

## **Principal Leadership in Growing a Culture of Discipline**

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### **Abstract**

This study aims to examine the leadership role of school principals in fostering a culture of discipline in the school environment. Using a qualitative approach and literature study method, this research examines various relevant literature, journals, and regulations to illustrate effective leadership strategies. The results indicate that principals have a central role in shaping a culture of discipline through exemplary leadership, clear policy planning, involvement of all school members, and continuous evaluation. Transformational and democratic leadership styles are considered the most effective in building discipline awareness that grows from within the school community. Strategies such as teacher empowerment, student involvement, and cooperation with parents also strengthen the implementation of disciplinary values. And the study results describe the planning, implementation, and evaluation strategies of school principals in fostering a culture of discipline. The findings confirm that strong and consistent principal leadership is key in creating an orderly, positive, and characterful educational environment.

**Keywords:** Leadership, Culture, Culture of Discipline



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### **INTRODUCTION**

Culture comes from the Sanskrit language, namely buddhayah, which is the plural form of buddhi (budi or reason) is defined as things related to the human mind and mind. In English, culture is called "culture," which comes from the Latin word colere, which means "cultivating" or "working," which can also be interpreted as "cultivating land" or "farming." The word "culture" is also sometimes translated as "culture" in Indonesian. Culture is a term that comes from the discipline of social anthropology. In the world of education, culture can be used as one of the transmissions of knowledge, because actually what is covered in culture is very broad. Culture is like software in the human brain, which guides perception, identifies what is seen, directs focus on one thing, and avoids others.(Sumarto, 2019) Culture can be interpreted as a concept that includes the results of thought, human efforts, and organized patterns of social interaction. The understanding of culture is not only limited to aspects of art or tradition but also includes important elements such as values, norms, and patterns of life that are passed down from generation to generation. Various expert views emphasize that culture is a complex system, consisting of knowledge, beliefs, habits, and practices that shape social life.(Putri et al., 2025)

Education is an essential part of human life that should never be abandoned. Education is the most important pillar in forming a quality generation, not only in academic aspects but also in character building. One of the character values that is an important foundation in the education process is discipline. Discipline in the school environment reflects order, responsibility, and commitment to the rules and norms that apply. Discipline is an awareness to obey and take action based on applicable regulations and certain values applied to the environment of educational institutions. Discipline is basically self-control in obeying the rules both made by oneself and outside oneself in the family, educational institutions, society, state,

and religion. Disciplined behavior comes from within the human being himself and is built from his environment. Discipline that comes from within the human being itself will be stronger and last longer than discipline that comes from outside. Discipline that comes from within will make a person able to obey the rules on his own consciousness voluntarily without having to be ordered by others.(Sumayya et al., 2024)

Education is an important element in the formation of individual character and personality from an early age. School is an institution or facility for implementing learning services or the education process. Schools, as one of the formal education institutions, have a huge responsibility in shaping a generation that not only achieves academically but also has a strong character and high discipline. School is the realm of education that includes the process of education, guidance, and training. The implementation of a disciplinary culture in schools plays an important role in supporting the smooth learning process, creating a positive learning environment, and strengthening social relationships in the school environment. Consistently applied discipline will form students who are more independent, responsible, and respectful of social rules and norms.(Sofiati & Pratikno, 2024) Schools are not separated from the role of the principal's leadership style in performing his duties as a leader who is responsible for the continuity of the teaching and learning process and the development of the potential possessed by educational institutions. In this case, the principal's leadership holds a very important role. Leadership is the process of encouraging individual or group action to achieve specific goals in a predetermined environment. Leaders use power and authority to control individual activities.(Siahaan et al., 2024) Principals as educational leaders have responsibilities not only in administrative aspects but also as agents of change who are capable of creating a conducive school climate, including fostering and strengthening a culture of discipline among teachers, education personnel, and students.

Implementing a culture of discipline is one of the options available to formal educational institutions for instilling the most important educational values in accordance with societal values and norms. The culture of discipline is used to develop disciplinary qualities such as obedience, awareness, responsibility, loyalty, compliance, and order, among other things, by creating an educational environment that is both comfortable and appropriate to the educational principles taught. As a result, education is more than just imparting knowledge; it is also a process of shaping pupils into individuals with excellent values, in line with societal norms, and with the highest level of self-worth, both intellectual and moral.(Fahma & Khamidi, 2023) The Principal's Role as a Leader in Developing School Culture with Teachers and Educational Personnel. Principals must be able to perform leadership responsibilities and roles in order to improve quality by fostering a disciplined culture.(Fahma & Khamidi, 2023) Effective leadership will be able to direct all school components to collaborate on creating discipline and beneficial behaviors. Communicative, interactive, and example leadership styles will help students internalize disciplinary ideals at school. As a result, a good discipline culture will emerge, fostering an ordered, congenial, and productive learning environment that will aid in the achievement of overall educational objectives.

In Indonesia, regulations related to teacher leadership have been regulated through Undang Undang No. 14 Tahun 2005 on Teachers and Lecturers and Peraturan Pemerintah No. 74/2008 on Teachers. These regulations highlight that instructors are responsible for developing students' character through their leadership responsibilities, in addition to formal instruction. Teachers, according to this notion, are both future educational leaders and role models for students. This demonstrates that teachers serve as role models for their students, and students will emulate their attitudes and behaviors. As a result, discipline is a valuable trait that every person should possess. The principal must first demonstrate the disciplinary

character as a role model for teachers, education professionals, and pupils in the school setting. This research aims to describe and analyze the form of principal leadership in building a culture of discipline in the school environment and how the principal's planning, implementation, and evaluation strategies in building a culture of discipline. Understanding this would hopefully provide important insights into efforts to increase educational quality by improving the role of school principals as inspirational and transformative leaders.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This research uses a qualitative approach, with a literature review method. The qualitative approach is to collect and analyze data from natural situations. Qualitative research aims to gain a deep understanding of human and social problems, not to describe the surface of reality as quantitative research does with its positivism. (Adlini et al., 2022) his research utilizes library research. Literature review research is the result of analyzing various conceptual information and qualitative and quantitative data from various previously published scientific articles. In obtaining research data, researchers collect, analyze, organize, sources from articles, books, previous research on the leadership of school principals in building a culture of discipline. (Riska et al., 2025) With this method, it is hoped that the research can make a theoretical contribution in developing the concept of educational leadership oriented towards fostering a culture of discipline in schools.

## **RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

According to the results of the literature study, it was found that the principal's leadership has a central role in fostering a culture of discipline in schools. The principal not only serves as an administrative manager, but also as a role model who can influence the attitude and behavior of all school personnel. Through an effective leadership style, consistent policies, and open communication, the principal can create an environment that supports the establishment of disciplinary values. The following discussion will describe the main findings from several relevant literatures related to how the principal's leadership contributes to the development of a culture of discipline in the educational environment.

1. **Leadership as a Determinant of Discipline Culture.** The results of the literature review show that the principal's leadership is one of the most influential factors in forming a culture of discipline in schools. The principal is not only in charge of administration, but also serves as a role model who is capable of shaping the character of all school personnel through policies, attitudes, and exemplary behavior. Discipline is more than just following the school regulations, it also includes being responsible, punctual, and having a high work ethic. (Zakiya et al., 2025) A lot of studies confirm that an effective leadership style can create a conducive and orderly school climate.
2. **Leadership Styles that Encourage Discipline.** In the context of discipline development, transformational and democratic leadership styles are considered the most effective. Leaders with this style not only give direction, but also involve the entire school community in the decision-making process and the establishment of rules. Transformational leadership has emerged as a powerful force in improving the performance of education services. By inspiring, motivating and empowering educators, transformational leaders can unleash the untapped potential in educational institutions. (Armiyanti et al., 2023) Through transformational leaders not only provide direction, but also motivate followers to go beyond existing boundaries, encourage innovation, and shape a positive organizational culture. (Umri & Sukriadi, 2024) In contrast, democratic leadership refers to how a leader collaborates with his or her team to reach a common goal. This style of leader listens to his

team's suggestions and incorporates them into decision-making. Communication is open, and everyone collaborates to solve problems and achieve objectives. This style of leadership encourages team members to support team choices.(Sutisna et al., 2023) With these two leadership styles, internal discipline awareness is encouraged rather than imposed through pressure or punishment.

3. **Principal's Exemplary Leadership as the Main Strategy.** According to the literature, the principal's exemplary leadership has a very strong impact in fostering a culture of discipline. In fostering a culture of discipline effectively, exemplary behavior is needed starting from the school leader. The principal not only acts as a manager and organizer of the educational process, but also as an example or role model for all school members The principal is someone who will become a role model for the school. Principals who are consistent with the rules, arrive on time, and show disciplined behavior in their daily lives will be a real example for teachers, students, and other staff. The discipline shown by the leader will be more easily internalized by the school community.
4. **Clear and consistent disciplinary policy.** A culture of discipline cannot emerge without a clear and consistent policy. Principals must establish norms that are not only strict, but also equitable and humane. According to some literature, the success of disciplinary enforcement is heavily dependent on the uniformity with which regulations are applied indiscriminantly.
5. **The Importance of Communication in Disciplined Leadership.** Building a discipline culture requires effective communication between principals and instructors, as well as students and parents. Principals that are receptive to feedback and can effectively communicate their vision and standards will be more likely to have assistance from all school components in implementing discipline.
6. **Empowering Teachers to Instill Discipline.** The principal's good leadership is also shown by his ability to empower teachers to foster student discipline. Teachers are the ones who interact directly with students, so they need to be supported with training, guidelines, and guidance in order to effectively instill discipline values in the classroom.
7. **Student Involvement in Creating Rules.** Several studies have emphasized the necessity of incorporating students in the formulation of school rules. Principals that take a participatory approach typically allow students to help develop rules through groups such as student councils. This makes students feel responsible for the rules, promoting conscious discipline.
8. **Increased Motivation and Positive Learning Environment.** Successful leadership in building a culture of discipline also has an impact on increasing student motivation and creating a positive learning environment. Good discipline creates a calm, organized, and focused atmosphere, so that learning activities can run more effectively and efficiently.
9. **Obstacles in Implementing a Culture of Discipline.** Although many principals have implemented various strategies, not a few have faced obstacles in building a culture of discipline. Some of the obstacles that are often found include low student awareness, lack of parental support, and weak internal supervision. Therefore, leadership strategies need to be adaptive and responsive to the situation at hand.
10. **Leadership Implications on Education Quality.** Overall, the literature study shows that principals' effectiveness in cultivating a culture of discipline has a positive effect on educational quality. The discipline not only builds students' character, but also improves learning effectiveness and overall school performance. Therefore, improving the leadership capacity of school principals is one of the crucial aspects in efforts to strengthen education management.

Based on the literature study, fostering a culture of discipline in the school environment requires systematic planning, consistent implementation, and continuous evaluation so that the values of discipline are truly internalized in the behavior of school members. These three stages become an important framework in the principal's leadership to create a culture of discipline that is not only based on rules, but also grows from mutual awareness and responsibility.

1. The Principal's Planning Strategy for Fostering a Culture of Discipline. In building a culture of discipline, principals need to develop a careful and directed planning. This planning includes identifying discipline problems that occur in schools, setting goals to be achieved, and preparing work programs that involve all school components. Based on the literature review, good planning begins with analyzing the needs and characteristics of students and the school environment. Principals also need to involve teachers, education personnel, school committees, and even students in the planning process to build a sense of ownership and shared responsibility for discipline.
2. Principal's Implementation Strategy to Foster a Disciplined Culture. The principal's implementation of the strategy entails tangible activities that are consistent with the plan that was developed. The principal employs a variety of strategies, including modeling, reinforcing discipline norms, developing character-building activities, and providing routine coaching to teachers and students. Implementation also entails empowering teachers as partners in establishing disciplinary ideals in the classroom and encouraging students to actively participate in maintaining school order. To establish a strong and long-lasting discipline culture, this execution plan must be consistent and tailored to the dynamics of the school setting. Principal's Implementation Strategy to Foster a Disciplined Culture
3. Principal's Evaluation Strategy for fostering discipline culture. Evaluation is a key stage in determining the effectiveness of previously adopted initiatives. Principals can evaluate by conducting direct observations, coordination meetings with teachers and staff, student discipline surveys, and reflecting on the frequency of violations that occur. The evaluation results are utilized to design more appropriate tactics or techniques. Evaluation is also used to reinforce successful programs and to inform decision-making when developing future discipline policies. Regular and open evaluations enable principals to continually enhance the quality of their leadership in building a disciplined school culture.

## CONCLUSION

Principal leadership has an important strategic role in developing and shaping a disciplined school culture. The principle is not simply an administrative manager, but also an outstanding figure who wields power by role modeling, good communication, and fair and consistent policies. Principals can establish an environment conducive to the development of disciplinary character by carefully planning, involving all school members, and continuously evaluating. Leadership tactics that encourage participation, teacher empowerment, student involvement, and parent cooperation have been shown to be helpful in fostering an orderly, good school atmosphere that promotes teaching and learning. As a result, developing school administrators' leadership skills is a vital step toward strengthening character education and improving overall educational quality.

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