



## School Culture Management in Improving the Quality of Student Learning

Darto Syahputra<sup>1</sup>, Wiwik Dyah Aryani<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup> Universitas Islam Nusantara, Bandung, Indonesia

\* Corresponding Author, Email: [dartosyahputra56@gmail.com](mailto:dartosyahputra56@gmail.com)

*Received:* June 5, 2025, *Revised:* June 12, 2025, *Accepted:* June 30, 2025,  
*Published:* July 1, 2025

**Abstract:** This study examines how schools strategically manage culture—beyond routine practices—to internalize noble values and consistently enhance the quality of learning amid modern challenges. Using a descriptive qualitative approach (observation, in-depth interviews, documentation), it analyzes planning, implementation, and evaluation of school culture grounded in Achmad Sanusi's six-dimensional value system (theological, ethical-legal, aesthetic, logical-rational, physical-physiological, and teleological). Findings show that effective culture management makes this value system a reference for individual and organizational attitudes, mindsets, and actions: theological values foster spiritual motivation; ethical-legal values build discipline and confidence; logical-rational and teleological values improve management quality, work performance, school effectiveness, and accountability. The study concludes that school culture management, rooted in a comprehensive value foundation, creates a conducive environment for the sustainable realization of the educational vision and mission.

**Keywords:** learning quality; qualitative; school culture management; value system.

### Introduction

School culture is a collection of values, norms, traditions, and habits—shaped and upheld by the school community—that encompasses ways of interacting, decision-making, and defining success. A positive and conducive school culture is believed to foster a safe and comfortable learning environment that motivates students to learn optimally (Abdiyah & Subiyantoro, 2021). Furthermore, studies have found a significant relationship between student achievement and cultural elements such as collaborative leadership, teacher cooperation, and a unified school purpose. Thus, a culture that supports collaboration improves learning outcomes. Various studies have shown a positive correlation between a strong school culture and various indicators of educational quality, such as improved student learning outcomes, reduced absenteeism, improved discipline, and the creation of a positive school climate (Leithwood, 2021).

School culture essentially represents the identity and "personality" of an educational institution. It is not simply a document of rules or slogans written on classroom walls, but rather a manifestation of a collection of values, norms, traditions, and habits that are internalized and collectively lived by the entire school community. These elements invisibly dictate daily behavior patterns, influence how individuals interact with one another, guide managerial decision-making mechanisms, and shape collective definitions of success within that environment. An institution with a mature culture will have deeply rooted moral and behavioral guidelines that consistently guide the principal, teachers, staff, and students to act in alignment with the school's educational vision and mission (Istiqomah et al., 2024).

The dimensions of school culture are closely linked to the professional and structural dynamics of its educators. There is a significant correlation between student achievement and elements that shape organizational culture, such as collaborative leadership practices, high levels of peer collaboration, and a shared vision that is universally understood by all elements of the school. When a culture fosters peer collaboration, teachers are encouraged to share pedagogical best practices and develop more innovative teaching strategies. The professional synergy that emerges from this supportive culture ultimately leads to higher-quality instruction, which directly improves student learning outcomes (Kholidi, 2025).

A wealth of leading literature has confirmed that school culture is not merely an abstract concept but a crucial determinant of educational quality. Leithwood's (2021) findings demonstrate a strong positive correlation between a strong school culture and improvements in various comprehensive indicators of educational quality. This success indicator is not only measured by a surge in academic achievement (cognitive achievement), but also manifests in measurable positive behaviors, such as a drastic reduction in absenteeism and increased discipline based on intrinsic awareness, not simply fear of sanctions. Ultimately, strengthening school culture will transform educational institutions into truly harmonious, inclusive learning communities oriented toward continuous quality improvement.

The issue of School Culture Management is a persistent problem, encompassing planning, organization, implementation, and evaluation (Susmiarti et al., 2024). This is due to students' suboptimal awareness of the existing school culture. In addition to the suboptimal implementation of the regulation concerning Permendikbudristek No. 8 of 2024 concerning process standards, existing school culture programs in these schools are also imperfect. Furthermore, there is a lack of professional human resources, inadequate supporting facilities and infrastructure, and insufficient funding. Furthermore, there is suboptimal awareness and involvement of teachers, principals, supervisors, and other stakeholders. This results in student achievement that is not as expected, ultimately impacting the failure to achieve the ideal student ideal.

Conceptually, school culture is the invisible foundation underlying all activities within an educational institution. This culture manifests as a collection of values, norms, traditions, and habits that are formed, internalized, and maintained by all members of the school community. These elements not only regulate superficial etiquette but also more deeply influence how individuals interact, how decision-making mechanisms are implemented, and how the school defines standards of success. As emphasized by Abdiyah, the existence of a positive and conducive school culture plays a crucial role in creating an ideal learning ecosystem. A psychologically safe and physically comfortable environment is believed to be a powerful catalyst for motivating students to actively engage and learn optimally, freeing them from stress, and encouraging the growth of their maximum potential.

The correlation between organizational culture and graduate quality has also been empirically proven through various academic findings. Numerous studies, including those by Leithwood, demonstrate a linear and significant relationship between a strong school culture and various indicators of educational quality. A culture that prioritizes collaborative leadership, close cooperation between teachers, and a unified institutional purpose has been shown to boost student achievement. These indicators of success extend beyond the cognitive domain and are also reflected in daily behavior, such as a drastic reduction in absenteeism, increased discipline based on intrinsic awareness, and the creation of an overall positive and supportive school climate (Indriyani et al., 2023).

The reality on the ground often reveals a stark gap between the ideals of the concept and its managerial practices. As highlighted in Susmiarti's study, school culture management remains a polemic and a growing problem. The complexity of this issue permeates the entire management cycle, from weaknesses in the planning stage, to ineffective organization, obstacles in implementation, and the absence of measurable evaluation instruments. One of the most obvious root causes is the suboptimal level of student awareness of the positive culture that schools are attempting to implement. Without this awareness and internalization of the core subject of education, school culture programs often become mere formalities with little substance.

These managerial challenges are further complicated by structural and regulatory barriers. The suboptimal implementation of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology Regulation (Permendikbudristek), which regulates Process Standards, indicates that schools are still struggling to translate macro policies into technical operations in the classroom. This operationalization failure aligns with the imperfect design of the school culture program itself. These limitations then compound with the limited availability of truly professional human resources to oversee this cultural transition. These obstacles are further exacerbated by inadequate supporting infrastructure and insufficient allocation of education funding to facilitate innovative habituation programs.

All of these systemic and structural limitations lead to a collective participation crisis. There is a suboptimal awareness and active involvement of key stakeholders, from teachers and principals to supervisors and other stakeholders. The weak synergy between these elements creates a detrimental domino effect. As a result, student achievement falls short of the expected targets, and the goal of educational institutions to produce graduates with superior character or exemplary students remains a major challenge that has not yet been fully realized.

The results of research by Nurlaela, Noor Miyono and Titik Haryati (Nurlaela et al., 2023) written in the title *The Role of School Quality Culture in Improving the Quality of Education at SMA Negeri 2 Cepu*. This study shows that the role of the principal, teachers, students and parents play an active role in improving school culture at SMAN 2 Cepu. In line with the research conducted by Mulyawan Syafwandy Nugraha and Hilyatun Najuba entitled "Implementation of School Culture Strategies in Improving the Quality of Education". The results of this study show that MAN 2 Kota Bandung implements various school culture strategies that have a positive impact on the quality of education. Referring to the results of the 2 studies above that school culture can significantly improve the quality of learning because a conducive, safe, comfortable, and consistent school culture is very necessary for students in carrying out the daily learning process, in addition to that the role of the principal, teachers, students and parents must play an active role in guiding students and because without a good school culture the quality of school learning is impossible to be optimal.

Empirically, the importance of school culture in improving educational quality has been demonstrated through various previous studies. One such study is the research conducted by Nurlaela, Noor Miyono, and Titik Haryati on the role of school quality culture in improving educational quality at SMA Negeri 2 Cepu. The study clearly shows that the success of establishing a positive school culture cannot be separated from the synergy and collaboration of all elements of the educational ecosystem. The massive involvement of the principal as the top manager, the dedication of teachers as the spearhead of teaching, the active participation of students, and the full support of parents have proven to be the main driving forces in accelerating the improvement of school culture at the institution.

These findings align with and reinforce research conducted by Mulyawan Syafwandy Nugraha and Hilyatun Najuba on the implementation of school culture strategies to improve educational quality. Based on their observations at MAN 2 Bandung City, the implementation of various structured strategies to strengthen school culture has had a very positive and significant impact on the overall quality of education. This confirms that school culture is not a passive concept, but rather a strategic instrument that—if implemented with strong commitment—will directly influence the effectiveness and quality of educational institution governance.

Referring to the synthesis of the two research findings, a firm conclusion can be drawn that school culture has a very significant leverage in improving the quality of learning. A conducive, safe, comfortable, and consistent school climate is an absolute prerequisite (*conditio sine qua non*) that is essential for students to undergo daily teaching and learning activities. Moreover, this success requires collective responsibility, where the roles of the principal, teachers, students, and parents must be manifested in the form of continuous guidance and support. Ultimately, it can be emphasized that without a solid and well-internalized foundation of school culture, any form of effort to achieve optimal school learning quality is essentially impossible.

The novelty of this research lies in the study of school culture management in improving the quality of student learning as a model of character education through school culture management to improve the quality of student learning analyzed through the POAC management

function approach as proposed by George R. Terry (Terry et al., 1985). This research not only examines school culture as a formation of student character but also develops the quality of student learning. Thus, this research offers a new perspective on the importance of school culture management in improving the quality of student learning which has not been widely studied in the context of basic education in Indonesia.

The novelty of this research lies in the integration of school culture management studies, which are not only positioned as technical instruments for improving learning quality but are also conceptualized as a holistic character education model for students. Unlike previous studies that often separate the realm of academic achievement from character formation, this study dissects both elements simultaneously. The analysis process is framed comprehensively using the scalpel of the POAC management function approach—namely Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling—as proposed by George R. Terry (Terry et al., 1985).

Through the POAC managerial framework, this study goes beyond conventional studies by proving that a structured school culture can act as a catalyst that simultaneously shapes students' moral character and accelerates their cognitive and learning qualities. Thus, this study offers a fresh theoretical and practical perspective on the urgency of school culture governance. Such an integrative approach is still very limited and has not been explored in depth, particularly in the Indonesian primary education landscape. Therefore, the findings of this study are expected to fill the existing research gap in the literature and serve as a strategic reference in formulating policies to equalize the quality of primary education in the future.

Therefore, this study aims to fill this empirical gap by examining in-depth how school culture management is implemented and how this implementation correlates with, or even influences, the quality of student learning. A deeper understanding of this issue is expected to provide valuable insights for schools in designing and implementing more effective school culture management strategies to continuously improve the quality of learning. Furthermore, the results of this study are also expected to provide theoretical and practical contributions to the development of educational management science, particularly in the context of school culture and learning quality at the elementary school level.

## Method

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study design. The qualitative approach was chosen because this research seeks to deeply understand the process of school culture management in improving the foundation. A qualitative approach allows researchers to explore the meaning, processes, and dynamics that occur naturally in the field (Moleong, 2019). The focus of the research is directed at the implementation of the Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling (POAC) management function in managing school culture and its implications for the formation of student attitudes and learning in schools. The case study design was used because this research examines phenomena contextually and holistically in educational units that have specific characteristics and policies. As emphasized, case studies are appropriate when researchers want to understand a program or activity in depth in a real context (D. Creswell & John, 2018).

The research was conducted at SDN 2 Jatiluhur and SDN 3 Cikaobandung, Jatiluhur District, Purwakarta Regency, West Java Province. The selection of the research location was based on the consideration that both schools have implemented school culture programs sustainably as part of school policy. In addition, the geographical conditions of the schools, which are located in mountainous and rural areas with relatively abundant natural resources, support optimal school culture programs. This research lasted for four months, namely October 2025 to January 2026, so that researchers had sufficient time to conduct repeated observations and obtain in-depth data, as recommended in qualitative research (Sugiyono, 2013).

The research subjects were determined through purposive sampling, taking into account direct involvement in the management and implementation of school culture management. This technique was chosen because the researcher needed informants who truly understood and were involved in the activities being studied (Sugiyono, 2013). The research subjects consisted of two

principals, two school committee members, two class teachers, two staff members, two parents, and four students. The purpose of this subject selection was to obtain relevant and comprehensive data related to the planning, organizing, implementing, and monitoring of school culture management at the school.

Data collection was conducted through observation, interviews, and documentation studies. Observations were conducted to directly observe school culture management practices at the planning, organizing, implementation, and monitoring stages. Observations allowed researchers to capture actual behaviors and activities occurring in the field (Moleong, 2019). In-depth interviews were conducted with school principals, program coordinators, and classroom teachers to explore their understanding, experiences, and perspectives regarding school culture management. In-depth interviews were chosen because they can produce rich and in-depth data about the research subjects' experiences (J. W. Creswell, 2015). Documentation studies were used to examine work programs, activity schedules, implementation reports, meeting minutes, and relevant visual documentation to strengthen the data from observations and interviews.

Data analysis was conducted using Miles and Huberman's interactive analysis techniques, which included data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing and verification. Data reduction focused on findings relevant to the POAC framework in school culture management. Data presentation was arranged descriptively and narratively to facilitate understanding of the relationships between findings, while conclusions were drawn in stages and verified continuously. Data validity was maintained through source triangulation, technical triangulation, and member checking with key informants to ensure the credibility and validity of the research findings (Sugiyono, 2013).

## Results and Discussion

The results of the study indicate that the school culture management implemented at SDN 2 Jatiluhur and SDN 3 Cikaobandung, Purwakarta Regency, has positively contributed to improving the quality of elementary school students' learning. Through the implementation of school culture management, students are accustomed to carrying out habits that have become school culture that correlate with improving the quality of student learning both in and outside the classroom. The results of the empirical study indicate that the governance and management of school culture implemented comprehensively at SDN 2 Jatiluhur and SDN 3 Cikaobandung, Purwakarta Regency, have made a very significant positive contribution to improving the quality of elementary school students' learning. Through the implementation of structured and continuous school culture management, students are not only guided, but are actively accustomed to internalizing various positive values through daily habituation programs. These habits, which have taken root and transformed into the school's cultural identity, have been proven to have a direct correlation to the escalation of learning quality. This positive impact is not only measured cognitively in the classroom through increased understanding of the material, but also manifests affectively and psychomotorically outside the classroom through improvements in student attitudes, discipline, and social interactions. A school environment that consistently maintains this conducive culture ultimately succeeds in creating a holistic learning ecosystem and motivating students to continue developing.

From a theoretical perspective, the findings of this study reinforce and expand the relevance of the application of Situational Leadership Theory combined with Henry Fayol's Planning Function in the realm of contemporary educational management. This study firmly confirms the postulate that educational program planning, particularly that related to the implementation of academic supervision, should no longer be operated in a rigid, mechanistic, or static manner. Instead, managerial planning must be dynamic and based on a foundation of accurate diagnostic data regarding the technical competency map and psychological readiness of each teacher. Furthermore, the results of this study offer a new academic perspective, proving that the effectiveness and surge in educator performance are essentially a tangible product of the precise synchronization between the flexibility of the principal's leadership style and the level of professional maturity of the educators they lead. These findings directly provide a valuable

contribution to enriching the literature on Human Resource Management (HRM), particularly in the discourse on the governance of basic educational organizations.

At the micro-level, this model of cultural management and adaptive leadership has had a real transformational impact on educators. Teachers are gradually encouraged to shed evaluative resistance, become more open to critical self-reflection, and be more proactive in adopting digital technology to accelerate the improvement of their pedagogical competence. Meanwhile, for the school institution as a whole, the results of this study can serve as a fundamental reference in formulating and evaluating Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for academic supervision to make them more humane and participatory. This operational transformation can be realized through the development and application of an initial diagnostic instrument that can accurately map the level of readiness, obstacles, and specific needs of each teacher before the supervision cycle is implemented.

At the macro-level of policymakers, particularly the Department of Education, the findings of this study provide a rational basis and a very strong empirical foundation for revitalizing the direction of school leadership development policies. The Department of Education has the momentum to design and implement a managerial training blueprint specifically focused on strengthening situational leadership intelligence and digital literacy for school principals. This systemic policy intervention is essential to ensure a radical transformation of academic supervision practices in the field—from what was often reduced to merely a reporting burden and bureaucratic administrative fulfillment, to a concrete, measurable intervention strategy that has a direct impact on efforts to equalize the quality of educator performance across all educational units.

The findings of this study indicate that the successful implementation of school culture management is strongly influenced by the consistent and continuous implementation of the Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling (POAC) management functions. Clear planning, targeted resource organization, integrated implementation with learning, and regular supervision are key supporting factors in the sustainability of the program. The comprehensive findings of this study provide strong empirical affirmation that the essential success of school culture management implementation is largely determined by the implementation of holistic management functions that include Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling, commonly known as the POAC cycle. These four fundamental functions are proven to be unable to be implemented partially or reactively, but must be orchestrated systematically, circularly, and sustainably.

In the initial stages, precise and far-sighted planning serves as a blueprint that provides strategic direction and measurable targets for the entire cultural development program. This strategic step is then supported by the targeted and proportional organization of resources—both human and material infrastructure. Through thorough organization, every element of educators, staff, and stakeholders fully understands their roles and the distribution of responsibilities in building this cultural ecosystem. Furthermore, the manifestation of this governance is seen in the implementation phase (actuation), which is not left to stand alone as an additional activity, but rather is organically integrated into the lifeblood of the daily learning process, both inside and outside the classroom. This entire systemic series is ultimately closely monitored by monitoring (controlling) and evaluation mechanisms that are carried out routinely, reflectively, and oriented towards improvement (formative evaluation). The uninterrupted synergy of these four managerial pillars acts as a supporting factor and a key catalyst in ensuring the resilience, adaptability, and sustainability of school cultural programs amidst the dynamics of contemporary education. Thus, school culture management is not only understood as a school habituation activity, but as part of the process of forming student character which is integrated into school management so as to improve student learning.

### **School Culture Management Planning**

Based on the results of the document study, the school has compiled a strategic plan systematically outlined in the Medium-Term Work Plan (RKJM), Annual Activity Plan (RKT), and Education Unit Curriculum (KSP). These three documents contain learning policy directions that integrate the school's cultural values, such as the use of 5S student greetings,

collective literacy, bringing supplies, and ngosrek (traditional reading) in early literacy learning, and the use of folklore as teaching materials. This demonstrates an institutional commitment to preserving local culture while simultaneously improving the quality of student learning.

It was revealed that the school institution has translated its educational vision into a highly systematic, structured, and long-term strategic planning system. This comprehensive planning is documented legally and operationally through the formulation of the Medium-Term Work Plan (RKJM), the Annual Activity Plan (RKT), and the Education Unit Curriculum (KSP) document. These three managerial instruments do not merely function as sheets to fulfill bureaucratic administrative requirements, but act as blueprints that guide the direction of pedagogical policies in practice. Specifically, these documents explicitly contain policy guidelines that integrate the school's cultural values into students' academic and non-academic routines. The manifestation of this planning is manifested in a series of habituation programs rich in character education meaning, such as the tradition of welcoming students at the school gate through the implementation of 5S (Senyum, Sapa, Salam, Pan, dan Polite) to build social-emotional intelligence from an early age. Furthermore, this plan also emphasizes the importance of joint literacy programs, the habit of bringing supplies to foster independence and a sense of community, and the collective environmental cleaning activity, which effectively instills the values of mutual cooperation and responsibility. In the intracurricular realm, these cultural values are integrated through the use of folklore as contextual teaching materials in early literacy learning. The accommodation of all these habituation programs and local wisdom into the official planning document is authentic evidence of a very strong institutional commitment. This confirms that the school leadership is not only striving to preserve local culture symbolically, but also strategically positioning it as an instrument of character education and an essential means to boost the quality of student learning holistically.

Theoretically, the school culture management approach is firmly grounded in Vygotsky's (1993) sociocultural theory, which emphasizes the importance of cultural context in children's cognitive development. Vygotsky argued that social interaction within a familiar cultural context can accelerate the internalization of new concepts, including reading and writing. At SDN 2 Jatiluhur and SDN 3 Cikaobandung, ongoing school culture activities such as school literacy, singing pupuh, and reciting Surah Yasin together have been shown to increase student engagement in the learning process. This demonstrates that literacy is not only about technical reading skills, but also about understanding meaning within their own cultural context.

Theoretically, the implementation of school culture management has a very strong epistemological foundation in Vygotsky's view of Sociocultural Theory. Within this framework, Vygotsky firmly emphasized the essence and central role of the environmental cultural context in the process of children's cognitive and psychological development. He argued that social interactions that are established within an ecosystem with familiar cultural instruments—such as mother tongue, local traditions, and communal customs—act as a very effective cognitive bridge. This meaningful social interaction is believed to be able to accelerate the process of internalizing new knowledge concepts, especially in mastering basic skills such as reading and writing, through a process of guidance (scaffolding) from the surrounding environment. The relevance of this theoretical postulate is authentically manifested in educational practices at SDN 2 Jatiluhur and SDN 3 Cikaobandung. In both institutions, habituation activities rooted in cultural and religious values—such as integrated school literacy programs, the preservation of traditional arts through the nembang pupuh (singing pupuh), and the communal routine of reciting Surah Yasin together—have been proven to be able to boost students' enthusiasm and active involvement in the entire learning process. This empirical phenomenon convincingly demonstrates that the concept of literacy must essentially be redefined; it does not simply refer to mastering the mechanical skills of spelling or stringing words together, but rather is a process of exploring understanding and constructing meaning that thrives because it is deeply rooted in the cultural identity of the students' lives.

Furthermore, Moll et al.'s (1992) funds of knowledge theory supports the importance of utilizing students' life experiences and local culture as assets in the learning process. By mapping local potential and integrating it into lesson planning, teachers at SDN 2 Jatiluhur and SDN 3

Cikaobandung were able to connect literacy materials to students' concrete experiences in their surroundings, such as traditional markets, gardens, and traditional activities. This approach aligns with the contextual learning principle proposed by Johnson (Curry et al., 2021), which states that learning will be more meaningful if students can relate it to their real lives.

The sociological and pedagogical foundations of this school's cultural management are closely aligned with the funds of knowledge theoretical framework proposed by Moll et al. This theory fundamentally emphasizes the importance of recognizing and utilizing students' lived experiences, daily family practices, and local cultural wisdom as strategic assets in designing a learning ecosystem. Through this paradigm, educators are encouraged to no longer view students as empty vessels, but rather as individuals who bring a wealth of cultural capital from their homes and communities. The concrete application of this framework is clearly manifested in the instructional strategies implemented by teachers at SDN 2 Jatiluhur and SDN 3 Cikaobandung. Through comprehensive mapping of local potential and its systematic integration into lesson planning documents, educators at both schools are able to contextualize literacy materials with their students' empirical experiences. They creatively and deliberately link learning texts to the realities of their surroundings that are very familiar to children, such as the dynamics of socio-economic interactions in traditional markets, agricultural activities on plantations, and the philosophical meanings behind various local traditional activities. This integrative approach resonates strongly with Johnson's principles of contextual teaching and learning. These principles underscore the theoretical premise that the learning process will transform into a more meaningful experience and result in high retention of understanding if students are able to bridge and connect the academic content in the classroom with the realities of their daily lives.

### **Organizing School Culture Management**

Regarding the organization of school culture management at SDN 2 Jatiluhur, it shows that although the school has divided tasks in implementing learning activities, there is still a lack of clarity regarding the job descriptions of each party. This results in less than optimal integration of school culture into the learning process, which aims to improve the quality of student learning. However, the implementation of school culture management is highly relevant in the context of elementary education because it provides a close cultural context that can improve the quality of student learning.

Turning to the analysis of the organizing function within the school culture management system, findings at SDN 2 Jatiluhur revealed a managerial dynamic that requires further evaluation. Visibly, the school leadership has indeed made efforts to distribute the workload and allocate operational tasks in the implementation of daily learning activities. However, a more in-depth examination reveals that this delegation structure is not supported by clear job descriptions and detailed authority management for each party involved.

The absence of definitive task specifications has led to role ambiguity among educators and education personnel. As a result, coordination flows are prone to overlap, and efforts to integrate school cultural values into learning practices are suboptimal and tend to be sporadic. This ineffectiveness at the organizational stage directly hinders the achievement of the program's primary goal, namely, to improve the quality of student learning holistically and measurably.

This managerial situation certainly merits critical consideration, given the high urgency and relevance of implementing school cultural governance, particularly in the primary education landscape. In this concrete operational stage, familiarity with the local cultural context acts as an essential pedagogical bridge. A familiar cultural context not only serves to contextualize abstract teaching materials, making them more accessible and digestible, but also proves capable of creating strong emotional resonance. This cultural connection ultimately serves as a crucial foundation for enhancing the quality, absorption, and meaningfulness of students' learning processes as a whole.

From the perspective of Henri Fayol's classical management theory (Fayol & Sarah, 2004), one of the important principles in an organization is the "division of work" and "authority and responsibility." A division of labor that is not accompanied by clear job descriptions will lead to inefficiencies in the implementation of the roles of teachers, principals, and educational staff in integrating local values into learning. Furthermore, according to Chester I. Barnard's systems

theory, an effective organization must have a good communication system and a shared understanding of the goals to be achieved. The lack of role clarity results in weak coordination among school personnel in designing and implementing school culture programs.

From the perspective of classical management theory, as proposed by Henri Fayol, the primary foundation of a robust organizational structure lies in adherence to the principle of division of work and maintaining equilibrium between authority and responsibility. Fayol fundamentally emphasized that specialization and structured task distribution are absolute prerequisites for ensuring an institution's operational efficiency. However, in the context of educational management, merely distributive workload delegation without clear, definitive, and transparent job descriptions will actually trigger managerial anomalies. Unclear authority boundaries and blurred lines of responsibility will directly lead to inefficient program execution. As a result, the main driving elements in schools—from the principal as strategic policy maker, teachers as academic technical implementers, to education personnel as administrative support—will become trapped in role confusion. This role disorientation, in turn, paralyzes the institution's ability to optimally integrate noble values and local wisdom into the heart of the learning process.

Barnard postulated that an organizational entity is not merely a stack of rigid hierarchical structures, but rather a living cooperative system. The effectiveness of this system is largely driven by two driving pillars: the existence of a clear internal communication network and the creation of a deep collective understanding of shared goals. When the structure of task delegation in a school is colored by role ambiguity, the foundation of communication between members will inevitably be distorted. This lack of legitimacy and clarity of operational roles not only creates sectoral egos but also results in weak orchestration and coordination among school personnel. This systemic inequality ultimately becomes the biggest obstacle for institutions in designing, aligning, and executing integrated, cohesive school culture programs that have a real impact on character development and student academic quality.

Furthermore, modern management theory by George R. Terry (Terry et al., 1985) emphasizes the importance of planning, organizing, implementing, and monitoring functions in achieving the goals of educational organizations. At SDN 2 Jatiluhur and SDN 3 Cikaobandung, the organizing function is still not optimal due to the absence of formal documents that describe who does what, when, and how the tasks are carried out in the context of local culture-based learning. As a result, school culture management initiatives are not structured and sustainable, even though the local potential that the school has is very large to support the improvement of the quality of student learning if managed with a more focused managerial system.

The operational foundations of educational institutions can be critically analyzed through the perspective of modern management theory put forward by George R. Terry. Terry comprehensively emphasizes that the effectiveness of achieving organizational goals—including those of basic education entities—is highly dependent on the continuous orchestration of four managerial functions: planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling. Within the school ecosystem, the organizing function plays a crucial role as a transitional bridge tasked with translating conceptual visions from the planning stage into technical work structures in the field. Ideal organization requires governance that precisely defines the distribution of roles, resource allocation, and coordination mechanisms between parties to avoid overlapping authority. However, empirical evidence from SDN 2 Jatiluhur and SDN 3 Cikaobandung indicates that the implementation of this organizational function remains suboptimal. This weakness stems specifically from the absence of formal managerial documents—such as Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) or task allocation matrices—that detail operational guidelines regarding "who does what, when it will be done, and how to complete the task."

Particularly in the context of integrating local values and culture-based learning, this lack of administrative guidance and job descriptions has led to role disorientation among educators and staff. Consequently, various noble initiatives related to school culture management lack a strong systemic foundation. These programs tend to operate ad hoc, unstructured, heavily reliant on individual initiative, and ultimately lack the principle of sustainability. This weakness in the organizational stage has given rise to a managerial paradox that deserves evaluation. On the one hand, both elementary schools are situated in environments rich in social capital and immense

potential for local wisdom. This cultural potential is a strategic pedagogical instrument with significant leverage to accelerate holistic improvements in student learning. However, due to a poorly directed managerial system and the lack of clear work commands, these abundant cultural assets have failed to be converted into a curriculum with systemic impact and are vulnerable to becoming merely ceremonial activities.

### **Implementation of School Culture Management**

The research results show that integrating school culture into learning activities positively contributes to improving the quality of student learning. This is evident in the increased student engagement in reading, writing, and active discussion when learning materials are linked to their culture and the surrounding environment. However, limited supporting resources remain a major obstacle to optimizing school culture programs. The limited availability of reading materials contextualized to local culture, the lack of teacher training in developing school culture management, and the lack of adequate literacy facilities such as reading corners are challenges that must be overcome to maximize learning implementation.

Empirical findings from the implementation phase (actuating) indicate that the integration of school cultural values into learning practices significantly contributes to the escalation of student educational quality. When teaching materials are contextualized with familiar cultural realities and the surrounding environment, there is a surge in the level of active engagement in the classroom. This phenomenon is clearly observed through the sharp increase in student enthusiasm in basic literacy activities, such as the intensity of reading texts, the courage to express themselves in writing activities, and the dynamics of participation and argumentation during discussions. Learning rooted in local wisdom has proven successful in breaking down the abstract barriers of formal academic material, transforming it into a meaningful learning experience. Psychologically, this approach sparks students' intrinsic motivation because they feel their cultural identity is recognized and represented in the knowledge transfer process.

Despite showing encouraging pedagogical achievements, the pace of optimizing the implementation of school culture management still faces a number of real dilemmas and structural challenges. Limited availability of supporting resources has been identified as a key bottleneck hampering the sustainability of this habituation program. In the field, schools experience a scarcity of reading materials or literature that specifically present contextual content aligned with local culture. This material challenge is further exacerbated by the lack of physical facilities supporting a climate of literacy, such as the uneven distribution of representative, comfortable, and adequate reading corners in every classroom. Beyond physical facilities, there is also a competency gap due to the lack of training and professional development programs for educators, particularly in the realm of school culture management governance. The accumulation of these material infrastructure deficits and limited human resource capacity constitutes a crucial obstacle that demands comprehensive managerial intervention. Strategic efforts are absolutely necessary to ensure the effectiveness of culture-based learning implementation does not stagnate at the initial initiative and euphoria level, but can be accelerated and institutionalized to its full potential.

These findings align with Lev Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which emphasizes that learning occurs effectively when grounded in the social and cultural context in which students find themselves. By linking learning materials to school experiences and culture, the process of internalizing knowledge becomes more meaningful. Vygotsky also emphasized the importance of scaffolding, the support provided to students during the learning process, which in this context can include the provision of relevant local learning resources and the assistance of trained teachers (Vygotsky, 1993).

These empirical findings in the field resonate strongly and align with the postulates of Sociocultural Theory, proposed by developmental psychologist Lev Vygotsky. Fundamentally, Vygotsky emphasized that children's cognitive development and learning processes do not occur in a vacuum, but rather are most effective when grounded in the social interactions and cultural context in which they grow. By deliberately linking the substance of academic learning materials with the accumulation of daily experiences and local cultural traditions within the school ecosystem, students'

internalization of new knowledge will become much more meaningful and relevant. This cultural closeness serves as a bridge connecting abstract concepts in textbooks with the concrete realities of their lives, significantly improving students' absorption and memory retention.

Beyond simply providing context, Vygotsky's framework also underscores the urgency of the concept of scaffolding, a mechanism for providing measurable support, guidance, and structure to students gradually during the early stages of their learning process. Within the operational context of school culture management, scaffolding is effectively implemented through two key pillars: the provision of locally nuanced learning instruments and resources relevant to the child's world, and the presence of intensive guidance from pedagogically trained teachers. This harmonious collaboration between contextualized teaching materials and targeted mentoring from educators ultimately serves as a "cognitive foothold" for students. This foothold gradually guides them from their current level of actual ability to their maximum understanding capacity—or what Vygotsky calls the Zone of Proximal Development—so that the acceleration of learning quality and character formation can be achieved holistically.

Furthermore, this approach is also supported by Freire's (Holst, 2020) perspective in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, which emphasizes the importance of liberating education, namely education grounded in the realities and lived experiences of students. When students become accustomed to the cultural activities of the school, which have become customary, the learning process will be more quickly absorbed.

Furthermore, this school culture-based learning approach has a strong philosophical resonance with Paulo Freire's views in his masterpiece, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Fundamentally, Freire sharply criticized the conventional, mechanistic model of education—or what he called the "banking concept of education"—in which students are merely positioned as empty vessels passively receiving piles of information from educators. As an antithesis, Freire promoted a paradigm of liberating education. This emancipatory paradigm firmly requires that true educational practices must always be grounded in social reality and the concrete life experiences experienced by students on a daily basis. Through this approach, learning activities are no longer instruments that alienate students from their world, but rather become a process of discovering meaning that begins from the perspective of their own culture.

When contextualized with implementation in the field, Freire's philosophical foundation provides a highly rational pedagogical justification for the effectiveness of school culture programs. When students are consistently exposed to and engaged in school cultural activities that have become ingrained into habituality, the learning environment transforms into a very natural and non-intimidating space. This familiar psychological and cultural environment ultimately acts as a cognitive catalyst. The dissolution of the distance or artificial barrier between theoretical academic material and students' real-life situations drastically reduces barriers to learning. As a result of this harmonious integration, the process of assimilating knowledge and absorbing the essence of learning can occur at a much faster, more organic pace, and be more firmly embedded in students' long-term memory. Thus, school culture management at SDN 1 Ciakobandung has proven to be a potential strategy for improving the quality of student learning. However, to achieve optimal results, further support is needed in the form of human resource development and the provision of more supportive infrastructure.

### **School Culture Management Evaluation**

The findings indicate that the school has implemented various learning evaluation activities, such as oral assessments and direct observations. However, these activities have not been systematically documented, making it difficult for the school to objectively assess the success of the strategies implemented. The lack of structured data also makes it difficult for teachers to reflect on and improve the learning process.

Moving on to the final crucial stage of the management cycle, namely the monitoring and evaluation (controlling) function, empirical findings in the field reveal an operational reality that deserves careful scrutiny. In fact, schools have not neglected this stage; educators have implemented various learning evaluation activities that are responsive to the school culture, such as through dialogic oral assessment mechanisms and direct participatory observation of students' daily behavior and interactions. These formative steps are a positive

indication that teachers have a high level of concern for the character and cognitive development of their students in the classroom and in the school environment. However, the effectiveness of this evaluation implementation has encountered critical points or structural obstacles in its administrative aspects. These valuable assessment instruments and activities are apparently not supported by a standardized, structured, or sustainable data documentation, recording, and archiving system.

This lack of systematic data tracking ultimately creates a domino effect that significantly weakens overall school quality governance. The most obvious managerial impact is the crucial difficulty for leaders and schools in objectively measuring, calibrating, and validating the success of implemented strategies. Without validated metrics and aggregated data, the process of drawing evaluation conclusions is highly susceptible to subjective bias and often relies solely on short-term memory, rather than on robust data-driven decision-making principles. Furthermore, at the technical pedagogical level, this lack of structured data directly hinders teachers' capacity for in-depth critical reflection (reflective teaching). When teachers lack essential data instruments for tracking student progress and identifying specific weaknesses in their teaching approaches, efforts to design continuous quality improvement measures for learning practices become disoriented, unmeasurable, and extremely difficult to implement with precision.

In the context of learning evaluation theory, this aligns with Daniel Stufflebeam's perspective in the CIPP (Context, Input, Process, Product) model, which emphasizes the importance of recording and documentation at every stage of evaluation to ensure the success of educational programs. Without recording, the process of reflecting on input and learning outcomes becomes unclear, making it impossible to accurately correlate with the ultimate goal of student learning outcomes. Poorly documented evaluations risk creating a gap between curriculum implementation and objectives.

In the theoretical discourse on educational program management and evaluation, this weakness in the documentation aspect is highly relevant to be critically analyzed using the analytical tool of the CIPP (Context, Input, Process, Product) Evaluation Model initiated by Daniel Stufflebeam. This comprehensive model fundamentally emphasizes the crucial importance of recording, collecting empirical data, and rigorous documentation at every stage of the evaluation—from the analysis of the context of needs, the availability of complete resources, the dynamics of instructional implementation, to the assessment of final results—to guarantee the success of an educational program. According to Stufflebeam's framework, evaluation should not be reduced to merely an assessment activity at the end of a phase, but rather should be interpreted as a continuous cycle of providing information to guide decision-making. Therefore, without the support of an orderly documentation system, the process of critical reflection on the effectiveness of material input and the quality of the learning process will be very unclear, biased, and lose its foundation of objectivity. This lack of historical track record directly results in schools and educators lacking a valid evidence base to correlate the effectiveness of school culture interventions with the actual product or student learning outcomes that ultimately lead to the ultimate goal of education. Furthermore, poorly documented managerial and pedagogical evaluation practices risk creating a fatal institutional anomaly, namely the creation of an ever-widening, illusory gap between the reality of program implementation in the field and the ideal projections of curriculum objectives outlined in the planning stage.

## Conclusion

This study concludes that school culture management can significantly improve the quality of student learning at SDN 2 Jatiluhur and SDN 3 Cikaobandung. This approach successfully integrates school cultural values into the teaching and learning process, thus increasing student motivation and understanding of the material, thus achieving the expected improvement in learning quality. However, several obstacles require attention, particularly related to the limited learning support facilities and evaluations that have not been systematically recorded. These factors have the potential to hinder the optimal implementation of school culture management. Therefore, improvements in the provision of facilities and the development of an integrated evaluation system are essential to support the sustainability and effectiveness of such learning.

## References

- Abdijah, L., & Subiyantoro, S. (2021). Penerapan Teori Konstruktivistik Dalam Pembelajaran Tematik Di Sekolah Dasar [The Application of Constructivist Theory in Thematic Learning in Elementary Schools]. *ELSE (Elementary School Education Journal) : Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran Sekolah Dasar*, 5(2), 127. <https://doi.org/10.30651/else.v5i2.6951> [In Indonesian]
- Creswell, D., & John. (2018). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (5th ed.). Sage.
- Creswell, J. W. (2015). *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research* (5th ed.). Pearson.
- Curry, J. H., Johnson, S., & Peacock, R. (2021). Robert Gagné and the systematic design of instruction. In *Design for Learning: Principles, Processes, and Praxis*. EdTech Books.
- Fayol, H., & Sarah, G. (2004). The administrative theory in the state. In *Papers on the Science of Administration*. Routledge.
- Holst, J. D. (2020). Fifty Years of Pedagogy of the Oppressed: A Book Review Essay. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 70(4), 395–402. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0741713620946721>
- Indriyani, R. A., Lestari, W., & Setiawan, F. (2023). Urgensi Manajemen Pendidikan dalam Pembentukan Karakter Siswa [The Urgency of Educational Management in Shaping Student Character]. *Jurnal Pendidikan, Bahasa Dan Budaya*, 2(1), 63–70. <https://doi.org/10.55606/jpbb.v1i2.981> [In Indonesian]
- Istiqomah, D., Mus, S., & Mustafa, M. (2024). Pengaruh Supervisi Akademik Pengawas Sekolah terhadap Kompetensi Profesional Guru di Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan [The Influence of School Supervisors' Academic Supervision on Teachers' Professional Competence in Vocational High Schools]. *Jurnal Administrasi, Kebijakan, Dan Kepemimpinan Pendidikan (JAK2P)*, 5(1), 66. <https://doi.org/10.26858/jak2p.v5i1.15445> [In Indonesian]
- Kholidi, A. K. (2025). Implementasi Supervisi Pendidikan Untuk Peningkatan Kualitas Pendidik dalam Sistem Pembelajaran di Sekolah [Implementation of Educational Supervision to Enhance Educator Quality within the School Learning System]. *Ta'dib: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam Dan Isu-Isu Sosial*, 23(1), 57–68. <https://doi.org/10.37216/tadib.v23i1.2240> [In Indonesian]
- Leithwood, K. (2021). A Review of Evidence about Equitable School Leadership. *Education Sciences*, 11(8), 377. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci11080377>
- Moleong, L. J. (2019). *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif [Qualitative Research Methodology]*. Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Nurlaela, N., Miyono, N., & Haryati, T. (2023). Peranan Budaya Mutu Sekolah dalam Meningkatkan Mutu Pendidikan SMA Negeri 2 Cepu [The Role of School Quality Culture in Improving the Quality of Education at SMA Negeri 2 Cepu]. *MANAJERIAL : Jurnal Inovasi Manajemen Dan Supervisi Pendidikan*, 3(3), 210–218. <https://doi.org/10.51878/manajerial.v3i3.2512> [In Indonesian]
- Sugiyono. (2013). *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif, Kuantitatif, dan R&D [Qualitative, Quantitative, and R&D Research Methods]*. Alfabeta.
- Susmiarti, H., Somantri, M., & Putri Kartiwi, A. (2024). Manajemen Lingkungan Fisik Sekolah Di Sekolah Dasar Negeri 6 Kota Manna [Management of the Physical School Environment at State Elementary School 6, Manna City]. *Manajer Pendidikan: Jurnal Ilmiah Manajemen Pendidikan Program Pascasarjana*, 18(2), 53–59. <https://doi.org/10.33369/mapen.v18i2.36733> [In Indonesian]

- Terry, G. R., Rue, L. W., & Ticoalu, G. A. (1985). *Dasar-dasar manajemen [Fundamentals of management]*. PT. Bina Aksara.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1993). *The collected works of LS Vygotsky: Vol. 2 (J. Knox & C. Stevens, Trans.)*. New York: Plenum.



© 2025 by the author. Submitted for possible open access publication under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY SA) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>).