



Transformational Leadership Strategy of School Principals in Implementing Academic Supervision to Build A Quality Culture

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ABSTRACT

Purpose - This study aims to examine the transformational leadership strategy employed by the school principal in implementing academic supervision as a means of building a quality culture at SD Negeri Patia 1, Pandeglang Regency.

Methodology - A qualitative case study design was adopted. Research participants included the school principal, teachers, school committee members, and students, selected through purposive and snowball sampling. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, non-participant observation, and documentation, and subsequently analyzed through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing in an interactive process guided by thematic coding.

Findings - The findings reveal that the principal integrates scheduled and reflective structural supervision with cultural supervision enacted through the BERAKSI Learning Community and the internalization of the 10 Budaya Malu (Ten Cultures of Shame). Leadership manifested through role modeling, open communication, encouragement of innovation, and consistency between values and actions has cultivated a school culture characterized by reflection, collaboration, discipline, and continuous improvement.

Contribution - These findings affirm that transformational leadership can reposition supervision from a mechanism of administrative control to one of professional empowerment, with substantive implications for consolidating the school's quality culture.

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INTRODUCTION

Twenty-first-century education has fundamentally reshaped how schools conceptualize success (Lino, 2016; Sjamsir & Yuliani, 2021; Thangeda et al., 2016). Academic achievement alone is no longer a sufficient

measure of educational quality. Contemporary demands call for graduates who are not only knowledgeable but also possess strong character, critical thinking capacities, adaptability, and the ability to collaborate and communicate effectively (Rais et al., 2022; Ripki et al., 2020). These imperatives place educational quality at the center of institutional priorities, making it a non-negotiable concern.

Educational quality does not emerge spontaneously; rather, it is cultivated through purposeful learning processes and coherent school governance (Aprina et al., 2025). The quality of instruction is fundamentally contingent upon teacher professionalism, which in turn is substantially shaped by the principal's role as an instructional leader (Suardi & Hasnah, 2021). In this regard, the principal occupies far more than an administrative function. As a strategic figure, the principal determines the orientation of the school's work culture, establishes a conducive academic environment, and fosters the collective commitment of the school community toward sustained quality improvement (Leithwood et al., 2020).

Transformational leadership has emerged as one of the most relevant frameworks for addressing these challenges (Cobanoglu, 2021; Karakose et al., 2023; Qi et al., 2025). This model conceptualizes the leader as an inspirational figure who serves as a moral exemplar, stimulates the generation of innovative ideas, and attends to the individual development of each member of the organization (Bantam et al., 2024; Nyenyembe et al., 2016). A transformational principal does not merely ensure the execution of programs, but actively cultivates among teachers a heightened awareness and genuine commitment to change (Kallapadee et al., 2017; Whincup et al., 2021). The resulting professional relationship transcends hierarchical command and compliance, giving rise instead to a dynamic of mutual trust and shared growth.

Such a shift in leadership orientation carries significant implications for academic supervision. Supervision, traditionally associated with administrative oversight, can be reframed as a professional development process focused on enhancing instructional quality (Badrin et al., 2022; Serin & Akkaya, 2020). At its core, academic supervision constitutes a systematic effort to assist teachers in refining the planning, implementation, and evaluation of instruction (Özdemir et al., 2020). When conducted meaningfully, supervision positions teachers as partners in reflective inquiry rather than subjects of evaluation. Feedback is delivered constructively, follow-up actions are collaboratively designed, and the improvement process is sustained over time (Mlinarević et al., 2022). This approach holds considerable potential for nurturing a school culture that is reflective, collaborative, and genuinely open to change.

Indonesian educational policy has long underscored the strategic importance of academic supervision (Dewi & Alam, 2020). Law Number 20 of 2003 on the National Education System affirms quality assurance as a shared responsibility across all educational institutions. Permendikbud Number 6 of 2018 and Permendikbudristek Number 40 of 2021 explicitly designate supervision as a core duty of the school principal. Program Sekolah Penggerak and the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum further reinforce the principal's role in actively guiding teachers toward more meaningful and impactful instructional practices (Eliophotou, 2021; Siraj et al., 2022).

These policy directions position academic supervision as a pivotal instrument for improving instructional quality (Ummah et al., 2022). Ideally, supervision serves as a venue for professional dialogue, collective reflection, and the continuous development of teacher competence (Castro & Jimenez, 2022). This view is corroborated by a growing body of empirical evidence (Özdemir et al. (2020), Zhang & Tan (2021), Berkovich & Hassan (2025) and Kositpimanvach et al (2021) collectively affirm that principal leadership and the effectiveness of academic supervision are positively correlated with improvements in educational quality, teacher professionalism, and instructional outcomes in elementary schools.

In practice, however, school realities frequently fall short of these aspirations. Supervision is often reduced to the inspection of lesson plans and administrative documents, rendering its professional development function largely ineffective (Parveen et al., 2022; Qi et al., 2025; Samancioglu et al., 2019). Classroom observations are inconsistently scheduled and rarely sustained, while post-supervision follow-up is often little more than written records without substantive guidance or mentoring (Chukwuemeka & Sarah, 2021; Samancioglu et al., 2019). As a consequence, many teachers continue to perceive supervision as an

evaluative and anxiety-inducing event rather than an opportunity for professional reflection and dialogue. The persistent association of supervision with formal assessment prevents it from functioning as a genuine platform for collaborative professional learning. When supervision prioritizes procedural compliance over sustained professional development, its potential to systematically build a quality culture is considerably diminished (Eliophotou, 2021; Yakob et al., 2025). This persistent gap between policy intent and institutional practice constitutes a pressing challenge in the broader effort to enhance educational quality.

Much of the existing literature treats leadership and supervision as separate variables or evaluates their impact primarily through measurable teacher performance outcomes (Cylve et al., 2021; Sonia, 2022; Suryanto & Sunarto, 2022). Studies on educational leadership, for instance, often concentrate on identifying leadership styles or examining their relationship with teacher performance and overall school effectiveness (Bildag & Pilli, 2024; Mert & Özgenel, 2020). Research on academic supervision, on the other hand, tends to focus on procedural aspects or the extent to which supervision complies with administrative standards (Juhadira et al., 2024; Susilo & Sutoyo, 2019; Yusuf & Jamali, 2019). While these studies provide important insights, they offer a limited explanation of how transformational leadership is actually enacted through supervisory practices in the daily life of schools. In particular, little attention has been given to how such leadership is translated into concrete strategies that influence organizational routines and shape the school's culture. In response to this gap, the present study explores the strategies principals use to enact transformational leadership through academic supervision and examines how these practices influence organizational processes and the development of a quality-oriented school culture. Rather than focusing solely on policy frameworks or formal regulations, this study pays close attention to everyday practices and the relational dynamics that emerge among members of the school community. From this perspective, supervision is understood not merely as an administrative requirement but as a developmental process that can foster a sustainable quality culture.

This contextual understanding is particularly significant in elementary education, which serves as the foundational stage in the formation of both learning culture and teacher professionalism. The quality of basic education has enduring consequences for students' academic trajectories and character development at subsequent educational levels. Principal leadership at this stage is of strategic importance, as it profoundly shapes the direction of teacher professionalism and the school's organizational culture. The findings of this study are intended to serve as a substantive reference for school principals, supervisors, and educational policymakers in designing supervision practices that are more meaningful and demonstrably impactful on instructional quality.

In light of the foregoing background, this study pursues two primary objectives: (1) to examine the transformational leadership strategies of the school principal in the implementation of academic supervision; and (2) to examine the transformational leadership strategies of the school principal in building a school quality culture. Beyond addressing these objectives, this study also seeks to contribute to the existing literature by providing an empirically grounded understanding of how transformational leadership is enacted through supervisory practices in everyday school contexts. By focusing on the concrete strategies principals use and how they influence organizational practices and school culture, this study offers insight into the practical integration of leadership and supervision in fostering a sustainable quality culture within schools.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employs a qualitative case study approach to explore leadership practices within their natural setting. The research was conducted at SD Negeri Patia 1, located in Pandeglang Regency, Banten Province, Indonesia, over approximately 4 months from March to June 2025. A case study design was selected to allow an in-depth examination of the principal's leadership practices as they unfold in real school conditions (Aspers & Corte, 2019; Denny & Weckesser, 2022) SD Negeri Patia 1 was purposively chosen due

to its distinctive integration of structural academic supervision and culturally embedded practices, which provides a rich context for understanding how leadership operates beyond administrative routines. This approach enables a more contextualized and nuanced interpretation of interactions, processes, and meanings constructed by participants within the school environment.

Participant

The research participants comprised several parties involved directly and indirectly in the implementation of academic supervision and the formation of a quality culture at the school, namely one school principal serving as the key informant, eight classroom and subject teachers, two school committee members, and ten students from upper grade levels (Grades 4–6). Participants were selected using purposive and snowball sampling. The criteria for informant selection included direct involvement in school activities, familiarity with academic supervision and school culture, relevant experience related to the research focus, and the capacity to convey information clearly and reflectively in accordance with their roles within the school environment. In addition to purposive sampling, snowball sampling was employed, as several additional informants emerged from recommendations of previously interviewed participants, enabling the researcher to reach individuals whose experiences were directly relevant to the phenomenon under investigation (Sugiyono, 2016). For instance, an interviewed teacher recommended another colleague who was considered to have a deeper understanding of the learning community's implementation. At the same time, the principal suggested certain teachers who were actively engaged in cultural supervision activities. The characteristics of the informants are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Characteristics of Research Informants

No.	Informant Role	Age Range	Teaching/Work Experience	Position/Role
1	Principal	45–50	20–25 years	School Principal
2	Teachers (8 persons)	25–50	3–25 years	Classroom & Subject Teachers
3	Committee Members	35–55	5–15 years	School Committee
4	Students (10 persons)	10–12	-	Grades 4–6

Data Collection and Instrument

Three primary techniques were employed in data collection: interviews, observation, and documentary study. The interview method used was a semi-structured interview, a data collection technique that combines prepared questions with the flexibility for more open and exploratory responses, thereby enabling the researcher to obtain in-depth information aligned with the research focus (Elo et al., 2014; Jamshed, 2014; Sugiyono, 2016). Interviews were conducted directly and in depth with the school principal, teachers, school committee members, and students. The interview topics encompassed academic supervision strategies, participants' experiences of supervision, school culture, and perceived changes in instructional practice. Observation was conducted using a non-participant approach, in which the researcher was present at the research site as an observer, without direct involvement in school activities, ensuring that the data obtained reflected naturally occurring phenomena in the field with minimal influence from the researcher's presence (Collins & Stockton, 2018). Observations were carried out during classroom supervision sessions, teacher learning community activities, principal-teacher interactions, and school cultural habituation practices. A documentary study was conducted to complement the data obtained through interviews and observation. The documents analyzed in this study included the annual and semester academic supervision programs, supervision schedules and observation instruments, records of supervision outcomes and their follow-up actions, lesson plans or teaching modules, the school's vision, mission, and program documents, learning community documents such as meeting minutes and activity reports, school cultural habituation program documents, and data on students' academic and non-academic achievements.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted progressively, commencing at the outset of data collection. The analytical process followed the three principal steps: (1) data reduction; (2) data display; and (3) conclusion drawing and verification. During the data reduction phase, the researcher selected and focused on data relevant to the research objectives. Raw data from interviews, observations, and documentation were condensed and categorized according to emerging themes, including structural supervision strategies, cultural supervision, and quality culture formation. In the subsequent data display phase, the reduced data were organized into narrative descriptions and thematic matrices, facilitating the researcher's identification of relationships among categories and the recognition of patterns emerging from the field. Finally, conclusion drawing and verification were conducted through an iterative process, in which the researcher cross-referenced data across multiple sources to ensure the consistency of findings before formulating the conclusions.

Data Trustworthiness Techniques

To ensure the data's trustworthiness, this study employed several validity techniques: triangulation, member checking, and an audit trail. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from the school principal, teachers, school committee members, and students. Triangulation was also used by cross-referencing interview, observation, and documentary analysis results. Member checking was carried out by asking informants to review summaries of interview findings or the researcher's interpretations (Sugiyono, 2016). Finally, an audit trail was maintained by systematically preserving all field notes, interview transcripts, documents, and analytical processes (Busetto et al., 2020; Naderifar et al., 2017).

FINDINGS

Transformational Leadership Strategies in the Implementation of Academic Supervision

Academic supervision at SDN Patia 1 is not conceived as a standalone administrative program detached from the principal's leadership. Rather, supervisory practice has grown organically as an expression of how the principal leads, engages, and builds trust with teachers. The findings reveal that supervision is conducted through two mutually reinforcing channels: a planned, structural channel and a cultural channel embedded in the school's daily life.

Structural Supervision

In-depth interviews with the school principal indicate that supervision is conducted periodically rather than on an ad hoc basis. The principal explained:

"Supervision here is not a spontaneous activity. I schedule it from the beginning of the year. Every quarter, I observe all teachers. However, before entering the classroom, I talk with them first. I want to know what they intend to focus on, what difficulties they are facing, and what goals they hope to achieve. So the observation is not about finding faults, but about looking together at whether what was planned has actually been carried out. Afterward, we reflect. I always begin with their strengths, then we discuss what needs improvement. I want teachers to feel supported, not judged."

This account is consistent with the experiences reported by teachers who were interviewed,

"Supervision now feels different. We no longer feel scrutinized the way we used to. The principal usually begins by asking, 'What part do you feel went best?' or 'What would you like to improve?' The discussion grows from there. We are given space to explain ourselves. Sometimes the principal even turns the question back to us so that we arrive at the solution ourselves. That makes us more confident and feel valued as professionals."

Direct classroom observation revealed that the principal was present as a composed observer, seated at the back of the room, taking notes on the lesson's progression without intervening. The classroom atmosphere remained natural, and students showed no signs of discomfort. This is shown in Figure 1, which depicts the supervision activity conducted during an ongoing instructional session.



Figure 1. Classroom Supervision During the Learning Process

These findings are further substantiated by archived annual supervision programs and observation schedules, which confirm that the activities were planned from the outset of the academic year. Post-observation follow-up records also reveal that improvement plans were formulated jointly rather than being determined unilaterally by the principal.

The post-observation phase further indicated that the reflection sessions were neither formal nor rigid. The principal initiated these sessions with open-ended questions, allowing teachers to articulate their teaching experiences fully. Another teacher recounted,

"After the observation, we sit together in the principal's office or sometimes in the teachers' room. The principal asks how I felt during the lesson and which part I thought was least effective. From there, the principal adds observations from what was noted. However, the approach is very gentle, never accusatory. Sometimes the principal says, 'What if you tried this method?' or 'If students seem passive, what strategy might make them more engaged?' So the discussion is genuinely two-way. I find that supervision makes me more reflective."

Cultural Supervision

Cultural supervision develops through the school's habits and culture. Observations revealed the presence of the BERAKSI Learning Community forum, which meets regularly. Teachers sit in a circle, engaging in discussions about instructional designs, sharing teaching experiences, and offering one another constructive feedback. The forum atmosphere was notably informal and participatory. This process is depicted in Figure 2, which shows the discussion activities within the BERAKSI program.



Figure 2. Discussion Activities in The BERAKSI Program

In the interview, the principal elaborated at length on the objectives of this program,

"I saw that teachers needed a shared learning space. Not all problems can be resolved through classroom supervision. So, we established the BERAKSI learning community. In that space, teachers share; one serves as a model teacher while the others observe. Afterward, we reflect collectively. The focus is not on the teacher, but on the students' learning process. Through that, we learn together. I only facilitate; I do not dominate."

Teachers involved in the program expressed similar perspectives,

"The BERAKSI forum makes us feel less alone. If the classroom is difficult, we can talk about it. Sometimes the solution comes from a colleague. We give each other feedback without any sense of hierarchy. The atmosphere is unlike that of an ordinary meeting."

Beyond the learning community, the cultural approach is also evident through the 10 Budaya Malu (Ten Cultures of Shame) program. Observations showed that the principal arrives at school earlier than required and greets students at the gate. This disciplined conduct is not merely a rule to be enforced, but is consistently modeled. Documentation of students performing the Dhuha prayer together is presented in Figure 3, illustrating the involvement of both teachers and the principal in religious habituation practices.



Figure 3. Students Performing the Dhuha Prayer Together

Teachers explained that the concept of shame culture is not understood as a form of moral punishment, but rather as a personal reminder. One teacher remarked,

"The shame culture actually makes us more self-aware. For instance, feeling ashamed of arriving late or of leaving work unfinished. It is not pressure; it is more like an internal alarm. Because the principal also sets the example, we feel uncomfortable if we fall short."

Transformational Leadership Strategies in Building a Quality Culture

The quality culture at SDN Patia 1 has been cultivated through leadership practices consistently enacted in the school's daily life. The principal does not build school quality through directives alone, but through consistent attitudes and habits. The findings from interviews and observations indicate that the transformation of school culture originates from exemplary conduct that is continuously repeated and demonstrated without excessive rhetoric.

Each morning, the principal arrives before most teachers and students. Positioned at the school gate, the principal consistently greets all members of the school community and gently reminds students who appear to violate the school's grooming standards. This practice is not incidental but constitutes a routine that has progressively shaped a climate of discipline within the school. This is illustrated in Figure 4, which depicts the principal welcoming students in the morning.



Figure 4. The Principal Welcoming Students at The School Gate

One teacher described the influence of this exemplary conduct as follows,

"When I think about quality culture, I see it not in the programs first, but in the principal as a person. The principal arrives earliest, often already there before we come. If there is litter in the yard, the principal picks it up personally. During school events, the principal not only gives directions but also participates directly. That makes us feel uncomfortable about arriving late or doing careless work. So discipline is not driven by fear of reprimand, but by a sense of shame at not following the example that has been set."

The influence of this modeling extends across various school activities. The flag ceremony proceeds in an orderly manner, teachers take turns serving as ceremony officers without complaint, and the principal participates throughout. Documentation of teachers serving as ceremony officers is presented in Figure 5.



Figure 5. Teachers Serving as Ceremony Officers as a Form of Role Modeling

Inspirational motivation is also evident through open communication. Meetings do not follow a unidirectional format; the principal creates space for teachers and committee members to voice their opinions. This is supported by the school committee interview, in which a member stated,

"The principal always invites us to discuss matters before making a decision. When the school plans to enter a competition or launch a new program, we are included in the conversation. We feel valued. That also makes us feel responsible for contributing to the school's quality."

The encouragement of continuous innovation is reflected in the freedom teachers have to experiment with new instructional models. Teachers connect subject matter to local culture, employ project-based approaches, and engage students in learning from their immediate environment. Literacy activities through a mobile library demonstrate efforts to expand students' learning resources. A culture of quality is also evident in camping activities. The camp is not merely a recreational event, but a means of cultivating independence and solidarity. The principal attends, offers encouragement, and interacts directly with students. Documentation of the camp atmosphere and student camaraderie is presented in Figure 6.



Figure 6. Students at The Camp and Evening Fellowship Activities

A student shared the following experience,

"During the camp, the principal came and cheered us on. We were taught teamwork and discipline. It felt like we were closer, not just to a principal but to a mentor."

A culture of collaboration is also apparent through the regular communal work sessions held every Saturday, in which teachers, students, and the principal work together to clean the school grounds, effectively dissolving perceptible hierarchical boundaries among participants. Direct observation documented the principal actively participating in cleaning activities alongside students, holding cleaning tools and guiding them without maintaining hierarchical distance. This practice is presented in Figure 7, which illustrates the communal work (gotong royong) involving the principal and members of the school community.



Figure 7. The Principal and Students Participating in Communal Work (Gotong Royong) Activities

Furthermore, the principal's moral commitment is reflected in the consistency between words and actions. The 10 Budaya Malu (Ten Cultures of Shame) program does not remain a slogan posted on the wall, but is brought to life through habitual discipline and responsibility. Teachers have become more conscientious in preparing lessons, arriving on time, and completing their duties without repeated reminders. A culture of continuous improvement is also evident from the school's willingness to participate in various competitions, as shown in Figure 8.



Figure 8. Students participating in various competitions

This is further supported by an interview with a teacher who explained,

"We are encouraged not to be complacent with routine. The principal always says that quality is dynamic, not static. Whenever there is an opportunity to compete or engage in extracurricular activities, we receive full support. The students grow more confident, and the teachers are also motivated to improve their teaching."

DISCUSSION

Transformational Leadership Strategies in the Implementation of Academic Supervision

The findings indicate that academic supervision at SDN Patia 1 is not treated as a routine administrative requirement. Instead, it is carried out as an interactive process in which the principal and teachers engage in dialogue and reflection about classroom practice. Interviews with teachers revealed that supervision usually begins with an informal conversation before the classroom observation. During this stage, teachers explain the lesson objectives, the strategies they plan to use, and any anticipated difficulties. Classroom observations are then conducted without interrupting the lesson, followed by a reflective discussion in which both parties

review the learning process together. Teachers noted that this sequence allows them to reflect on their teaching more openly because the supervision is experienced as supportive rather than evaluative.

This pattern of supervision aligns with the clinical supervision model proposed by Cogan and Goldhammer, in which observation is followed by reflection aimed at improving instructional practice rather than merely assessing performance (Park et al., 2016). In practice, however, the supervision observed in this study appears to be more flexible than the formal clinical supervision model. The principal often begins with a conversation, explores the specific challenges teachers face, and then discusses possible improvements after the observation (Erturk, 2022; Komara et al., 2025). Teachers emphasized that this approach helps them identify aspects of their teaching that require adjustment while also acknowledging practices that are already effective. Such interactions suggest that supervision functions as a space for professional dialogue rather than a one-way evaluation process.

The findings also show that trust plays an important role in shaping teachers' experience of supervision. Because the principal consistently approaches supervision through discussion and reflection, teachers tend to view the process as an opportunity for professional learning. This pattern emphasizes that effective supervision rests upon collaborative relationships and trust. It also reinforces the importance of moral leadership in cultivating commitment rather than mere compliance (Haj & Jubran, 2016; Miškolci et al., 2016). Research demonstrates that supportive and reflective instructional leadership enhances teaching practice (Hoque & Raya, 2023; Kılınç, 2014). Compared with studies that emphasize structural supervision procedures, the present findings highlight the relational dimension of leadership as a critical factor in determining whether supervision contributes to instructional improvement.

These observations also contrast with research describing supervision as largely administrative and focused on document checking. In such situations, supervision often centers on verifying lesson plans or teaching records, rather than providing meaningful feedback for instructional improvement. The situation observed at SDN Patia 1 differs in that reflective discussion becomes a central component of the supervision process. Teachers reported that the follow-up conversations after classroom observation often lead to practical adjustments in their teaching strategies. This suggests that the effectiveness of supervision depends not only on the procedures used but also on how the principal facilitates professional dialogue.

Beyond formal supervision sessions, the study also found that supervisory practices extend into the school's cultural life. One example is the BERAKSI Learning Community, where teachers regularly gather to share experiences and discuss classroom challenges. Observations of these meetings showed teachers sitting in a circle, sharing their teaching experiences and offering one another feedback. In this context, the principal primarily acts as a facilitator rather than as a central authority figure.

These practices reflect the characteristics of value-based leadership described by Sergiovanni (1993), which emphasizes moral commitment, role modeling, and the cultivation of shared values within the school community. The principal's habit of arriving early and participating directly in school activities illustrates idealized influence, while the openness shown in discussions with teachers reflects inspirational motivation (Saleem, 2021). Opportunities for teachers to experiment with new teaching approaches and to reflect collectively on classroom practice demonstrate elements of intellectual stimulation. At the same time, the BERAKSI forum aligns with the Professional Learning Community model proposed by DuFour (2004), in which teachers collaborate to examine teaching practices and student learning (Bachtiar, 2020; Miller, 2018; Nandedkar et al., 2023; Qi et al., 2025).

What appears distinctive in this context is how these collaborative practices are embedded in everyday school routines rather than introduced as occasional professional development activities. Teachers described the BERAKSI meetings as a space where they can discuss classroom difficulties and learn from one another's experiences. In this sense, the learning community becomes an extension of the supervision process itself. These findings reinforce Leithwood's (2020) conclusion that transformational leadership contributes to the development of collaborative cultures within schools, where improvement emerges through shared commitment rather than through formal directives alone.

Transformational Leadership Strategies in Building a Quality Culture

The findings also show that the quality culture at SDN Patia 1 has developed largely through the daily practices of school leadership. Rather than relying primarily on formal rules or monitoring systems, the principal appears to influence the school culture through consistent example and regular interaction with teachers and students. Observations conducted during the study indicated that the principal routinely arrives at school earlier than most teachers and greets students at the entrance gate each morning. Teachers interpreted these practices as a sign of commitment and responsibility that gradually encourages similar attitudes among staff members.

Such practices are consistent with Bass and Avolio's transformational leadership theory, which emphasizes idealized influence and inspirational motivation as central elements of leadership (Agustin et al., 2023; Hoque & Raya, 2023; Wote & Sero, 2021). In the case of SDN Patia 1, these elements appear in the way the principal models discipline and openness in everyday interactions. When the principal participates directly in school activities and invites teachers to express their ideas during meetings, leadership is experienced less as a formal authority and more as a shared commitment to improving the school environment.

This interpretation is also consistent with Sergiovanni (1993), who argues that strong school leadership is grounded in shared values and trust. Similar conclusions are drawn by Leithwood (2020), who notes that transformational leadership contributes to the development of positive school climates and collective commitment among staff. The present findings suggest that this commitment develops gradually through repeated interactions in which the principal consistently demonstrates the values expected from the school community.

In contrast, research on bureaucratic leadership often shows that administrative control alone does not necessarily lead to the development of a strong quality culture. When leadership relies mainly on monitoring and compliance, teachers may follow procedures without developing a deeper commitment to school improvement (Haj & Jubran, 2016; Ripki et al., 2020; Sirait, 2021). The experiences reported by teachers in this study point in a different direction. Teachers indicated that the principal's example more influences their sense of responsibility than formal supervision mechanisms.

The collaborative culture observed in this study is also reflected in several school activities, including camping programs, literacy initiatives, communal work sessions, and participation in academic competitions. These activities involve teachers, students, and the principal working together to strengthen relationships within the school community. Through such shared experiences, the idea of quality becomes associated not only with academic performance but also with discipline, cooperation, and mutual support.

From this perspective, quality culture appears to develop through repeated collective practices rather than through isolated programs. This pattern demonstrates that quality is constructed as a shared habit (Adeoye & Ainnubi, 2023; Mansor et al., 2021; Sukdee, 2021). The emphasis on collaboration also reflects the principles of Professional Learning Communities described by DuFour (2004), which emphasize continuous improvement through collective reflection and teamwork. In addition, the principal's encouragement of instructional experimentation provides teachers with opportunities to explore new teaching approaches, which reflects the intellectual stimulation component of transformational leadership (Adriantoni et al., 2023). Recent studies have also shown that schools led through transformational approaches tend to develop stronger learning cultures and higher levels of teacher engagement (Berkovich & Hassan, 2025; Efendi et al., 2023). The situation observed at SDN Patia 1 supports this argument. Teachers reported increased confidence in experimenting with new teaching strategies, and students were actively involved in a range of academic and extracurricular activities. These developments suggest that leadership practices emphasizing example, collaboration, and dialogue can gradually shape a school environment oriented toward continuous improvement.

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the research focuses on a single case at SD Negeri Patia 1, which means the findings reflect the specific context, culture, and leadership

practices of that school and cannot be generalized to all elementary schools. Second, the qualitative case study design relies heavily on participants' experiences and interpretations, which may contain subjective perspectives despite efforts to ensure data trustworthiness through triangulation and member checking. Third, the study primarily examines leadership practices from the perspective of internal school actors. In contrast, perspectives from external stakeholders, such as supervisors and district education authorities, were not explored in depth. In addition, the research emphasizes leadership strategies and cultural processes but does not quantitatively measure their direct impact on student learning outcomes. Finally, the findings describe leadership practices within a particular time frame, so longer-term changes in school culture and supervision practices were beyond the scope of this study.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion of this study, several important conclusions can be drawn. The findings demonstrate that the principal implements supervision through a scheduled, reflective, structured approach, as well as through a cultural approach enacted through the BERAKSI Learning Community and the habituation of the 10 Budaya Malu (Ten Cultures of Shame). Furthermore, the principal exhibits the characteristics of transformational leadership through consistent role modeling, open and appreciative communication, encouragement of instructional innovation, and the alignment between values and actions. These practices have given rise to a culture of reflection, collaboration, discipline, and continuous improvement that is deeply embedded in the daily life of the school community. This study offers a distinctive perspective by examining the interrelationships among transformational leadership, academic supervision practices, and the development of quality culture as an integrated, mutually constitutive phenomenon. The findings of this study convey that academic supervision becomes more meaningful when integrated with the cultivation of school culture. Schools seeking to build quality cannot limit themselves to refining supervision instruments or administrative completeness. Change must begin with how leaders interact, model exemplary conduct, and build trust.

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