



Principal leadership in fostering an effective school culture in primary education

Ervin Alberthina Dimara¹, Priadi Surya², Tarso³

^{1,2,3} Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Kota Yogyakarta, Indonesia

ervinalberthina.2024@student.uny.ac.id¹, priadisurya@uny.ac.id², tarso.2024@student.uny.ac.id³

ABSTRACT

Principal leadership has a strategic role in creating a conducive, character-based, and competitive learning environment. This study was conducted because some elementary schools still lack optimal conditions for building an effective school culture. The purpose of this study is to describe the leadership style of the principal and his role in developing an effective school culture at SD Inpres 7 Sorong Regency. The approach used is qualitative with a case study type. Data collection techniques include observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Data were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's model, which involves three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion. The results of the study showed that the principal applied a situational leadership style, predominantly using a dominant participatory approach, and occasionally employed a delegative and authoritarian style. The principal fulfills the role of EMASLIM (Educator, Manager, Administrator, Supervisor, Leader, Innovator, Motivator) through strategies such as strengthening the 5S culture, implementing school regulations, utilizing fingerprints, and offering moral mentoring programs. Adaptive and collaborative leadership has proven to be the key to forming an effective school culture and supporting the achievement of the school's vision and mission.

ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received: 22 Feb 2025

Revised: 23 May 2025

Accepted: 27 May 2025

Available online: 2 Jun 2025

Publish: 27 Jun 2025

Keywords:

effective school culture;
elementary school; principal
leadership

Open access

Curricula: Journal of Curriculum Development is a peer-reviewed open-access journal.

ABSTRAK

Kepemimpinan kepala sekolah mempunyai peran yang strategis dalam menciptakan lingkungan belajar yang kondusif, berkarakter, dan kompetitif. Penelitian ini dilakukan karena masih terdapat sekolah dasar yang belum optimal dalam membangun budaya sekolah yang efektif. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mendeskripsikan gaya kepemimpinan kepala sekolah dan perannya dalam mengembangkan budaya sekolah yang efektif di SD Inpres 7 Kabupaten Sorong. Pendekatan yang digunakan adalah kualitatif dengan jenis studi kasus. Teknik pengumpulan data meliputi observasi, wawancara mendalam, dan dokumentasi. Data dianalisis dengan menggunakan model Miles dan Huberman, melalui tahapan reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan simpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kepala sekolah menerapkan gaya kepemimpinan situasional dengan gaya dominan partisipatif, dan kadang-kadang menggunakan gaya delegatif dan otoriter. Kepala sekolah menjalankan peran EMASLIM (Educator, Manager, Administrator, Supervisor, Leader, Innovator, Motivator) melalui strategi seperti penguatan budaya 5S, peraturan sekolah, sidik jari, dan program pendampingan moral. Kepemimpinan yang adaptif dan kolaboratif telah terbukti menjadi kunci untuk membentuk budaya sekolah yang efektif dan mendukung pencapaian visi dan misi sekolah.

Kata Kunci: budaya sekolah efektif; kepemimpinan kepala sekolah; sekolah dasar

How to cite (APA 7)

Dimara, E. A., Surya, P., & Tarso, T. (2022). Principal leadership in fostering an effective school culture in primary education. *Curricula: Journal of Curriculum Development*, 4(1), 479-492.

Peer review

This article has been peer-reviewed through the journal's standard double-blind peer review, where both the reviewers and authors are anonymised during review.

Copyright



2025, Ervin Alberthina Dimara, Priadi Surya, Tarso. This an open-access is article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-SA 4.0) <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author, and source are credited.

*Corresponding author: ervinalberthina.2024@student.uny.ac.id

INTRODUCTION

Education serves as the fundamental cornerstone for shaping high-quality and competitive human resources that are also grounded in strong character and ethical values. Within the scope of primary education, schools assume a pivotal and central role in cultivating the attitudes, values, and behaviors of young learners from their earliest developmental stages (Mustoip et al., 2023). Consequently, the presence of an effective school culture emerges as an essential and indispensable component that supports the establishment of a learning environment that is conducive, inclusive, and productive. School culture embodies the collective values, norms, habits, and everyday practices that are alive and continuously evolving within the school setting, and these elements ultimately have a profound impact on the quality of educational processes and their outcomes (Kilag et al., 2023). It is precisely in this context that the school principal's leadership takes on a highly strategic and influential role in shaping, embedding, and nurturing an effective school culture.

The principal's role extends beyond that of a mere administrative manager; they are also a visionary learning leader and a dynamic agent of change. Leadership that is visionary and transformational, as demonstrated by the principal, has the potential to significantly influence the behaviors and attitudes of teachers, students, staff members, and even parents, thereby shaping the overall character and climate of the entire school community. In developing an effective school culture, the principal must be equipped to facilitate open and transparent communication, foster harmonious and collaborative working relationships, and instill positive core values such as discipline, responsibility, cooperation, and integrity throughout the school community. Simultaneously, the principal must possess the ability to accurately identify and assess the school's inherent strengths, potential obstacles, and pressing needs as a solid foundation for making informed and appropriate policy decisions that encourage continuous progress and improvement (Waland & Shaw, 2022).

Previous studies have emphasized the importance of principal leadership in supporting teacher performance and building a positive school culture (Heenan et al., 2023). However, most research has focused on general leadership characteristics without thoroughly examining the practical strategies used to foster school culture, particularly in the context of under-resourced or remote schools. The novelty of this study lies in its detailed exploration of situational leadership practices through the Educator, Manager, Administrator, Supervisor, Leader, Innovator, Motivator (EMASLIM) framework and its application in strengthening school culture within the specific context of SD Inpres 7 Sorong Regency. This research provides a more contextual and practice-oriented insight that contributes to the development of adaptive and collaborative leadership models in elementary education settings.

SD Inpres 7 Kabupaten Sorong stands as one of the public primary schools located in the eastern region of Indonesia, confronting a complex array of geographical, social, and cultural challenges. Its position within a border area and the limited accessibility to adequate educational facilities necessitate that the school principal embody leadership qualities that are adaptive, resilient, and oriented towards finding practical solutions. Despite these significant challenges and constraints, developing an effective school culture remains a vital and strategic endeavor to sustain student motivation, elevate teacher professionalism, and foster a positive and respected image of the school within the surrounding community. The

success of cultivating such a culture at SD Inpres 7 is heavily contingent upon how effectively and optimally the principal fulfills their leadership roles and responsibilities.

An effective school culture is not something that emerges spontaneously or instantaneously. Instead, it is cultivated through a long-term, deliberate process that requires the active engagement and participation of all members of the school community. In this regard, the principal catalyzes transformative change, possessing the capacity to guide and unite all school stakeholders towards a shared commitment to common goals (Rasmitadila et al., 2020). The application of collaborative, democratic, and contextually grounded leadership practices is critical to fostering trust, solidarity, and a profound sense of ownership among all members of the school community (Zhang et al., 2025). Principals who excel in establishing open lines of communication, modeling exemplary behavior, and inspiring motivation across the entire school population are more likely to succeed in creating a cohesive, resilient, and harmonious organizational culture (Mahmood et al., 2022).

Moreover, the development of a school culture must be carefully tailored to align with the specific local context, including the unique socio-cultural characteristics of the surrounding community. In Kabupaten Sorong, the rich ethnic diversity and varied cultural backgrounds represent both challenges and opportunities in the endeavor to cultivate an inclusive school culture. The principal must be adept at bridging these differences and transforming diversity into a source of strength that promotes unity, mutual respect, and a spirit of togetherness within the school environment (Illah et al., 2022). This undertaking demands a leadership approach that is humanistic, communicative, and contextually sensitive, ensuring that the school culture that emerges is not only effective but also relevant, meaningful, and widely embraced by all stakeholders involved.

The principal's role in fostering an effective school culture extends beyond the internal dynamics of the school. It encompasses building and maintaining productive relationships with external parties, including the broader community and relevant stakeholders (Smith et al., 2022). The principal must be capable of forging synergies and partnerships with the school committee, local government authorities, and various other stakeholders to support the holistic and sustainable development of the school (Ugobueze, 2024). The capacity to establish productive collaborations, secure additional resources, and advocate effectively for the school's needs and aspirations at higher policy-making levels forms a critical component of a comprehensive leadership strategy aimed at nurturing a sustainable and thriving school culture.

In light of this background, it is both necessary and timely to conduct an in-depth and comprehensive study investigating how the leadership of the principal at SD Inpres 7 Kabupaten Sorong contributes to the development of an effective school culture. This research seeks to describe in detail the strategies employed, the challenges encountered, and the impacts observed as a result of the principal's leadership in creating a school culture that robustly supports high-quality learning processes. The insights and findings generated from this study are expected to provide valuable practical contributions for educational stakeholders in designing policies and strategies that advance school development, particularly in remote, disadvantaged, and underdeveloped regions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Transformational Leadership

Bass and Avolio, in their book titled *"Improving Organizational Effectiveness Through Transformational Leadership"* reveal that transformational leadership is an approach that emphasizes fundamental change within an organization through enhancing the motivation, morale, and performance of both individuals and groups. Transformational leaders possess four primary characteristics: 1) Idealized influence; 2) Inspirational motivation; 3) Intellectual stimulation; and 4) Individualized consideration. In the educational context, school principals who adopt a transformational leadership style can inspire teachers and students to move beyond personal interests to achieve shared goals (Nabella et al., 2022). Such leaders do not focus solely on administrative aspects but also play a strategic role in building a strong vision, values, and school culture.

Several studies have demonstrated that transformational leadership has a positive impact on school culture and the quality of learning. Transformational principals contribute to establishing a school climate that supports learning, enhances collaboration among teachers, and strengthens ownership of the school's vision (Supit et al., 2024). Furthermore, principals who implement transformational leadership tend to be more responsive to change and capable of creating innovative strategies to address the challenges faced by schools. In the context of SD Inpres 7 Kabupaten Sorong, this approach is particularly relevant because it enables the principal to empower all school elements to collectively overcome structural and social barriers through the creation of a dynamic and inclusive school culture.

Effective School Culture

Effective school culture refers to an ideal condition in which the values, norms, and practices prevailing within a school create an environment that optimally supports the learning process. A strong and positive school culture acts as an invisible force that shapes the behavior of both teachers and students, serving as the foundation for long-term educational success (Hamzah, 2023). This culture can be manifested through open communication, exemplary leadership by the principal, recognition of achievements, and the instillation of values such as responsibility, diligence, and mutual respect (Vries et al., 2022). Such a culture is an essential instrument in creating a school that is adaptive, disciplined, and enthusiastic about learning.

Moreover, an effective school culture encourages active involvement from all members of the school community, including teachers, students, and parents. The principal holds primary responsibility for shaping and maintaining the school culture through a clear vision, consistent values, and exemplary conduct (Gullo & Beachum, 2020). A culture that supports collaboration and openness will produce an environment conducive to learning and the development of students' character. In the context of SD Inpres 7 Kabupaten Sorong, strengthening an effective school culture is critically important given the social and geographical challenges the school faces. With a strong culture, the school can foster safety, orderliness, and a spirit of togetherness, elements essential for achieving equitable educational quality.

Local School Context

The local school context refers to the social, cultural, economic, and geographical conditions that shape the unique characteristics of each educational institution. The effectiveness of school leadership largely depends on understanding the local environment in which the school operates (Pangestika, 2024). In the context of SD Inpres 7 Kabupaten Sorong, the school leader must consider the remote geographical location, limited access to technology, and diverse cultural backgrounds when formulating policies and strategies. A deep understanding of the local community's characteristics enables the principal to develop approaches that are contextual, participatory, and relevant to the actual needs of school members (Tarso et al., 2025).

Additionally, the success of developing school culture is closely linked to the principal's ability to integrate local values into educational practices. Contextual education rooted in local culture has been shown to foster a sense of belonging and promote active participation among school members (Moore, 2022; Sung & Gounk, 2023). Schools that are responsive to cultural diversity tend to be more successful in building harmonious relationships with the community and improving students' academic achievements (Siswanto et al., 2025). At SD Inpres 7 Kabupaten Sorong, approaches that respect local culture and foster dialogue with the surrounding community represent important strategies to develop a school culture that is not only effective but also socially and culturally meaningful.

METHODS

The research approach used in this study is qualitative, employing a case study design. The study was conducted at SD Inpres 7 Kabupaten Sorong, a prominent private Islamic school selected for its representativeness in implementing an effective school culture. The research focuses on the principal's leadership style, the principal's role in developing school culture, and the overall effectiveness of the school. Data collection techniques included participatory observation, in-depth interviews, document analysis, and triangulation of data. The research subjects comprised the principal, vice principal, teachers, students, and the school committee.

Miles and Huberman, in their book titled *"Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook"*, reveal that data analysis was conducted using a qualitative descriptive approach involving four main steps: data collection, data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing and verification. Data were gathered through observation, interviews, and documentation, then summarized and selected to highlight key points relevant to the research focus. Subsequently, the data were presented in narrative form. The final step involved interpreting and connecting various data to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the principal's leadership practices in developing an effective school culture at SD Inpres 7 Kabupaten Sorong.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Principal's Leadership Style

Based on the research findings, the principal of SD Inpres 7 Kabupaten Sorong does not adhere to a single leadership style but instead adopts a conditional approach that adapts to the situation. In implementing school programs, the principal does not work solely behind the scenes but also serves as an active role model, for example, by fostering a culture of discipline through punctual attendance. This approach demonstrates the application of a participative leadership style, wherein the principal creates harmonious collaboration, fosters loyalty, and encourages the participation of the entire school community. This style fosters a strong relationship between the leader and subordinates, eliminating barriers and ultimately supporting the establishment of a cooperative culture in program implementation.

The improvement in teacher and staff performance resulting from delegative leadership has had a significant impact on the quality of the learning process in schools. When teachers and staff are entrusted with responsibilities and authority aligned with their respective duties and functions, they feel more valued and motivated to contribute their best. This sense of ownership and accountability encourages the emergence of initiative and innovation in the implementation of learning programs. Such an environment fosters a more dynamic workplace, where each school member has the opportunity to grow and actively participate in decision-making processes aimed at enhancing educational quality.

In this context, improved performance among educators and school personnel contributes to the establishment of a professional and collaborative work environment. Highly motivated teachers are better prepared to design creative lessons, adapt to students' needs, and remain open to self-evaluation and professional development. At the same time, well-organized staff provide essential administrative and operational support, enabling the teaching and learning process to run efficiently. Therefore, the implementation of delegative leadership not only strengthens school management systems but also serves as a fundamental pillar in realizing a high-quality, sustainable, and student-centered learning process.

In certain urgent situations that require swift decision-making, the principal employs an authoritarian leadership style. For instance, when facing deadlines imposed by the Education Office, the principal takes a firm, uncompromising stance, including imposing sanctions for tardiness. However, this style is applied only when necessary and does not become the dominant approach. Overall, these findings indicate that the principal of SD Inpres 7 Kabupaten Sorong uses a situational leadership style. Nonetheless, the participative style remains the most dominant and effective approach in supporting the development of school culture.

The Role of Principal's Leadership in Developing an Effective School Culture

The principal of SD Inpres 7 Kabupaten Sorong plays a vital role in creating an effective school. One of the efforts undertaken is developing an effective school culture that serves as the school's hallmark and identity. This aligns with the view that effective schools pay special attention to creating and maintaining a conducive learning climate and culture (Wahyuni et

al., 2024). In this effort, the principal exercises leadership by influencing all members of the school community to follow the direction aimed at realizing a school culture that supports the overall progress of the institution.

In developing an effective school culture, the principal carries out various functions as outlined in the Educator, Manager, Administrator, Supervisor, Leader, Innovator, Motivator (EMASLIM) paradigm. As an educator, the principal demonstrates discipline and exemplary behavior, implements the 2013 Curriculum focused on character values, and encourages the enhancement of teacher professionalism through training and workshops. As a manager, the principal designs programs to instill positive values, such as the 5S method and an honest culture, with systematic managerial stages that range from planning to program evaluation.

As an administrator, the principal creates a culture of orderly administration by ensuring all learning tools are complete and by establishing an efficient school organizational structure through five department heads. The role of supervisor is carried out through regular supervision, including classroom visits and the engagement of experts to mentor teachers in specific areas. As a leader, the principal applies a participative leadership style that fosters harmonious relationships within the school environment and builds a culture of collaboration and intense loyalty. In the role of innovator, the principal initiates new programs such as moral mentoring to cultivate honesty among students. Finally, as a motivator, the principal consistently encourages teachers and staff to take on greater responsibility and improve their performance, serving as a source of inspiration in every forum and school activity. All these roles are consistently performed to create an excellent and effective school culture at SD Inpres 7, Kabupaten Sorong.

The Principal's Efforts in Developing an Effective School Culture

Based on the research findings, the principal of SD Inpres 7 Kabupaten Sorong undertakes various efforts to develop an effective school culture. These efforts include fostering harmonious relationships among all members of the school community, enhancing school safety, and creating a conducive learning environment. One of the main strategies implemented is building harmonious relationships with all school stakeholders. The principal's ability to establish positive relationships is a hallmark of effective leadership, as it encourages active involvement from all parties in collectively realizing the school's vision, mission, and goals.

To achieve these harmonious relationships, the principal employs an intensive communication approach, encompassing both formal and informal interactions. Formal communication is conducted through regular weekly and monthly meetings with teachers, student guardians, and the school committee. Informal communication takes place through activities such as *istighosah* (prayer gatherings), Quran recitations, WhatsApp groups, and social events like barbecues and short religious talks (*kultum*). This approach involves not only teachers but also parents, committee members, and the broader community. The communication strategy demonstrates the principal's skill in uniting all stakeholders to achieve shared objectives.

In addition to communication, the principal also strives to increase active participation among the school community by involving them in various school programs and policies. The participative leadership style and communicative nature of the principal serve as important assets in fostering cooperation and collaboration among school members. This increased participation further strengthens harmonious relationships within the school community, enabling the optimal creation of a conducive and effective school culture.

The Principal's Efforts in Enhancing School Safety

Another effort undertaken by the principal of SD Inpres 7 Kabupaten Sorong in developing an effective school culture is creating a school environment that is psychologically, physically, socially, and culturally safe. The principal recognizes that a sense of safety is a crucial prerequisite for all members of the school community to feel comfortable and secure while engaging in learning activities. A safe school environment also supports the establishment of a conducive and enjoyable learning climate, allowing students and educators to interact optimally within the school setting. This awareness of the importance of safety forms the foundation for the principal's continuous efforts to ensure comfort and tranquility for everyone in the school.

This step is particularly relevant, given that the school serves as a gathering place for students with diverse backgrounds, characters, and needs, which can potentially lead to friction or conflict. Therefore, creating a sense of security is not merely a need but a critical responsibility of every principal. The development of safety measures is preventive to avoid unwanted incidents. These preventive efforts not only protect the school community from physical harm but also foster collective awareness regarding the importance of establishing a safe, harmonious, and comfortable environment for all parties, like students, teachers, and support staff alike.

To realize this, the principal has implemented various concrete strategies, including the formulation of written regulations, the signing of integrity pacts by teachers, and the implementation of the Student Control Card. In addition, the provision of security facilities, empowerment of security personnel (*satpam*), and the establishment of suggestion boxes as a means for the school community's aspirations are part of the safety maintenance efforts. The principal also utilizes visual media, such as banners and plaques featuring positive slogans, to instill a safety culture. The reinforcement of the 5S culture (smile, greet, salute, politeness, courtesy) is also applied as part of the strategy to build safety based on positive cultural values. All of these measures demonstrate that the principal proactively and systematically fulfills their role in creating a safe, comfortable, and productive learning environment.

The Principal's Efforts to Improve Student Discipline

Improving discipline is a primary focus of the principal at SD Inpres 7 Kabupaten Sorong in creating a conducive school environment. Discipline is enhanced through various methods, such as direct supervision, modeling behavior demonstrated by teachers and staff, and the use of fingerprint technology for both teachers and students. Additionally, the principal implements a system of rewards and sanctions as a form of motivation and consequences for behavior that complies with or violates the rules. Messages about discipline are also disseminated through posters displayed in various areas of the school as reminders and reinforcement of these values.

These efforts have proven effective in improving discipline at SD Inpres 7 Kabupaten Sorong. However, the principal recognizes the importance of intensifying these initiatives, particularly by enhancing teacher discipline as a core element of effective school management. A consistent approach to discipline among all school members helps establish a structured and achievement-oriented school culture (Tamir & Ganon-Shilon, 2021). In this context, the principal's leadership extends beyond managing student behavior. It also involves modeling professionalism and accountability for teachers. This dual impact reinforces shared values within the school community, where educators set examples through punctuality, consistency, and commitment, ultimately strengthening institutional integrity and mutual respect.

Furthermore, increased student discipline has contributed significantly to improving the learning environment in the classroom. When students practice responsible behaviors such as being punctual, following classroom norms, completing assignments on time, and respecting teachers and classmates, the atmosphere becomes more focused and supportive. This enables lessons to run smoothly without unnecessary disruptions, allowing educators to concentrate on delivering instruction and fostering meaningful engagement (Kusmawan et al., 2025; McKeithan et al., 2021). As a result, students develop greater motivation, academic responsibility, and collaborative skills. A disciplined and respectful environment not only enhances academic outcomes but also fosters personal growth, promotes positive peer interactions, and cultivates a sustainable learning culture (Jusoh et al., 2024).

This suggests that discipline is not merely about creating rules, but also about consistency in implementation and striking a balance between positive reinforcement and educational sanctions. Such consistency is key to discipline becoming an ingrained culture within the school institution. The school must have written regulations that serve as the foundation of discipline and bind all school members, including students and staff. These rules function as a shared guideline that must be consistently followed to establish a well-ordered and harmonious learning environment. With clear regulations and firm enforcement, discipline becomes a vital foundation supporting the success of the learning process.

Discussion

This study reveals that the principal of SD Inpres 7 Kabupaten Sorong employs an adaptive situational leadership style tailored to the school's needs, with a dominant participative approach that stands out in cultivating the school culture. This participatory leadership approach not only fosters a harmonious and collaborative climate but also enhances the loyalty and motivation of all school members. It demonstrates that the principal actively serves as a role model in discipline and is directly involved in implementing school programs, thereby creating a conducive and inclusive school atmosphere (Welsh, 2024). This success confirms that responsive leadership, which involves active participation from the school community, is a key factor in building a productive and meaningful work culture.

Furthermore, the principal prioritizes empowering teachers and staff through a delegative style that allows them space for innovation and accountability according to their respective roles. With clear delegation of authority, such as through department heads managing various school sectors, the principal avoids a "one-man show" system and builds a professional, collaborative work system. This strategy is crucial in strengthening the school's organizational structure, ensuring that administrative management and program implementation run effectively. These findings align with the principal's role as a manager and administrator who systematically carries out planning, organizing, and supervising functions to achieve efficient school governance (Astuti et al., 2025; Yasin & Mokhtar, 2022).

In the context of ensuring safety and discipline, the principal plays a strategic role by implementing concrete policies such as direct supervision, fingerprint technology, and a reward-and-punishment system. This approach not only improves student discipline but also seeks to reinforce teacher discipline as an integral part of school management (Apriwulan et al., 2025). This effort reflects the principal's understanding that discipline is not merely about written rules but requires consistent application and a balance between positive motivation and educational sanctions. This forms an essential foundation for establishing a disciplined school culture oriented towards achievement, while also creating a safe, comfortable, and conducive learning environment for all school members (Amanda et al., 2024; Sipahutar, 2022).

Intensive communication also plays a key role in developing an effective school culture. The principal establishes both formal and informal communication channels with various stakeholders, including teachers, parents, the school committee, and the wider community. This comprehensive communication approach not only fosters harmonious relationships among school members but also promotes active participation in all school programs and policies. Such communication skills support the principal's role as a leader capable of uniting the school's vision and mission so that all elements are involved in achieving shared goals (Hanama et al., 2024). Overall, this study indicates that the principal's success in developing an effective school culture results from the consistent and holistic integration of multiple leadership roles (educator, manager, administrator, supervisor, leader, innovator, motivator). A flexible situational leadership style, strengthened discipline, harmonious relationship building, and enhanced school safety are mutually supportive strategic steps. This underscores that school culture development is not merely an individual responsibility but a collective effort requiring visionary and collaborative leadership (Azorín & Fullan, 2022;

Tahir & Fatima, 2023). Consequently, SD Inpres 7 Kabupaten Sorong stands as an exemplary school in creating a productive, safe, and highly motivated learning environment.

CONCLUSION

The principal implements an adaptive and flexible situational leadership style, characterized by a dominant participative approach that fosters harmonious collaboration, loyalty, and active participation among all school members. A delegative style is also employed to empower teachers and staff through clear task delegation, while an authoritarian style is applied selectively when swift decisions are required. The principal plays a comprehensive role as an educator, manager, administrator, supervisor, innovator, motivator, and leader, actively fostering harmonious relationships, ensuring safety, maintaining discipline, and promoting open communication with stakeholders, thereby creating a conducive and productive school climate. The implications of these findings emphasize the need to develop flexible situational leadership capabilities, strengthen participative and delegative leadership styles to enhance ownership and innovation, manage school culture integratively following the EMASLIM paradigm, maintain consistent enforcement of discipline and safety balanced with educational rewards and sanctions, enhance communication with stakeholders, and provide competency development training for principals to optimize their role in creating an excellent and effective school.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

There is no conflict of interest with the publication of this article, the author states. The author states that the information and facts in the article are based on plagiarism.

REFERENCES

- Amanda, S., Suabuana, C., & Suresman, E. (2024). Student discipline character development strategies in primary school. *Edukasi: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pengajaran*, 11(2), 1-12.
- Apriwulan, H. F., Hanama, A., Pisriwati, S. A., & Siswanto, D. H. (2025). Library service management as an effort to cultivate students' reading interest in improving activities and learning outcomes. *Curricula: Journal of Curriculum Development*, 4(1), 199-214.
- Astuti, S. J. W., Dwiningwarni, S. S., & Atmojo, S. (2025). Modeling environmental interactions and collaborative interventions for childhood stunting: A case from Indonesia. *Dialogues in Health*, 6(1), 1-11.
- Azorín, C., & Fullan, M. (2022). Leading new, deeper forms of collaborative cultures: Questions and pathways. *Journal of Educational Change*, 23(1), 131-143.

- Gullo, G. L., & Beachum, F. D. (2020). Principals navigating discipline decisions for social justice: An informed grounded theory study. *Heliyon*, 6(12), 1-11.
- Hamzah, A. (2023). The school principal's strategy in enhancing academic achievement of students through olympiad coaching at State Junior High School 1 Galis. *Pendidikan Dasar Islam*, 15(1), 1-26.
- Hanama, A., Pisriwati, S. A., & Siswanto, D. H. (2024). Memimpin dengan cemerlang: Peranan pengetua dalam menghasilkan pengurusan sekolah yang berkesan. *Jurnal Kepimpinan Pendidikan*, 11(4), 32-40.
- Heenan, I. W., Paor, D. De, & McNamara, P. M. (2023). The impact of transformational school leadership on school staff and school culture in primary schools-A systematic review of international literature. *Societies*, 13(133), 1-27.
- Illah, A., Mansur, R., Hidayatullah, M. F., Sariman, S., & Seen, I. (2022). Principal leadership in developing the competence of islamic religious education teachers. *NidhomulHaq: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, 7(3), 404-419.
- Jusoh, R., Dasuki, N. M., Shu, Q., & Amram, A. (2024). Sustainable leadership: Encouraging teacher performance and classroom excellence. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 14(11), 2350-2359.
- Kilag, O. K. T., Tokong, C. L., Enriquez, B. V., Deiparine, J. P., Purisima, R. L., & Zamora, M. B. (2023). School leaders: The extent of management empowerment and its impact on teacher and school effectiveness. *International Multi-Disciplinary Journal of Education*, 1(1), 127-140.
- Kusmawan, A., Rahman, R., Anis, N., & Arifudin, O. (2025). The relationship between teacher involvement in curriculum development and student learning outcomes. *International Journal of Educatio Elementaria and Psychologia*, 2(1), 1-12.
- Mahmood, S., Rehman, U. R., Ashraf, U. M., & Khan, S. N. (2022). Organizational culture, AI training, and technological Tools: Influencing women's leadership success in the unique context of the UAE. *Journal of Excellence in Management Sciences*, 2(2), 18-28.
- McKeithan, G. K., Rivera, M. O., Mann, L. E., & Mann, L. B. (2021). Strategies to promote meaningful student engagement in online settings. *Journal of Education and Training Studies*, 9(4), 1-11.
- Moore, M. Z. (2022). Fostering a sense of belonging using a multicontext approach. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice*, 24(3), 703-720.
- Mustoip, S., Al Ghozali, M. I., As, U. S., & Sanhaji, S. Y. (2023). Implementation of character education through children's language development in elementary schools. *IJECA (International Journal of Education and Curriculum Application)*, 6(2), 91-100.

- Nabella, S. D., Rivaldo, Y., Kurniawan, R., Nurmayunita, N., Sari, D. P., Luran, M. F., & Wulandari, K. (2022). The influence of leadership and organizational culture mediated by organizational climate on governance at senior high school in Batam City. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 12(5), 119-130.
- Pangestika, N. M. (2024). Evaluation of leadership and management programs for teacher professional development. *Indonesian Journal of Education (INJOE)*, 4(2), 439-454.
- Rasmitadila, R., Aliyyah, R. R., Rachmadtullah, R., Samsudin, A., Syaodih, E., Nurtanto, M., & Tambunan, A. R. S. (2020). The perceptions of primary school teachers of online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic period. *Journal of Ethnic and Cultural Studies*, 7(2), 90-109.
- Sipahutar, R. S. (2022). Implementation of Pancasila values through school culture in the digital era. *International Journal of Students Education*, 1(2), 29-34.
- Siswanto, D. H., Putri, H. A., Kintoko, K., & Suwajirah, S. (2025). Chemistry laboratory management: Reviewing planning, organization, and evaluation for effectiveness. *Curricula: Journal of Curriculum Development*, 4(1), 229-242.
- Smith, K., Maynard, N., Berry, A., Stephenson, T., Spiteri, T., Corrigan, D., Mansfield, J., Ellerton, P., & Smith, T. (2022). Principles of Problem-Based Learning (PBL) in STEM education: Using expert wisdom and research to frame educational practice. *Education Sciences*, 12(10), 1-20.
- Sung, M., & Gounko, T. (2023). Fostering the sense of belonging: Cultivating educational values through a cultural association. *International Journal of Asian Education*, 4(4), 235-246.
- Supit, S., Samal, A. L., & Tamandatu, S. O. (2024). Spiritualitas kolaboratif dan integrasi teknologi dalam pendidikan: Sebuah tawaran inovatif manajemen pendidikan kristiani melalui studi pada sekolah menengah di Sulawesi Utara. *Jurnal Teologi dan Pendidikan Agama Kristen*, 10(3), 647-661.
- Tahir, I., & Fatima, N. (2023). Effect of principal's instructional leadership practices on teachers' professional development: A cross sectional study of secondary school level from selected areas of Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan. *International Journal of Science and Research Archive*, 10(2), 590-606.
- Tamir, E., & Ganon-Shilon, S. (2021). A "cracking" school culture: Leading resource exploitation during implementation of a national reform. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 59(5), 650-665.
- Tarso, T., Siswanto, D. H., & Setiawan, A. (2025). Teacher qualifications in the implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka and ISMUBA. *Curricula: Journal of Curriculum Development*, 4(1), 13-28.

- Ugobueze, A. N. (2024). The role of school-society collaboration in the development of primary schools. *Journal of Indonesian Primary School*, 1(4), 1-14.
- Vries, J. A. de, Dimosthenous, A., Schildkamp, K., & Visscher, A. J. (2022). The impact on student achievement of an assessment for learning teacher professional development program. *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, 74(1), 1-10.
- Wahyuni, N., Setiawan, A., Apriwulan, H. F., & Siswanto, D. H. (2024). Optimalisasi budaya positif sekolah untuk membentuk karakter profil pelajar Pancasila pada murid sekolah dasar. *Murabbi*, 3(2), 79-90.
- Walland, E., & Shaw, S. (2022). E-portfolios in teaching, learning and assessment: Tensions in theory and praxis. *Technology, Pedagogy, and Education*, 31(3), 363-379.
- Welsh, R. O. (2024). Administering discipline: An examination of the factors shaping school discipline practices. *Education and Urban Society*, 56(7), 847-880.
- Yasin, H., & Mokhtar, M. (2022). Practices of accountability and transparency in financial management among secondary school principals. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 12(9), 198-216.
- Zhang, J., Zamani, E. D., Gerli, P., & Mora, L. (2025). Co-constructing cooperative value ecosystems: A critical realist perspective. *Information Systems Journal*, 35(2), 504-544.