

# Situational Leadership of Catholic Secondary School Principals in Enhancing School Achievement in Manokwari, West Papua: Contributing to SDG 4

Immanuel Tenau\*, Erny Roesminingsih, Karwanto

Universitas Negeri Surabaya, Surabaya, Indonesia



DOI : <https://doi.org/10.63230/jocsis.2.1.168>

## Sections Info

### Article history:

Submitted: May 21, 2026

Final Revised: June 3, 2026

Accepted: June 8, 2026

First Available Online: June 18, 2026

Publication Date: June 27, 2026

### Keywords:

Boarding School Principal;

Multi-Site Study;

School Achievement;

Situational Leadership;

West Papua.

## ABSTRACT

**Objective:** To analyze and describe the situational leadership styles of boarding school principals in improving school achievement at Senior High School Katolik Villanova and Senior High School Katolik Santo Arnoldus Janssen, focusing on how principals adapt leadership practices to the readiness of teachers and educational staff. **Method:** A qualitative approach with a multi-site study design was employed. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation, and analyzed using an interactive model of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data validity was ensured through source, method, and time triangulation. **Results:** The findings revealed that principals implemented flexible situational leadership styles, including directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating, based on the competence and readiness of teachers and staff. Leadership extended beyond academic improvement to emphasize character formation, discipline, faith development, and communal life. Strategies such as strengthening teacher professionalism, school culture, student mentoring, and dormitory management contributed to improved academic and non-academic achievement and fostered a positive school climate. **Novelty:** Proposing a spiritual-oriented situational leadership model distinctive to Catholic boarding schools in West Papua by integrating faith formation, moral exemplarity, and pastoral practices into school leadership. The model contributes to SDG 4 (Quality Education) by promoting holistic student development through academic achievement, character formation, and spiritual growth.

## INTRODUCTION

Education in West Papua still faces various challenges, including low educational quality, high dropout rates, limited numbers of professional teachers, and difficulties in fostering students' character development (Fiharsono et al., 2024). The Government of West Papua Province has stated that the school dropout rate remains high and has become a serious concern for the local government (Ananda & Prasetyia, 2024; Parker & Sudiby, 2024). Data from 2022 indicate that approximately 4,618 children in West Papua did not continue their education from elementary through senior high school. In this context, the situational leadership style of boarding school principals has become one educational model considered capable of shaping students' discipline, character, spirituality, and learning culture more intensively. Catholic boarding schools possess advantages because they emphasize not only academic aspects but also the formation of faith, character, leadership, and social responsibility (Grace, 2002).

These educational challenges are closely related to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, which aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. In regions facing educational disparities, effective school leadership plays a crucial role in improving educational quality, strengthening student character, and creating supportive learning environments. Therefore, understanding how principals adapt their leadership practices in Catholic boarding schools may offer valuable insights for promoting holistic education that aligns with the aspirations of SDG 4.

In Manokwari Regency, Senior High School Katolik Villanova and Senior High School Katolik Santo Arnoldus Janssen play an important role in providing educational services for the Papuan community, including Indigenous Papuans (OAP). These schools implement a boarding school education system that enables principals to serve as strategic leaders not only as educational administrators but also as character builders, community leaders, motivators, and decision-makers in students' daily lives. Boarding school principals are required to possess situational leadership styles that are responsive to the conditions of teachers, students, Papuan local culture, and school dynamics. Therefore, the situational leadership approach is relevant because it emphasizes the leader's ability to adapt leadership styles to subordinates' readiness levels and needs.

Leadership styles in schools and other educational institutions in West Papua generally differ from those in advanced urban regions of Indonesia (Adriana<sup>1</sup> & Suparyati<sup>1</sup>, 2024; Fiharsono et al., 2024; Werang & Agung, 2017). School leadership in West Papua tends to be adaptive, contextual, participatory, and grounded in local cultural approaches due to limitations in geographical, social, cultural, and educational infrastructure. In general, the leadership style most commonly found in the educational context of West Papua is situational leadership. School principals in West Papua frequently face changing conditions, such as teacher shortages, limited facilities, limited access to transportation, and cultural diversity among students. Therefore, principals cannot rigidly adhere to a single leadership style. They must adjust their approach according to school situations and teacher conditions.

In the context of this study, the most relevant theory is Fred Fiedler's Contingency Theory, which emphasizes that leadership effectiveness is determined by the compatibility between leadership style and the situation faced (Fiedler, 1967). Therefore, school principals are required to possess flexible leadership and the ability to assess situations and make effective decisions. This situational leadership style aligns with the educational leadership style commonly found in West Papua, which is influenced by local culture and familial approaches. Principals who are accepted by the community are usually those who respect customs, local languages, and patterns of Papuan social relations. The implementation of contextual educational leadership in West Papua has also been directly encouraged by the government, ensuring that learning processes remain connected to local Papuan culture. Consequently, school leadership styles in West Papua frequently employ dialogical, persuasive, humanistic, socially based relational approaches that respect traditional and church leaders. Research conducted in Kambrau District, West Papua, demonstrated that leadership grounded in Papuan local wisdom helps increase students' motivation to learn in remote areas (Broek, 2005; Iwitiyu et al., 2026).

Therefore, the leadership style of school principals becomes a determining factor in school success (Garza Encarnacion et al., 2014; González-Falcón et al., 2020; Mbua, 2023). Principals act not only as administrators but also as educational leaders, character builders, motivators, decision-makers, cultural mediators, and pastoral figures within boarding school life (Maher, 2021). The implementation of situational leadership styles is relevant because principals are required to adapt their leadership approaches to the conditions of teachers and students, the social environment, Papuan culture, and the dynamics of dormitory life (Maskur et al., 2026; Munro, 2018). Situational leadership theory emphasizes that leadership effectiveness does not depend on a single style but on the leader's ability to adapt their behavior to subordinates' readiness levels and conditions (Thompson & Glasø, 2018). In the context of boarding schools in West Papua, principals are expected to apply flexible, humanistic, contextual, and adaptive approaches to meet the needs of Indigenous Papuan students and educational staff.

School success or achievement is not measured solely by students' academic achievement, but also by several other aspects:

First, the quality of educational management, consisting of:

- a. The existence of clear annual and semester work programs (RKS/RKAS) that are regularly evaluated.
- b. A dormitory-based management system with integrated daily schedules for students (study, prayer, rest, and social activities).
- c. Regular coordination among principals, dormitory supervisors, and teachers through weekly or monthly meetings.
- d. The use of academic and non-academic data in decision-making processes (for example, remedial programs based on score analysis).
- e. Clear distribution of teachers' duties, including homeroom teachers, extracurricular supervisors, and dormitory mentors.

Second, teacher professionalism, consisting of:

- a. Teachers preparing complete instructional tools (lesson plans/modules, diagnostic assessments, and assessment rubrics).
- b. High attendance and punctuality rates, with very few empty classes.
- c. Teachers playing dual roles as classroom educators and character mentors in dormitories.
- d. Participation in training programs, workshops, or subject teacher forums (MGMP) on a regular basis.
- e. Close teacher-student relationships through personal mentoring for students.

Third, school discipline, consisting of:

- a. Strict daily schedules involving waking up early, prayer, study sessions, afternoon activities, and evening study.
- b. Consistent implementation of dress codes, attendance regulations, and school rules.
- c. The existence of a violation point and coaching system rather than punishment alone.
- d. Twenty-four-hour supervision by dormitory supervisors.
- e. Students becoming accustomed to orderly and independent living, such as cleaning rooms and following schedules without being instructed.

Fourth, character formation, consisting of:

- a. Regular spiritual activities such as Mass, communal prayer, recollections, and retreats.
- b. The cultivation of values such as discipline, responsibility, cooperation, and service.
- c. Social activities including community visits and social service programs.
- d. A culture of living together across ethnic groups that fosters tolerance and solidarity.
- e. Personal mentoring for students experiencing problems.

Fifth, public trust, consisting of:

- a. High numbers of applicants every year, often exceeding school quotas.
- b. Parents being willing to send their children from distant areas, including outside West Papua.
- c. Alumni actively recommending the school to others.
- d. Support from the Church, dioceses, and local communities.
- e. The school's reputation as a disciplined and character-oriented institution.

Sixth, non-academic achievements, consisting of:

- a. Championships in sports competitions such as soccer, volleyball, and athletics.
- b. Achievements in arts, including choir, traditional dance, and music.
- c. Leadership activities such as student council organizations, scouting, and spiritual

organizations.

- d. Participation in district- and provincial-level activities.
- e. Student involvement in church or community social activities.

Seventh, the quality of graduates, consisting of:

- a. Graduates being accepted into public and private universities.
- b. Some graduates entering seminaries or religious vocations.
- c. Graduates possessing strong character traits such as independence, discipline, and the ability to live communally.
- d. Alumni being able to adapt to new environments such as universities or workplaces.
- e. The existence of active alumni networks contributing back to the school.

The achievements mentioned above can also be observed at Senior High School Katolik Villanova and Senior High School Katolik Santo Arnoldus Janssen, which constitute the sites of this dissertation study. The achievements of Senior High School Katolik Villanova began in 2007, including overall championships in Science Olympiads (IMO, IPHO, IBO, ICHO, Informatics, and Astronomy) at the district level in 2007; first place in the Provincial Youth Scientific Writing Competition in 2017; third place in the National Youth Scientific Writing Competition in 2018; first place as Outstanding Student at the provincial level in 2018; first place in the Provincial Automotive Skills Competition in 2009; third place in the National Automotive Skills Competition in 2019; second place in the Provincial Flag-Raising Troop Competition in 2011; first place in the Provincial Patriotism Competition in 2015; first place in the Provincial Healthy School Competition in 2017; the Indonesia Young Scientist Association (IYSA) Semi-Grand Special Award and the Malaysia Invention Innovation Competition Association (MIICA) Special Award in 2022; and the Grand Prize in the World Invention Creativity Olympic (WICO) competition in South Korea in 2023. Likewise, Senior High School Katolik Santo Arnoldus Janssen has achieved various accomplishments, including non-academic achievements such as second place in the Senior High School Volleyball Competition in 2023 and first place in the Junior and Senior High School Marching Competition in 2023. In academic achievement, the school became part of the second cohort of the "Sekolah Penggerak" program from 2021 to the present and qualified participants for the Biology and Informatics Olympiads in 2023.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *The concept of leadership*

In Latin, the concept of leadership is related to the word *ducere*, which means "to guide," "to direct," or "to lead" (Watson, 1993). From this word emerged the term *dux*, meaning leader. This concept emphasizes that a leader is someone capable of guiding others toward common goals. Meanwhile, from the perspective of the ancient Greeks, leadership is associated with the word *hegemon*, which means a leader, a guide, or a person who stands at the front to direct a community (Grint, 2011; Nabers, 2016). From this term, the concepts of moral authority and the ability to influence others developed.

Terminologically, leadership is understood as a person's ability to influence, direct, and mobilize others to achieve common goals effectively and efficiently (Iszatt-White & Saunders, 2017). In the context of education, leadership is not only about formal authority but also about the principal's ability to guide, motivate, and develop all members of the school community to achieve educational goals (Brinia & Papantoniou, 2016).

### ***Situational leadership***

Situational leadership is a leadership approach that emphasizes the importance of compatibility between leadership style and the situation at hand (Cortes, 2023; Klarström et al., 2025). Fred Fiedler developed this theory through contingency theory. According to him, there is no single leadership style that is most effective in all situations; rather, leadership effectiveness is largely determined by the degree of fit between leadership style and situational conditions (Fiedler, 1967).

Therefore, Fiedler classified leadership styles into two main types: first, task-oriented leadership. Task-oriented leaders emphasize goal achievement, clear work structures, supervision and control, discipline, and targets. This style is effective in situations that are either very favorable or very unfavorable – second, relationship-oriented leadership. Leaders who are relationship-oriented emphasize interpersonal relationships, trust and communication, motivation, and emotional support. This style is more effective in moderate situations.

Fiedler identified three main factors that determine leadership situations. First, leader-member relations, which describe the level of trust, respect, and relationships between leaders and members. Second, task structure, which indicates the extent to which assigned tasks are clear, structured, and organized. Third, position power, which reflects the level of formal authority the leader has to give rewards or impose sanctions. Thus, according to Fiedler, leadership effectiveness occurs when there is a match between leadership style (task-oriented or relationship-oriented) and leadership situations (relationships, task structure, and power). Therefore, effective leadership is not determined by a “good” style, but by the suitability of the style to the situation.

### ***Educational leadership***

Educational leadership refers to the role of a teacher who is given additional responsibility to lead a school as an institution where the teaching and learning process takes place between teachers, as providers of instruction, and students, as recipients of instruction (Connolly et al., 2019). The principal has a vital role in the educational system. This role varies greatly depending on the school's size, educational environment, and the challenges it faces. Principal leadership has a significant impact on the quality of education (Hariyadi et al., 2022). Therefore, principals have a great responsibility for managing and leading schools to achieve established educational goals.

The term principal is equivalent to the term "school principal," who daily performs the functions of the principalship or school leadership (Sebastian et al., 2018). The concept of principalship encompasses all primary duties and responsibilities associated with the position of principal. This explanation is important considering the variety of terms used to refer to the position, including school administrator, school leader, and school manager (Akinbode & Al Shuhumi, 2018). The principal's position always involves guiding, designing, and implementing school policies, as well as managing human resources, finances, and infrastructure.

According to Maponya (2020), the main duty of a principal is to serve as an educational leader. Educational leadership means that principals fully understand the meaning and function of leadership in the educational context. Educational leaders are expected to possess certain qualities and perform certain functions. These include the ability to lead, motivate, manage resources, and collaborate with educational stakeholders. Such leadership

demonstrates integrity and high ethical standards as an example for staff and students, while promoting moral and ethical values throughout the school environment.

According to Sumintono et al. (2019), educational leaders have two main functions: administrative and supervisory. First, the administrative function includes: (1) instructional management, (2) personnel management, (3) student management, (4) facilities management, (5) financial management, and (6) school-community relations management. Second, the supervisory function refers to the principal's duty to provide guidance, assistance, supervision, and evaluation related to the technical implementation of education.

Educational leadership requires effective practices to achieve quality educational goals (Isbahi, 2023). A leader who understands that everyone can have a leadership role and appreciates each person's contribution can create an environment where collaboration and mutual growth occur. Cooperation is important in achieving common goals. Leaders are individuals capable of leading and uniting groups to achieve objectives. The role of a leader is significant in leading groups effectively.

### ***Leadership in boarding schools***

Boarding school leadership is a form of educational leadership that is more complex than that in regular schools, because it not only includes the management of classroom learning processes but also the guidance of students' lives in dormitories for 24 hours (Gymnastiar et al., 2023; Hanafi et al., 2021). In this context, the principal serves as an academic leader, manager, character builder, and guide for students' social and spiritual lives.

Therefore, according to Sunaengsih et al. (2019), principal leadership is the ability to mobilize, influence, and guide all members of the school community in achieving educational goals effectively. In the context of boarding schools, this function becomes broader because it includes managing students' lives outside formal learning hours. Principals have roles as educators, managers, administrators, supervisors, leaders, innovators, and motivators. In boarding schools, these roles are applied not only in academic activities but also in the development of discipline and character, and in the supervision of students' daily lives.

The effectiveness of educational leadership must be able to create vision, manage school organizations, and build a conducive school culture. In boarding schools, school culture is formed not only in classrooms, but also in dormitory community life, which requires intensive social interaction among students, teachers, and supervisors. Furthermore, UNESCO emphasizes that modern educational leadership should be oriented toward the holistic development of students, including cognitive, social, emotional, and moral aspects (Shields, 2022). This is in line with the characteristics of boarding schools, which emphasize holistic education.

In the context of boarding schools, principals also play a role in organizing dormitory life systems, fostering student discipline, developing character and personality, and building spiritual life, especially in religion-based schools. Thus, boarding school leadership can be understood as the principal's ability to manage and integrate all aspects of education, both academic and dormitory life, effectively in order to achieve holistic educational goals.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This study employed a qualitative approach with a multi-site research design. Multi-site research is a research method that involves in-depth analysis of several relevant cases within a particular context. This multi-site study focused on the leadership of principals in two

senior high schools, namely Villanova Catholic Senior High School and Santo Arnoldus Janssen Catholic Senior High School in Manokwari Regency, West Papua. The informants in this study consisted of students, foundation chairpersons, dormitory supervisors, principals, homeroom teachers, teachers, school committees, and parents. Participants were selected through purposive sampling. This technique allowed the researcher to select participants who were considered most relevant and capable of providing in-depth insights into the research problem. The researcher identified research subjects who possessed a broad understanding, experience, and perspectives regarding leadership in boarding schools.

Data collection in this study was conducted through systematic observation of the situational leadership styles of boarding school principals at Villanova Catholic Senior High School and Santo Arnoldus Janssen Catholic Senior High School. The researcher was directly involved in the daily activities of students, teachers, and dormitory supervisors, who served as data sources. Interviews were also used to obtain in-depth information through direct interaction with informants, particularly regarding the situational leadership of boarding school principals at Villanova Catholic Senior High School and Santo Arnoldus Janssen Catholic Senior High School. Furthermore, document analysis was the final method used to analyze and interpret data from written documents, images, and monumental works, particularly those related to the situational leadership styles of boarding school principals.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### ***Results***

The results of the study concerning the leadership style, implementation, facilitation, and impact of situational leadership among boarding school principals at Villanova Catholic Senior High School and Santo Arnoldus Janssen Catholic Senior High School can be explained as following.

### ***Situational leadership style of boarding school principals***

The findings revealed that the principals of both educational institutions applied flexible and adaptive leadership styles according to the situation, school needs, teacher readiness, and student characteristics. These findings are consistent with Fiedler's situational leadership theory, which states that leadership effectiveness is determined by the compatibility between leadership style and the situation encountered.

In practice, the principals employed a directive style in handling dormitory discipline, school regulations, and the supervision of student activities. This style was necessary because boarding schools operate on a communal living model that requires orderliness, compliance with regulations, and consistent supervision. The principals acted firmly in maintaining the stability and order of dormitory life.

On the other hand, the principals also implemented participative and delegative leadership styles in academic development and teacher guidance. Teachers were given opportunities to express ideas, participate in decision-making, and develop creativity in learning activities. This approach demonstrates that principals function not only as controllers, but also as facilitators and motivators for the school community.

At Villanova Catholic Senior High School, the leadership style was more strongly characterized by a pastoral approach and character formation through personal closeness with students. Meanwhile, at Santo Arnoldus Janssen Catholic Senior High School, leadership focused more on strengthening academic culture and teacher empowerment. This difference indicates that situational leadership is strongly influenced by the school's context

and organizational culture. Thus, the situational leadership styles of boarding school principals in both schools demonstrate the leaders' ability to balance firmness, guidance, cooperation, and empowerment of the school community.

### ***The implementation of situational leadership by principals***

The implementation of situational leadership in both schools was carried out through several forms of activities, including:

- a. School and dormitory discipline development. The principals were directly involved in supervising school regulations, dormitory activity schedules, learning discipline, and student character formation.
- b. Guidance for teachers and educational staff. The principals provided direction, academic supervision, work motivation, and periodic evaluations of the learning process and teacher performance.
- c. Deliberative decision-making. In designing school programs, the principals involved teachers, dormitory supervisors, educational staff, and the foundation in order to create harmonious cooperation.
- d. Personal and pastoral approaches. The principals applied a family-oriented approach through personal dialogue, simple counseling, communal prayer, and spiritual guidance for both students and teachers.
- e. Development of boarding school culture. The principals' leadership was directed toward forming a culture of communal living, responsibility, independence, and Catholic spirituality in daily life.

The implementation of situational leadership demonstrates a balance between managerial, educational, and pastoral functions in managing boarding schools.

### ***Principal facilitation in improving school achievement***

The findings showed that the principals sought to facilitate school achievement improvement through various strategies, including:

- a. Providing learning facilities and infrastructure;
- b. Supporting teacher training and professional development;
- c. Providing motivation and rewards for outstanding teachers and students;
- d. Creating a disciplined and conducive learning atmosphere;
- e. Supporting extracurricular activities and student talent development;
- f. Building cooperation with parents, alumni, the Church, and the community.

In the boarding school environment, facilitation was also carried out through evening study assistance, supervision of students' daily activities, character formation, and strengthening spiritual life through prayer and faith activities. The principals of both institutions also acted as motivators who encouraged teachers and students to continuously improve their quality, both academically and non-academically.

### ***The impact of situational leadership on school achievement***

The findings indicated that the implementation of situational leadership had positive impacts on school development. These impacts can be seen in several aspects:

- a. Improved school and dormitory discipline. Students demonstrated obedience to school regulations, orderly communal living, and responsibility in daily activities.
- b. Improved teacher professionalism. Teachers became more active, creative, and responsible in carrying out learning activities and developing school programs.

- c. Improved student academic and non-academic achievement. The schools achieved various accomplishments in academics, sports, arts, and religious activities.
- d. Formation of student character. Boarding school life helped shape students' discipline, independence, cooperation, social concern, and spirituality.
- e. Increased public trust in the school. The schools' success in character formation and student achievement enhanced their positive image within the community.

Thus, the situational leadership of boarding school principals was proven to make a significant contribution to improving educational quality, student character formation, and school achievement in both educational institutions.

### ***Discussion***

The findings regarding situational leadership among boarding school principals at Villanova Catholic Senior High School and Santo Arnoldus Janssen Catholic Senior High School have both theoretical and practical implications in educational management, particularly in Catholic boarding schools. The theoretical implications indicate that, first, this study strengthens situational leadership theory, which holds that leadership effectiveness is greatly influenced by the leader's ability to adapt leadership styles to conditions, needs, and subordinates' readiness levels. Boarding school principals cannot rely on a single leadership style permanently, but must be capable of applying flexible approaches according to the situations encountered.

Second, this study contributes to the development of Catholic educational management studies, particularly in the context of boarding schools in West Papua. Principal leadership is not only oriented toward administrative and academic aspects, but also includes pastoral dimensions, character formation, and the spirituality of service. Therefore, this study broadens the understanding of how educational leadership in Catholic boarding schools differs from that in general schools. From a sustainable development perspective, these findings contribute to SDG 4 (Quality Education) by demonstrating the importance of adaptive, holistic school leadership in improving educational outcomes. The integration of academic guidance, character formation, discipline, and faith development reflects a broader understanding of educational quality that extends beyond academic achievement alone. In the context of Catholic boarding schools, situational leadership supports the creation of inclusive, supportive, and values-based learning environments that foster students' intellectual, moral, social, and spiritual development.

The practical implications indicate that, first, principals need adaptive leadership skills to manage schools. Principals are required to adjust their leadership styles according to the conditions of teachers, students, and the school environment. Firmness is necessary for maintaining school and dormitory discipline, while participatory approaches are needed to build cooperation and motivate the school community. Principals also need to strengthen their roles as mentors, motivators, facilitators, and servants for all members of the school community. In the context of boarding schools, the principal's presence in students' daily lives becomes an essential part of character formation and school culture.

Second, teachers and educational staff need to establish effective cooperation with principals to support boarding school management. Teachers function not only as instructors, but also as mentors and role models in dormitory life. Teachers are expected to improve professionalism, creativity, and responsibility in both teaching and student guidance. With supportive and participative leadership, teachers are expected to become more motivated in improving the quality of educational services.

Third, the importance of student character formation through boarding school life is emphasized. Students gain learning experiences that not only emphasize academic aspects but also the values of discipline, responsibility, cooperation, independence, and spirituality. Boarding school life provides a more intensive environment for guidance, enabling students to develop holistically as intellectually, morally, and spiritually mature individuals. Fourth, Catholic educational foundations need to support the development of principal leadership through training, mentoring, and managerial and pastoral formation. Boarding school principals require leadership competencies that are not only administrative, but also involve the ability to guide character and spirituality. Foundations also need to pay attention to providing facilities and infrastructure that support boarding school life so that the student formation process can run optimally.

Thus, the leadership styles, implementation, facilitation, and impacts described above strengthen Fiedler's contingency theory, which emphasizes that leadership effectiveness depends on the compatibility between leadership style (task-oriented or relationship-oriented) and leadership situations. On the other hand, this study also discovered a new dimension that may strengthen Fiedler's theory by adding a spiritually oriented dimension, which includes faith formation, moral exemplarity, and pastoral approaches. This leadership emphasizes faith-based role modeling and spiritual formation for students and teachers through communal prayer, school Masses, and religious character guidance within boarding school life.

## CONCLUSION

**Fundamental Finding:** The situational leadership style of boarding school principals plays an important role in improving school achievement at Villanova Catholic Senior High School and Saint Arnoldus Jansen Catholic Senior High School. Principals apply flexible leadership according to the readiness of teachers, dormitory supervisors, and students. Their leadership is shown through school and dormitory management, discipline development, character formation, learning supervision, and spiritual guidance. **Implication:** Effective boarding school leadership requires principals to serve not only as administrators but also as motivators, facilitators, mentors, and pastoral figures. The findings reinforce Fiedler's Contingency Theory while introducing a spiritual-oriented leadership dimension. This study also contributes to SDG 4 (Quality Education) by highlighting the role of adaptive and holistic leadership in fostering academic excellence, character development, and students' overall well-being. **Limitation:** This study is limited to two Catholic boarding schools in Manokwari Regency, West Papua. Therefore, the findings may not represent all boarding schools with different cultural, religious, and institutional backgrounds. **Future Research:** Future studies are recommended to examine situational leadership in broader educational contexts and to explore more deeply the role of spiritual-oriented leadership in improving school achievement, character formation, and graduate quality.

## AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

**Imanuel Tenau** contributed to the conceptualization of the study, research design, data collection, data analysis, interpretation of findings, and drafting of the manuscript. **Erny Roesminingsih** contributed to supervision, methodological validation, critical review, and revision of the manuscript. **Karwanto** contributed to research supervision, validation of findings, manuscript review, and final approval of the submitted version. All authors have

read and approved the final version of the manuscript and agree to be accountable for all aspects of the work.

### CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors state that no financial or personal conflicts of interest exist that may have affected the content or findings of this research.

### STATEMENT ON THE USE OF AI OR DIGITAL TOOLS IN WRITING

The authors declare that no artificial intelligence (AI) tools or other digital writing assistants were used in the preparation, analysis, or writing of this manuscript. All stages of the research process, including data analysis, interpretation, and manuscript writing, were conducted solely by the authors. The authors take full responsibility for the originality, accuracy, and integrity of the content presented in this article.

### REFERENCES

- Adriana, M., & Suparyati, A. (2024). Regional inequality analysis in Papua. In *Proceedings of the International Conference on Entrepreneurship, Leadership and Business Innovation (ICELBI 2022)* (Vol. 453, pp. 399–408). Atlantis Press. [https://doi.org/10.2991/978-94-6463-350-4\\_44](https://doi.org/10.2991/978-94-6463-350-4_44)
- Akinbode, A. I., & Al Shuhumi, S. R. A. (2018). The principalship in the twenty-first century. *PUPIL: International Journal of Teaching, Education and Learning*, 2(2), 137–148. <https://dx.doi.org/10.20319/pijtel.2018.22.137148>
- Ananda, C. F., & Prasetyia, F. (2024). Elementary school dropout rate: The policy application of Program Indonesia Pintar (PIP) as a reduction in elementary school dropouts in Papua, Indonesia. *Proceedings of Brawijaya Economics and Finance*, 3, 229–252. <https://doi.org/10.21776/bef.3.2024.229-252>
- Brinia, V., & Papantoniou, E. (2016). High school principals as leaders: Styles and sources of power. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 30(4). <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEM-03-2015-0035>
- Connolly, M., James, C., & Fertig, M. (2019). The difference between educational management and educational leadership and the importance of educational responsibility. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 47(4), 504–519. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143217745880>
- Cortes, M. (2023). *The employees' perspective: Situational leadership style flexibility and effectiveness and employee performance in a technological organization*. Walden University.
- Fiedler, F. E. (1967). *A theory of leadership effectiveness*. McGraw-hill Series in Management.
- Fiharsono, A., Carey, M., Hyde, M., Beazley, H., & Yektiningtyas-Modouw, W. (2024). Culturally based learning needs of Korowai students in a lowland-remote area of Indonesian Papua: school physical environment and building design. *The Australian Educational Researcher*, 51(2), 611–629. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13384-023-00615-x>
- Garza Encarnacion, J., Drysdale, L., Gurr, D., Jacobson, S., & Merchant, B. (2014). Leadership for school success: Lessons from effective principals. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 28(7), 798–811. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEM-08-2013-0125>
- González-Falcón, I., García-Rodríguez, M. P., Gómez-Hurtado, I., & Carrasco-Macías, M. J. (2020). The importance of principal leadership and context for school success: Insights from '(in) visible school.' *School Leadership & Management*, 40(4), 248–265. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13632434.2019.1612355>

- Grace, G. (2002). *Catholic schools: Mission, markets, and morality*. Routledge.
- Grint, K. (2011). A history of leadership. In A. Bryman, D. Collinson, K. Grint, B. Jackson, & M. Uhl-Bien (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of leadership* (pp. 3–14). SAGE Publications.
- Gymnastiar, I. A., Hufad, A., & Wahyuni, S. (2023). The role of the boarding school system on leadership character building and 21st century skills in high school students at Global Islamic Boarding School South Kalimantan. *Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan*, 23(1), 56–72. <https://doi.org/10.17509/jpp.v23i1.56538>
- Hanafi, Y., Taufiq, A., Saefi, M., Ikhsan, M. A., Diyana, T. N., Thoriquttyas, T., & Anam, F. K. (2021). The new identity of Indonesian Islamic boarding schools in the “new normal”: the education leadership response to COVID-19. *Heliyon*, 7(3). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2021.e06549>
- Hariyadi, A., Darmuki, A., Shofwani, S. A., Auruma, P. H. M., & Sasmita, W. R. (2022). School principal leadership strategies in improving academic quality in high schools. *ANP Journal of Social Science and Humanities*, 3(1), 48–53. <https://doi.org/10.53797/anp.jssh.v3i1.7.2022>
- Isbahi, M. B. (2023). Optimizing educational leadership: building sustainable education in the 5.0 era. *Anjasmoro: Islamic Interdisciplinary Journal*, 1(1), 43–66. <https://doi.org/10.69965/anjasmoro.v1i1.18>
- Iszatt-White, M., & Saunders, C. (2017). *Leadership*. Oxford University Press.
- Iwitiyu, M. P., Handayani, S., & Wasliman, E. D. (2026). Peran kepala sekolah sebagai administrator pendidikan berbasis kearifan lokal papua dalam meningkatkan motivasi belajar siswa sd terencil (studi di distrik kabrau, Papua Barat). *Didaktik: Jurnal Ilmiah PGSD STKIP Subang*, 12(01), 176–186. <https://doi.org/10.36989/didaktik.v12i01.11537>
- Klarström, L., Adnan, S., & Ek, A. (2025). *Leadership adaptation in organizational crises: A situational leadership perspective on decision-making (Bachelor's thesis, Jönköping University)*. DiVA Portal. <https://urn.kb.se/resolve?urn=urn:nbn:se:hj:diva-68153>
- Maher, T. J. (2021). *Examining teacher and administrator trust in school board decision-making outcomes in Indonesian private international Christian Schools*. Columbia International University.
- Maponya, T. J. (2020). The instructional leadership role of the school principal on learners' academic achievement. *African Educational Research Journal*, 8(2), 183–193. <https://doi.org/10.30918/AERJ.82.20.042>
- Maskur, M., Rasyid, M. R., & Sari, F. (2026). Leadership strategies of the head of the Islamic boarding school in shaping the character of students: A case study at the Salafiyah Darul Abror Islamic Boarding School in Sorong Regency. *Jurnal Praktik Baik Pembelajaran Sekolah Dan Pesantren*, 5(02), 66–77. <https://doi.org/10.56741/IISTR.pbpsp.002158>
- Mbua, E. M. (2023). The impact of principal's leadership styles on teacher and school effectiveness. *International Journal of Research in Education Humanities and Commerce*, 4(2), 147–177. <https://doi.org/10.37602/IJREHC.2023.4215>
- Munro, J. (2018). *Dreams made Senior High School: The education of Papuan highlanders in Indonesia* (Vol. 9). Berghahn Books.
- Nabers, D. (2016). Power, leadership and hegemony in international politics. In *Regional Leadership in the Global System* (pp. 51–70). Routledge.
- Parker, L., & Sudibyo, L. (2024). Why young people leave school early in Papua, Indonesia, and education policy options to address this problem. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, 54(1), 146–162.

- <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057925.2022.2084037>
- Sebastian, J., Camburn, E. M., & Spillane, J. P. (2018). Portraits of principal practice: Time allocation and school principal work. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 54(1), 47–84. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161X17720978>
- Shields, C. M. (2022). Responding to the UNESCO framework: A transformative approach to educational leadership. *Leading and Managing*, 28(2), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.3316/informit.097849011294250>
- Sumintono, B., Hariri, H., Nugroho, P. J., Izzati, U. A., & Sriyanto, J. (2019). The role of districts in supporting school leaders' instructional leadership: a view and experience from a developing country. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 57(5), 591–600. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JEA-09-2019-227>
- Sunaengsih, C., Anggarani, M., Amalia, M., Nurfatmala, S., & Naelin, S. D. (2019). Principal Leadership in the Implementation of Effective School Management. *Elementary School Forum (Mimbar Sekolah Dasar)*, 6(1), 79–91. <https://doi.org/10.17509/mimbar-sd.v6i1.15200>
- Thompson, G., & Glasø, L. (2018). Situational leadership theory: a test from a leader-follower congruence approach. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 39(5), 574–591. <https://doi.org/10.1108/LODJ-01-2018-0050>
- van den Broek, T. (2005). Social aspects in Papua. In *Economic, social, and cultural rights in West Papua: A study on social reality and political perspectives* (pp. 133–214). Franciscans International & SKP Jayapura.
- Watson, J. L. (1993). *Language, metaphors, and phenomenology of leadership*. The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.
- Werang, B. R., & Agung, A. A. G. (2017). The effect of principals' transformational leadership and teacher socioeconomic status on school organizational climate in the elementary schools of Boven Digoel District, Papua, Indonesia. *European Journal of Education Studies*, 3(10), 519–535. <https://doi.org/10.46827/ejes.v0i0.810>

---

**\*Immanuel Tenau (Corresponding Author)**

Doctoral Program of Science Education, Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Universitas Negeri Surabaya

Jl. Ketintang, Ketintang, Gayungan District, Surabaya City, East Java 60231

Email: [immanuel.201006@mhs.unesa.ac.id](mailto:immanuel.201006@mhs.unesa.ac.id)

**Erny Roesminingsih**

Doctoral Program of Science Education, Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Universitas Negeri Surabaya

Jl. Ketintang, Ketintang, Gayungan District, Surabaya City, East Java 60231

Email: [ernyroesminingsih@unesa.ac.id](mailto:ernyroesminingsih@unesa.ac.id)

**Karwanto**

Doctoral Program of Science Education, Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Universitas Negeri Surabaya

Jl. Ketintang, Ketintang, Gayungan District, Surabaya City, East Java 60231

Email: [karwanto@unesa.ac.id](mailto:karwanto@unesa.ac.id)

---