

## ANALYSIS OF THE PRINCIPAL'S LEADERSHIP STYLE IN IMPLEMENTING TEACHER DUTIES AT TIARA PRIVATE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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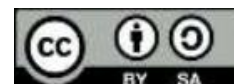
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### ABSTRACT

Leadership style plays a crucial role in the quality of teacher performance in elementary schools. This study aims to analyze the principal's leadership style in the performance of teacher duties. The study used a descriptive qualitative approach and was conducted at Tiara Bandar Setia Private Elementary School in the even semester of the 2025-2026 academic year. Subjects were the principal and all 10 teachers from grades 1 to 6. Data collection was conducted through interviews and questionnaires. The results showed that teachers perceived an authoritarian leadership style of 0%, a democratic leadership style of 100%, and a laissez-faire leadership style, with freedom to make decisions (80%) and substantial autonomy in carrying out tasks (90%). However, all stated that the principal did not avoid responsibility, did not provide minimal direction, and still conducted regular performance evaluations (0%). Therefore, it was concluded that the dominant leadership style practiced by the principal at Tiara Bandar Setia Private Elementary School was democratic leadership, complemented by elements of functional laissez-faire leadership in the form of constructive professional trust.

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## INTRODUCTION

Leadership is inherently inseparable from every aspect of human life. Leadership is a process by which a leader channels influence and the ability to direct others. In educational settings, leadership is implemented effectively to ensure that all school activities align with the desired educational goals. The principal is responsible for optimally carrying out their duties and functions, as the quality of a school is largely determined by how the principal leads the teachers. The leadership process, using methods, habits, and consistency, is referred to as a leadership style.

According to Azmy (2022), leadership style is a manifestation of a leader's behavior that incorporates their leadership abilities. Each leader has their own unique methods and strategies that create specific patterns to influence the behavior of others. This leadership style acts as a necessary behavior in developing a conducive work environment and building teacher motivation. In educational management, we recognize three main leadership styles:

authoritarian, which prioritizes self-regulation (Azmy, 2022), democratic, which prioritizes discussion and shared responsibility (Erpidawati and Yuliastanty, 2019), and laissez-faire, or delegative, which allows team members significant freedom to make their own decisions (Wulandari and Mulyanto, 2024).

Ideally, a principal's leadership style should create a healthy balance within the elementary school environment. As an ideal leader, the principal consistently sets an example in both words and actions and is flexible in directing teachers (Azmy, 2022). Principals should adopt an open, democratic style, where discipline is maintained flexibly, communication is two-way, and teachers are given high levels of trust to contribute new ideas in teaching (Pransintia et al., 2023). Even if laissez-faire policies are provided, ideally, to encourage teacher creativity and independence. However, the principal remains willing to provide the necessary guidance, direction, and supervision to ensure the achievement of elementary school curriculum objectives (Saefuddin and Suherman, 2024).

However, real-world conditions often present a dilemma. A phenomenon observed at Tiara Private Elementary School (SD Swasta Tiara) is that the principal attempted to lead democratically by consistently respecting the voices of his subordinates. However, this process created a new problem: crucial decision-making became extremely slow because the principal accommodated too many teacher opinions. When urgent policy decisions needed to be made, the principal tended to hesitate and become confused about the direction due to the large amount of conflicting input. This delay resulted in less than optimal implementation of teacher duties, such as developing learning materials, disciplining students, and evaluating learning outcomes. At Tiara Private Elementary School, there was also a lack of clear mapping of the dominant leadership style and the direct impact of the principal's leadership style on the implementation of teachers' duties in elementary schools.

This gap between ideal and reality creates an important research gap that needs to be addressed. Much leadership research has focused solely on the impact of leadership style on teacher performance. Research specifically mapping these three leadership styles (authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-faire) from the perspective of elementary school teachers' daily perceptions of their teaching duties remains limited. Yet, these teachers' perceptions determine whether they feel motivated or discouraged in their classroom teaching.

This problem persists due to several inhibiting factors, both leadership and technical aspects within schools. Sunarti (2021) revealed that the lack of synergy between principals and teachers results in poor time management, a lack of teacher creativity in developing learning methods or media, limited mastery of material, and low motivation for self-development. These conditions also contribute to technical constraints in the field. According to Saputri et al. (2025), limited infrastructure, administrative burdens, and a lack of ongoing training are also major factors preventing teachers from performing their duties optimally in elementary schools.

The solution to address this problem is to conduct an objective analysis and mapping of the leadership styles applied in schools. Through this analysis, we can map the leadership style tendencies perceived by teachers and identify the results of teacher performance in elementary schools. The results of this analysis can then serve as a reflection for principals to balance assertiveness, democratic acceptance of input, and independent delegation of tasks, resulting in a healthier, more productive, and harmonious work environment in elementary schools.

Previous research has shown that the accuracy of a principal's leadership style selection is directly proportional to the quality of the teachers' teaching. Previous studies have confirmed

that an overly rigid leadership style can diminish teacher creativity, while overly lax supervision can lead to neglect of teacher administration. Conversely, the right style has a positive impact; Haryani et al. (2022) found that good principals are willing to listen to teachers' opinions, take responsibility when faced with obstacles, are skilled at communicating, and consistently support teachers' ideas to achieve school goals. The influence of good principal leadership ultimately helps teachers carry out their primary duties in the classroom. This aligns with Yanti's (2019) view that teachers also require leadership skills in the classroom to motivate, persuade, and coordinate students to achieve learning objectives. Therefore, research into the dynamics of the relationship between principal leadership and teacher duties in elementary schools is urgently needed to improve the quality of education.

Based on the above background, the researchers are interested in conducting further research to examine this phenomenon in depth through a scientific article entitled "Analysis of Principal Leadership Styles in the Implementation of Teacher Duties at Tiara Private Elementary School."

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This research used a descriptive qualitative approach. The study was conducted at Tiara Private Elementary School in Bandar Setia. The study took place in May 2026, during the even semester. The study subjects consisted of the principal and all 10 homeroom teachers, including homeroom teachers for grades 1A, 1B, 2A, 3A, 3B, 4A, 5A, 5B, 6A, and 6B.

The data collection techniques used were interviews and questionnaires. Interviews were conducted directly with the principal. Questionnaires were administered to all teachers using leadership indicators covering authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-faire styles. Each category in the questionnaire was measured using five indicators, resulting in a total of 15 items.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The research results were obtained from two data collection instruments: interviews with the principal and a questionnaire with 10 homeroom teachers at Tiara Private Elementary School. The data are presented based on three leadership styles: authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-faire.

**Authoritarian Leadership Style**

Based on the questionnaire results, all 10 teachers responded "No" to all indicators of authoritarian leadership style. This means that the teachers did not perceive any indicators of authoritarian behavior in the principal's leadership at Tiara Private Elementary School, Bandar Setia.

Table 1. Summary of Authoritarian Leadership Style Questionnaire of Tiara Private Elementary School Principals

| Number | Indicator                                                                                                           | Yes<br>(n =<br>10) | %  | No<br>(n =<br>10) | %    |
|--------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|----|-------------------|------|
| 1.     | The principal makes all decisions directly without asking for input, suggestions or discussion with teachers/staff. | 0                  | 0% | 10                | 100% |

|    |                                                                                                                                                                |   |    |    |      |
|----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|----|----|------|
| 2. | The principal sets work procedures, methods or targets rigidly, where teachers/staff are only required to carry out orders without any room for improvisation. | 0 | 0% | 10 | 100% |
| 3. | The principal always gives orders, and subordinates are expected to obey without feedback or questioning.                                                      | 0 | 0% | 10 | 100% |
| 4. | Principals tend to close themselves off from criticism, suggestions or new ideas from teachers/staff.                                                          | 0 | 0% | 10 | 100% |
| 5. | The principal exercises very strict control over the work of teachers/staff (often using coercive approaches, threats, punishments if goals are not achieved). | 0 | 0% | 10 | 100% |

The data in Table 1 shows that none of the teachers perceived authoritarian behavior from the principal. This is consistent with the results of interviews with principals, which stated that decision-making was always carried out through joint meetings and collective task allocation. This finding aligns with Robbins and Judge's (2013) opinion, which states that an authoritarian leadership style is characterized by unilateral decisions, strict control, and minimal subordinate participation.

**Democratic Leadership Style**

Based on the questionnaire results, all 10 teachers responded "Yes" to all five indicators. Therefore, all indicators of democratic leadership style were fully met based on the perceptions of all teachers.

Table 2. Summary of the Democratic Leadership Style Questionnaire for the Principal of Tiara Private Elementary School

| Number | Indicator                                                                                                                            | Yes<br>(n =<br>10) | %    | No<br>(n =<br>10) | %  |
|--------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|------|-------------------|----|
| 1.     | The principal involves teachers/staff in discussions and asks for input before making a final decision (rather than deciding alone). | 10                 | 100% | 0                 | 0% |
| 2.     | The principal gives trust to teachers/staff to manage tasks and also provides autonomy in completing their respective jobs.          | 10                 | 100% | 0                 | 0% |
| 3.     | The principal creates an environment where teachers/staff feel safe and encouraged to share ideas, opinions and feedback honestly.   | 10                 | 100% | 0                 | 0% |
| 4.     | The principal actively motivates, helps develop personal abilities and pays attention to the needs of teachers/staff.                | 10                 | 100% | 0                 | 0% |
| 5.     | The principal considers success/failure as part of a group effort (shared responsibility) without blaming each other.                | 10                 | 100% | 0                 | 0% |

The data in Table 2 indicates that all indicators of a democratic leadership style received positive responses from all teachers. This is consistent with the results of an interview with the

principal, who revealed that in managing the school, he regularly holds meetings, organizes learning community activities (kombel) every Friday, implements the Teacher Working Group (KKG), and actively provides motivation and solicits ideas from teachers. These findings align with Yukl's (2010) opinion that democratic leaders encourage subordinate participation, value individual contributions, and create a collaborative work environment.

**Laissez-Faire Leadership Style**

Based on the questionnaire results, all 10 teachers provided more varied answers. Most teachers acknowledged the provision of freedom and autonomy in managing tasks, but did not perceive absenteeism, avoidance of responsibility, lack of direction, or absence of evaluation from the principal.

Table 3. Summary of the Laissez-Faire Leadership Style Questionnaire for the Principal of Tiara Private Elementary School

| Number | Indicator                                                                                                         | Yes<br>(n =<br>10) | %   | No<br>(n =<br>10) | %    |
|--------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-----|-------------------|------|
| 1.     | The principal gives absolute freedom to teachers/staff to make decisions, both individually and in groups.        | 8                  | 80% | 2                 | 20%  |
| 2.     | Principals rarely or do not participate in the daily activities of teachers/staff and often avoid responsibility. | 0                  | 0%  | 10                | 100% |
| 3.     | The principal gives teachers/staff great autonomy in managing work and task completion techniques.                | 9                  | 90% | 1                 | 10%  |
| 4.     | The principal only provides a little direction and guidance to staff/teachers.                                    | 0                  | 0%  | 10                | 100% |
| 5.     | Principals tend not to evaluate or assess teacher/staff performance proactively (do not interfere).               | 0                  | 0%  | 10                | 100% |

The data in Table 3 shows that eight teachers (80%) answered "Yes" to the indicator granting freedom in decision-making (indicator 1), and nine teachers (90%) answered "Yes" to the indicator granting substantial autonomy in work management (indicator 3). However, all teachers (100%) stated "No" to the principal avoiding responsibility, providing little direction, or not conducting performance evaluations. This finding indicates that the laissez-faire leadership style is not a weakness, but rather a form of trust placed in democratic leadership that remains accountable.

Interview results support this finding, with the principal stating that he gives teachers time to develop their own plans for evaluation, and regularly checks on teacher attendance and administration at least once every three months. This demonstrates that granting autonomy to teachers does not mean an absence of control; rather, control is carried out in a planned and flexible manner. According to Bass and Bass (2008), functional laissez-faire leadership can actually strengthen teachers' professional autonomy without compromising accountability. Thus, the leadership of the principal of Tiara Private Elementary School shows a combination of a dominant democratic style with a constructive laissez-faire touch.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the research results and discussion outlined above, it can be concluded that the dominant leadership style of the principal at Tiara Private Elementary School is democratic. In addition to the dominant democratic style, there are also elements of a functional laissez-faire style, particularly in the aspect of granting teachers freedom in decision-making (80%) and granting them substantial autonomy in managing their work (90%). However, negative elements of laissez-faire, such as avoiding responsibility, minimal direction, and the absence of evaluation, were not found. This indicates that the principal places trust in teachers within a leadership framework that remains responsible and development-oriented.

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