still rely on hierarchical authority and compliance-based approaches, which may suppress conflict rather than transform it constructively. This creates a tension between the normative ideals of Islamic leadership and the operational realities within madrasahs. Therefore, understanding how Islamic values can be operationalized into effective conflict management strategies is crucial. Such an understanding provides a foundation for developing leadership models that are both contextually relevant and theoretically robust.

A growing body of research has explored the interconnection between leadership, conflict management, and organizational outcomes within educational settings. Unmanaged conflict is often associated with decreased teacher motivation, reduced job satisfaction, and a decline in overall organizational effectiveness. Leadership plays a central role in shaping a positive school climate and in managing interpersonal dynamics constructively. Transformational leadership, in particular, has been shown to foster collaboration, strengthen collegial relationships, and reduce the intensity of conflicts (AbdulRab, 2023; Marzuki, 2023). Moreover, emotional intelligence emerges as a critical competency that enables leaders and educators to navigate conflicts more effectively, promoting understanding and mutual respect. Constructive approaches to conflict management can further stimulate team innovation and support organizational learning processes (Aprilianti, 2024; Sliwka et al., 2024). Within Islamic educational contexts, conflict resolution is also guided by value-based

principles such as *islah* (reconciliation) and *ukhuwah* (brotherhood), which emphasize harmony, justice, and collective well-being. Value-oriented leadership, therefore, contributes to more sustainable and meaningful conflict management practices. However, existing discussions tend to remain partial, often examining leadership, conflict, or organizational outcomes in isolation.

While previous research acknowledges the importance of leadership and conflict management, it often lacks a holistic perspective that incorporates emotional, relational, and spiritual dimensions simultaneously. Moreover, the concept of “yielding is not losing” has not been adequately explored as a leadership strategy within academic discourse, despite its relevance in Islamic ethical traditions. This gap indicates a lack of conceptual models that explain how value-based leadership can operationalize conflict transformation processes. Therefore, this study introduces a novel framework termed the “Yielding-Based Constructive Leadership Model,” which seeks to bridge these theoretical and practical gaps.

This study is guided by the key research questions: How do madrasah leaders manage conflict using a values-based leadership approach? And how can the concept of “giving in does not mean losing” be reconstructed within a constructive conflict management framework? Therefore, this study aims to explore the empirical realities and conceptual possibilities of leadership practices in Islamic educational settings. By answering these questions, this study seeks to provide a deeper understanding of the interaction between leadership, conflict, and organizational culture. Therefore, the research is positioned at the intersection of educational leadership, organizational behavior, and Islamic studies. The “yielding” strategy is hypothesized to function as a relational mechanism that fosters trust, enhances dialogic communication, and facilitates collaborative conflict resolution. This research contributes to the advancement of inclusive, peaceful, and high-quality educational institutions, aligning with global development goals while remaining rooted in local cultural and religious contexts.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design to gain an in-depth understanding of madrasah leadership practices in managing organizational conflict through the value of “yielding is not losing.” A qualitative approach was selected because it enables the exploration of complex social phenomena, subjective meanings, and interpersonal interactions within their natural context (Hirose & Creswell, 2023). The case study design was considered appropriate as it allows for a contextual and holistic investigation of the relationships among leadership, conflict management, value systems, and quality culture within a specific institutional setting. Conceptually, this methodological approach aligns with the broader framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 4 (Quality Education) and Goal 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions), by examining leadership practices that promote both educational quality and constructive conflict resolution.

The study was conducted at MIN 1 Malang City, Indonesia, which was purposively selected as the research site due to its organizational complexity and dynamic institutional environment. The madrasah is characterized by a large number of teachers and staff, a formal bureaucratic structure, and increasing demands for educational quality, all of which contribute to a high intensity of social interaction and diverse forms of organizational conflict. These characteristics make it a suitable context for examining value-based leadership and constructive conflict management practices. Research participants were selected using purposive sampling, consisting of the madrasah principal as the key informant, along with teachers, administrative staff, and parents as supporting informants. This selection strategy aimed to obtain comprehensive and multi-perspective insights into leadership practices, conflict dynamics, and their implications for organizational culture.

Data were collected through methodological triangulation, including in-depth semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore participants' experiences, perceptions, and interpretations of leadership practices and conflict situations (Köhler, 2024). Participant observation enabled the researcher to directly examine social interactions and conflict processes in real-life settings, while document analysis—such as institutional records, policy documents, and meeting notes—provided additional contextual and supporting data. This triangulated approach allowed for a comprehensive understanding of conflict not merely as isolated events but as dynamic and socially constructed processes.

Data analysis followed the interactive model proposed by Miles et al. (2015), which involves three concurrent steps: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. This iterative and cyclical process enabled the researcher to systematically identify patterns, relationships, and emerging themes related to leadership practices and conflict management. In this study, particular analytical attention was given to how the value of “yielding” is interpreted and operationalized as a leadership strategy, and how it contributes to trust-building, dialogic communication, and constructive conflict resolution. The analysis ultimately led to the development of a conceptual model linking leadership values with organizational outcomes.

Credibility was enhanced through triangulation of data sources and methods, prolonged engagement in the field, and member checking with selected participants (Chand, 2025). Dependability was ensured by maintaining a clear audit trail of the research process, while confirmability was addressed by minimizing researcher bias through reflexive practices. Through these strategies, the study provides not only empirically grounded findings but also robust conceptual insights into the integration of value-based educational leadership, constructive conflict management, and quality culture development in madrasah settings.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Multidimensional Nature of Organizational Conflict in Madrasahs**

The findings indicate that organizational conflict in MIN 1 Malang City is inherent, systemic, and multidimensional, emerging as a natural consequence of institutional complexity rather than as an incidental disruption. This complexity is shaped by the interaction of structural demands, diverse human characteristics, and evolving communication patterns within the madrasah environment. Conflict, therefore, is not an anomaly but a structural reality embedded in daily organizational practices. Empirically, the study identifies three interrelated forms of conflict: policy conflict, interpersonal conflict, and communication conflict. Policy conflict arises primarily from discrepancies between leadership decisions and teachers' expectations, particularly when decision-making processes are perceived as top-down and insufficiently participatory. Interpersonal conflict stems from differences in personality, workload distribution, and professional perspectives, often remaining latent but still affecting collaboration. Meanwhile, communication conflict reflects weaknesses in information dissemination and limited dialogic interaction, which exacerbate misunderstandings. These interconnections suggest that conflict operates as a dynamic system rather than isolated events. Therefore, recognizing the multidimensional nature of conflict is essential for developing more integrative and context-sensitive conflict management strategies in madrasah settings.

Observational findings further reinforce the systemic and multidimensional character of organizational conflict within the madrasah. Direct observations during formal meetings, daily interactions, and informal discussions reveal that conflict often manifests subtly rather than overtly. For instance, in staff meetings, not all teachers actively participate in discussions, indicating limited

engagement and possible underlying disagreement with policy directions. Non-verbal cues such as silence, avoidance of eye contact, and side conversations outside formal forums suggest the presence of unexpressed tensions. Additionally, interaction patterns among teachers show the emergence of small informal groups, which may indicate relational distancing and latent interpersonal conflict. In terms of communication, information is frequently delivered in a one-directional manner, with minimal opportunities for clarification or feedback, leading to varying interpretations among staff members. These observational patterns demonstrate that conflict is embedded in everyday organizational practices and interactions. Consequently, conflict should be understood not only through explicit disagreements but also through subtle behavioral indicators that reflect deeper organizational tensions.

**Table 1. Typology of Organizational Conflict in Madrasah**

Conflict Type	Key Drivers	Empirical Manifestations	Organizational Implications
Policy Conflict	Top-down decision-making; limited teacher participation; administrative demands	Passive resistance; implementation difficulties; perceived policy burden	Gap between policy formulation and implementation
Interpersonal Conflict	Differences in personality, workload distribution, and work style	Latent tension; formation of cliques; limited interaction	Reduced collaboration and team cohesion
Communication Conflict	Ineffective information flow; inconsistent messaging; limited dialogic space	Misunderstanding; information asymmetry; confusion among staff	Escalation of conflict and organizational tension

Table 1 highlights that each form of conflict is interconnected, with communication conflict acting as a reinforcing mechanism that intensifies other conflict types. Thus, the table provides a comprehensive overview of how conflict operates within the organizational system. The dominance of policy conflict suggests that decision-making structures play a crucial role in shaping conflict dynamics, particularly when participation and inclusivity are limited. At the same time, the presence of latent interpersonal conflict indicates that relational aspects of organizational life require more attention, especially in fostering trust and collaboration. Communication conflict, in this context, serves as a central mediating factor that can either mitigate or exacerbate tensions depending on how it is managed. This interconnectedness implies that addressing conflict in one dimension without considering others may lead to incomplete solutions. Therefore, a holistic and integrative approach to conflict management is necessary, one that simultaneously addresses structural, relational, and communicative dimensions within the organization.

The multidimensional nature of conflict reflects the dynamic interplay between institutional structures, human agency, and communication systems. When understood and managed constructively, conflict can serve as a catalyst for organizational learning, innovation, and improved collaboration. Conversely, when ignored or poorly managed, it can undermine organizational cohesion and performance. Therefore, recognizing conflict as a systemic and relational phenomenon provides a foundation for developing more effective leadership strategies. Ultimately, this study underscores the importance of reframing conflict from a disruptive force into a strategic resource that, when properly managed, contributes to the development of a more adaptive, inclusive, and quality-oriented madrasah organization.

### Hybrid and Situational Leadership Practices

The leadership practices at MIN 1 Malang City are characterized by a hybrid and situational approach, reflecting the dynamic interaction between institutional demands and relational considerations within the madrasah context. The principal does not rely on a single leadership

paradigm but integrates transformational, instructional, and directive elements depending on situational needs. Transformational leadership is evident in efforts to motivate teachers and build a shared vision for improving educational quality, while instructional leadership appears in the principal's active involvement in supervising teaching and learning processes. At the same time, directive leadership is applied in contexts requiring compliance with policies and administrative regulations. This combination indicates that leadership is shaped by both internal organizational needs and external accountability pressures. As a result, leadership practices are flexible yet sometimes inconsistent, particularly when balancing participatory ideals with bureaucratic constraints. Therefore, the hybrid and situational nature of leadership reflects both adaptability and tension within the organizational system.

During formal meetings, the principal is frequently observed providing structured guidance and setting clear expectations related to academic performance and administrative responsibilities, demonstrating instructional and directive tendencies. However, in certain discussions, especially those related to program development, the principal opens limited space for teacher input, reflecting a partial application of participatory leadership. Despite this, not all teachers actively engage in these opportunities, suggesting that the dialogic culture is not yet fully institutionalized. Communication patterns observed in daily interactions reveal a dominance of formal channels, such as scheduled meetings and digital messaging platforms, with limited spontaneous dialogue. Additionally, conflict situations are typically managed informally, with the principal facilitating conversations between parties rather than imposing formal resolutions. These observations confirm that leadership practices are enacted in a situational manner, balancing authority and relational engagement. Consequently, leadership behavior is shaped not only by intention but also by organizational culture and structural conditions.

**Table 2. Characteristics of Leadership Practices**

Dimension	Characteristics	Strengths	Limitations
Leadership Style	Transformational–Instructional–Directive (hybrid)	Adaptive and responsive to context	Inconsistency across situations
Communication	Formal, structured, predominantly top-down	Ensures coordination and clarity	Limited dialogic interaction and feedback
Conflict Management	Accommodative and persuasive; informal mediation	Maintains harmony and relationships	Lack of formal procedures and assertiveness

Table 2 demonstrates that leadership practices are multidimensional and interconnected, with each dimension influencing organizational dynamics in distinct ways. It also highlights that strengths and limitations coexist within the same leadership framework, indicating the need for balance and refinement. The principal seeks to implement transformational and participatory practices that encourage collaboration and shared responsibility. On the other hand, bureaucratic demands and institutional accountability necessitate directive and control-oriented approaches. This duality creates a leadership paradox in which flexibility becomes both a strength and a limitation. Furthermore, the dominance of formal and top-down communication suggests that relational aspects of leadership, such as dialogue and mutual understanding, are not yet fully optimized. In terms of conflict management, the preference for accommodative and persuasive strategies indicates a relational orientation, but the absence of structured mechanisms may limit the effectiveness of long-term conflict resolution.

Such models allow leaders to navigate uncertainty, balance multiple expectations, and respond to diverse stakeholder needs. However, without a strong foundation in dialogic communication and systematic conflict management, hybrid leadership may lead to ambiguity and

inconsistency. Therefore, the effectiveness of situational leadership depends on the leader's capacity to align different leadership approaches within a coherent value-based framework. In the context of madrasahs, this implies the need to strengthen leadership practices that integrate adaptability with clarity, authority with participation, and structure with relational engagement.

### The Yielding-Based Constructive Leadership Model

The findings lead to the development of a conceptual framework termed the Yielding-Based Constructive Leadership Model, which explains how value-based leadership transforms organizational conflict into a driver of institutional development. This model positions "yielding" not as passive behavior but as a strategic leadership mechanism grounded in emotional intelligence and ethical values. The process begins with yielding behaviors such as active listening, emotional self-regulation, and openness to others' perspectives, which signal respect and empathy in leadership interactions. These behaviors foster psychological safety and mutual recognition among organizational members, forming the basis for trust. As trust develops, it enables more open and dialogic forms of communication, allowing individuals to express differing views without fear of negative consequences. Through this dialogic engagement, conflicts are addressed collaboratively, leading to constructive rather than destructive outcomes. Over time, these processes contribute to the development of a quality-oriented organizational culture characterized by collaboration, inclusivity, and continuous improvement. Therefore, the model provides a relational explanation of how leadership values shape conflict transformation and organizational quality.

The principal is frequently observed prioritizing listening over immediate judgment in conflict situations, allowing teachers to articulate their concerns before any decision is made. This practice reduces emotional tension and creates a more open atmosphere for dialogue. Additionally, the principal demonstrates emotional restraint, avoiding reactive or confrontational responses even in potentially tense situations, which helps maintain organizational stability. Informal mediation is also commonly observed, where the principal facilitates conversations between conflicting parties and encourages mutual understanding rather than imposing authoritative solutions. These interactions gradually build trust among staff members, as they perceive leadership as fair, respectful, and supportive. Furthermore, meetings and discussions occasionally evolve into dialogic spaces where multiple perspectives are considered, although this practice is not yet fully consistent.



Figure 1. Yielding-Based Constructive Leadership Model

Figure 1 represents a sequential yet dynamic process in which each stage reinforces the next. Yielding acts as the initiating mechanism that enables trust-building, while trust serves as the foundation for dialogic communication. Through such communication, conflicts are transformed into opportunities for collaboration and shared problem-solving. Ultimately, these processes contribute to the formation of a sustainable quality culture within the organization. The model highlights the relational and process-oriented nature of leadership, emphasizing that organizational outcomes are shaped through continuous interaction rather than isolated actions.

The model suggests that the effectiveness of conflict management is deeply rooted in relational and value-based leadership practices. Yielding, as conceptualized in this study, functions

as a form of reflective leadership that integrates emotional intelligence, ethical awareness, and social sensitivity. Rather than avoiding conflict, yielding enables leaders to engage with conflict in a constructive manner by prioritizing understanding and mutual respect. The sequential relationship between yielding, trust, and communication indicates that conflict resolution is not an immediate outcome but the result of a gradual relational process. Moreover, the emergence of quality culture as the final outcome underscores the long-term impact of leadership practices on organizational development. This interpretation positions yielding not as a situational tactic but as a foundational leadership orientation. Therefore, the model contributes to a deeper understanding of how leadership values can shape organizational processes and outcomes in educational settings.

The Yielding-Based Constructive Leadership Model can be generalized as a framework for managing conflict in complex educational organizations beyond the specific context of madrasahs. The model suggests that conflict, when approached through value-based and relational leadership, can serve as a strategic resource for organizational learning and improvement. By emphasizing trust-building and dialogic communication, the model aligns with contemporary perspectives on collaborative and inclusive leadership. Furthermore, the integration of emotional and ethical dimensions highlights the importance of holistic leadership approaches in addressing organizational challenges. While the model is grounded in the context of Islamic educational institutions, its underlying principles are applicable to diverse organizational settings that value collaboration and continuous improvement. Therefore, this study offers both theoretical and practical contributions by demonstrating that leadership grounded in yielding behaviors can transform conflict into a catalyst for building adaptive, inclusive, and quality-oriented organizations.

## Discussion

Organizational conflict in madrasahs is multidimensional and systemic, which has significant implications for how it should be understood and managed in educational settings. Recognizing that conflict is not only a disruptive force but also a functional organizational mechanism that can enhance or hinder institutional performance depends on how it is managed. When approached constructively, conflict can stimulate critical reflection, improve decision-making, and strengthen collaboration among organizational members (Gilli et al., 2024; Pariyanti et al., 2022). However, when mismanaged, conflict can lead to fragmentation, reduced trust, and decreased organizational effectiveness (Gura et al., 2023). The presence of policy, interpersonal, and communication conflicts suggests that multiple layers of the organization are simultaneously affected. Similar findings have been reported in educational research, where conflict has been shown to impact teacher performance and school climate (Huguley et al., 2022). Educational leaders must shift from viewing conflict as a problem to be avoided to recognizing it as a resource that can be harnessed for organizational learning and improvement.

The underlying causes of multidimensional conflict can be explained through the structural and relational dynamics within the organization. The interaction between formal institutional structures and informal interpersonal relationships. Policy conflicts, for example, are rooted in hierarchical decision-making systems that limit participation, creating a gap between leadership intentions and teacher experience (Kainde & Mandagi, 2023). Interpersonal conflicts arise from individual differences and perceived inequities, particularly in workload distribution, which aligns with equity theory in organizational behavior (Qalati et al., 2022). Meanwhile, communication conflicts reflect systemic weaknesses in information flow and feedback mechanisms, which are essential for organizational coherence (Muharom, 2023). These dimensions are not mutually reinforcing, as ineffective communication often exacerbates policy and interpersonal tensions.

The hybrid and situational nature of leadership practices has important implications for leadership effectiveness in complex educational organizations. Leadership flexibility can be both a strength and a limitation. On the one hand, combining transformational, instructional, and directive leadership styles allows leaders to respond adaptively to diverse challenges, thereby enhancing organizational responsiveness (Leithwood, 2021). Overreliance on situational adjustments without a coherent framework can lead to inconsistencies and ambiguity in leadership practices. For example, while directive leadership ensures policy compliance, it can simultaneously suppress teacher participation and reduce engagement. Transformational leadership fosters motivation but requires consistent implementation to be effective (Basaffar, 2022; Sudha et al., 2023). Leadership effectiveness depends not only on adaptability but also on integrating diverse leadership approaches into a coherent, values-driven system.

A causal explanation for hybrid leadership practices lies in the tension between bureaucratic structures and relational expectations within educational organizations. Bureaucratic pressures, such as adherence to policies and performance standards, often require directive leadership, while relational dynamics require participatory and transformational approaches. This duality can create a leadership paradox in which leaders must continually negotiate the balance between control and empowerment. Furthermore, communication patterns play a crucial role in shaping leadership effectiveness. The dominance of top-down communication limits feedback loops and reinforces hierarchical structures, thus limiting the development of dialogic leadership (Agu et al., 2024; Lyon et al., 2022). Hybrid leadership emerges not simply as a choice but as a structural response to competing organizational demands.

The Defeat-Based Constructive Leadership Model provides a new perspective on how leadership can transform conflict into a constructive organizational force. The key is that defeat, when understood as a values-based and emotionally intelligent strategy, enhances trust, communication, and collaboration within organizations. Unlike avoidance or passivity, defeat involves actively engaging in conflict through empathy, listening, and compromise. This aligns with research on emotional intelligence, which emphasizes the role of self-regulation and empathy in effective leadership (Malik et al., 2021). Trust acts as a mediating variable between leadership behavior and organizational outcomes, consistent with studies highlighting trust as a key determinant of organizational performance (Mansor et al., 2021; Virgiawan et al., 2021). By fostering dialogic communication, defeat-based leadership enables a more inclusive and collaborative conflict resolution process. Leadership strategies based on values and relationships can significantly improve conflict management and organizational culture.

The underlying mechanisms of the defeat-based leadership model can be explained through relationship- and process-oriented leadership theories. The sequential and cumulative nature of social interactions within organizations. Submissive behavior initiates the process of building trust by signaling respect and openness, which reduces psychological barriers among organizational members (Munyon et al., 2021). Trust then facilitates dialogic communication, allowing individuals to share perspectives and negotiate meaning collaboratively. Over time, these interactions lead to constructive conflict resolution, which contributes to the development of a positive organizational culture. This process aligns with social exchange theory, which states that relationships are built through reciprocal interactions (Haerizadeh & Vijaya Sunder, 2022). The effectiveness of submissive leadership can be understood as the result of a relational chain linking individual behavior to collective outcomes.

The implications of this study extend to theory development and practical application in educational leadership. This study contributes to the integration of constructive conflict management, values-based leadership, and organizational culture into a unified framework,

addressing gaps in the existing literature. Practically, the findings suggest that educational leaders should prioritize trust-building, dialogic communication, and relational approaches in managing conflict. Training programs for school leaders should include competencies in emotional intelligence, communication skills, and conflict resolution strategies. Conflict can be transformed from a source of tension into a driver of innovation and quality improvement. Ultimately, this study underscores the importance of aligning leadership practices with organizational values to create adaptive, inclusive, and high-performing educational environments.

## CONCLUSION

The findings indicate that conflict at MIN 1 Malang City is shaped by interrelated dimensions—policy, interpersonal, and communication—while leadership practices are characterized by a hybrid and situational approach that reflects adaptability and structural constraints. The paper highlights the emergence of the Defeat-Based Constructive Leadership Model, which positions “defeatism” as a values-based and emotionally intelligent leadership strategy that fosters trust, enables dialogic communication, and facilitates constructive conflict resolution, ultimately contributing to the development of a sustainable quality culture. These results suggest that the effectiveness of conflict management depends not only on structural mechanisms but also on the relational and ethical dimensions of leadership. Therefore, integrating values-based leadership with constructive conflict management provides a new and holistic framework for building adaptive, inclusive, and high-quality educational organizations, with implications for theory and practice in educational leadership.

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