

THE PRINCIPAL'S ROLE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF 7KAIH (KEBIASAAN ANAK INDONESIA HEBAT) PROGRAM

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Abstract

This study aims to comprehensively describe the principal's role in implementing the 7KAIH program at SMP Salafiyah Pekalongan. 7KAIH is a strategic movement to build Indonesia's 2045 golden generation through the development of positive character and life skills. The study focuses on how the principal plans, organizes, implements, and evaluates the program to ensure its effective and consistent implementation within the school environment. The 7KAIH program is implemented not only as a routine activity but also as a strategic effort to strengthen character education and build positive habits among students in their daily lives. The theoretical framework of this study is based on the POAC (Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling) management theory proposed by Terry, Fayol, Robbins, and Coulter, as well as theories of educational leadership and character education. This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design. Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Data were analyzed through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The findings indicate that the principal carries out the planning function by integrating the 7KAIH program into the school's vision, annual program, and school culture. The organizing function is carried out by forming an implementation team and providing a clear division of tasks. The driving function is implemented through providing role models, motivation, and intensive communication with teachers, students, and parents, while the controlling function is carried out through journal-based monitoring and periodic evaluation.

Keywords

Character education, Managerial functions, Principal leadership, 7KAIH Program.



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INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology, globalization, and international labor competition demand human resources who are not only intellectually superior but also possess strong character. However, amidst the currents of globalization and digital culture, the nation's noble values are beginning to be neglected (Abidin et al., n.d.) . In this era of rapid digitalization, teachers often face challenges in building positive character in students (Syukriady et al., 2023). The decline in students' positive values is evident in various behaviors that have drawn attention in the educational world (Judrah et al., 2024), and there is even a decline in students' morals and character, particularly in the application of Pancasila values (Revalina et al., 2023). Yet, education aims to shape good character while developing individual potential to improve the quality of life and the welfare of society (Hakim, 2023). Therefore, character education must be integrated into the school curriculum (Suarningsih et al., 2024). As a commitment to strengthening character, the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education of the Republic of Indonesia launched the *Tujuh Kebiasaan Anak Indonesia Hebat (7KAIH)* Movement on December 27, 2024, as a strategic step towards Indonesia's golden generation by 2045 (Kemendikdasmen, 2025). This program emphasizes positive habits such as waking up early, praying, exercising, eating healthily, enjoying learning, being active in the community, and going to bed early (Sinulingga, 2025). The 7KAIH program is believed to shape students' character academically, socially, and spiritually (Satriyo et al., 2026), and has been proven to have a positive impact on student discipline in the digital age (Syahni et al., 2025).

In the context of educational management, the successful implementation of 7KAIH depends heavily on the role of the principal as a manager and learning leader. The principal is responsible for planning, organizing, implementing, and supervising school programs (Sagala, 2020). However, its implementation still faces various challenges, both internally, such as differences in teacher commitment, and externally, such as the influence of the social environment and family habits. Therefore, adaptive and solution-oriented leadership from the principal is needed so that the 7KAIH program can run effectively and sustainably. The principal is an educational staff member who is entrusted by the government to lead the school and is responsible for managing, organizing, and developing all the school's potential in a directed and planned manner (Fattah, 2019). Wahjosumidjo (2018:83) states that the principal is a teacher who is given the task of leading and managing school resources to achieve educational goals. A leader must be able to inspire, provide direction, and create a positive work atmosphere so that all members of the organization are committed to common goals

(Supriyono, 2018).

Based on observations and interviews conducted, in the implementation of the 7KAIH Movement at Salafiyah Pekalongan Middle School, the principal's role as manager is crucial to the program's success. The principal acts as a planner, formulating goals and strategies aligned with school values and national education goals. In his organizing role, the principal forms an implementation team, assigns tasks, and ensures the availability of facilities and infrastructure. Furthermore, as director, the principal sets an example, motivates teachers and students, and builds communication with parents and the community. In his controlling role, the principal conducts regular monitoring and evaluation to ensure the program's effectiveness and sustainability. Supervision allows managers to evaluate work results and take corrective action if there are deviations from the plan (Mulyadi, 2021). Therefore, the principal's managerial leadership is key to the success of the 7KAIH Movement at SMP Salafiyah Pekalongan.

The implementation of the 7KAIH principles is an effective strategy for instilling positive values such as initiative, time management, and cooperation to strengthen student discipline and help them stay focused and develop character amidst the challenges of the digital era (Rahayu et al., 2025). The 7KAIH movement uses a habituation approach that is considered more effective than mere instruction, because it allows students to experience internalizing character values directly in their daily lives (Satriyo et al., 2026). These habits are designed to instill positive values in everyday life as an effort to support the realization of Golden Indonesia 2045 (Mentari, 2025). From a family perspective, research by Jannah et al. (2025) emphasized that parental involvement is a key factor in the success of the habit internalization process, so the 7kaih movement is ideally understood as a collaborative effort between schools, families, and communities. This is in line with Joyce Epstein (2018), who emphasized the importance of school, family, and community partnerships in character education. Research by Fadila (2025) shows that the 7KAIH program is able to build students' moral awareness gradually, while Hasanah & Islamiyati (2025) emphasized its contribution in forming physically and mentally healthy characters. Compared to Miranti and Wakhudin (2025) on 5S, the 7KAIH Movement has a more comprehensive scope.

Based on initial observations and preliminary interviews, the implementation of the 7KAIH Movement at SMP Salafiyah Pekalongan has been introduced and optimally implemented across all school components. Teachers and students have become aware of the importance of character building, and the positive habits that underlie 7KAIH are beginning to be integrated into daily

learning activities and school culture. Furthermore, the school has a well-structured monitoring and evaluation mechanism to assess the program's success. This demonstrates that the principal has played an active role as the primary driver in coordinating, encouraging, and ensuring the consistent implementation of 7KAIH within the school environment.

Although the *Tujuh Kebiasaan Anak Indonesia Hebat (7KAIH) Movement* has been implemented at SMP Salafiyah Pekalongan and has shown quite positive results, academically, there are still issues that require further study. To date, no research has specifically analyzed the principal's managerial role in implementing 7KAIH based on management functions such as planning, organizing, motivating, and supervising. Furthermore, the program's apparent success in the field has not been supported by scientific studies that systematically explain the strategy, supporting and inhibiting factors, and the process of integrating the program into the school culture. Therefore, there remains a research gap that needs to be addressed through this study.

A literature review published in Tiyas et al. (2025) explains that the *Tujuh Kebiasaan Anak Indonesia Hebat (7KAIH) Movement* is a strategic step in realizing Golden Indonesia 2045 by strengthening national character. This program emphasizes cultivating seven positive behaviors: waking up early, praying, exercising, eating healthy, enjoying learning, being active in the community, and going to bed early. Its implementation uses the 1% rule principle through consistent, small changes and emphasizes role models, a fun approach, and collaboration between schools, families, communities, and the media (Tiyas et al., 2025). However, that study focused more on the program's implementation and evaluation stages, while this study focuses on the principal's managerial role in implementing 7KAIH.

Research conducted by Hasanah & Islamiyati (2025) states that implementing 7KAIH is a strategic step in developing a healthy, character-based generation ready to face global challenges. This program emphasizes the integration of character education into the curriculum, parental and community involvement, and exemplary behavior from teachers and school leaders (Hasanah & Islamiyati, 2025). Another study by Syahni et al. (2025) shows that the 7KAIH program has a positive impact on fostering student discipline, particularly in time management, responsibility, and learning motivation. However, this research focused more on the implementation phase and program outcomes, rather than the principal's managerial role.

Research conducted by Purwanti et al. (2025) emphasized the importance of collaboration between schools, parents, and the community in developing positive student habits. Meanwhile,

research by Rajibi et al. (2025) demonstrated that physical education teachers play a crucial role in instilling healthy lifestyle habits through the 7KAIH program. Based on these studies, it can be concluded that most research still focuses on program implementation, impact, and the role of teachers. Therefore, this study is novel because it emphasizes the principal's managerial role in implementing *Tujuh Kebiasaan Anak Indonesia Hebat (7KAIH) Movement*.

Research conducted by Hasanah & Islamiyati (2025) states that the implementation of the 7KAIH Movement, which includes waking up early, praying, exercising, eating healthy, enjoying learning, being social, and sleeping on time, is a strategic step in forming a healthy generation with character and ready to face global challenges. This movement aims to instill positive values from an early age and requires effective strategies, such as character integration in the curriculum, active learning methods, parental and community involvement, the use of technology, and role models from teachers and leaders. Synergy between schools, families, and the environment will strengthen the impact of this movement. The 7KAIH Movement emphasizes the formation of positive habits, namely activities carried out repeatedly so that they can shape a person's lifestyle and character (Tyas et al., 2025). The habit of waking up early trains discipline and health (Rofiqi et al., 2025), being obedient in worship strengthens faith and character (Rofiqi et al., 2025), exercising improves fitness (Agisah et al., 2025), eating healthy supports growth (Agisah et al., 2025), being fond of learning develops creativity and mindset (Rofiqi et al., 2025), being in society improves social interaction (Rofiqi et al., 2025), and getting enough sleep maintains recovery and quality of life (Rofiqi et al., 2025). Research by Suprpti et al. (2025) shows that the role of the principal is very important in the successful implementation of 7 KAIH through policies that prioritize structured activities such as morning routines, worship, exercise, and nutritional monitoring. The 7KAIH Movement is an approach that strengthens children's character development by integrating positive habits, including responsibility, discipline, honesty, and respect. It is hoped that this will help children become better individuals and better prepared for social life (Purwanti et al., 2025).

The principal is understood to hold a dual role: as both an educator and a manager. The principal is not merely an administrative administrator but also an educational agent, guiding teaching staff and creating a conducive learning climate. This role encompasses educational functions (advancing the quality of teaching), managerial (planning and organizing resources), supervisory (supervising learning), and an innovator and motivator who mobilizes staff and school components toward common goals (Mulyasa, 2019). This view emphasizes the multidimensional

and dynamic role of the principal; they must integrate technical management duties with pedagogical responsibilities to ensure learning outcomes. The principal's role as a manager is crucial in the management of educational institutions. The principal is not only responsible for academic policy but also must be able to manage human resources, finances, and existing facilities. In this context, the POAC (Planning, Organizing, Actuating, Controlling) management model is highly relevant (Hamalik, 2019).

The research results of Suherman et al. (2025) show that the role of the principal in implementing the 7KAIH Movement effectively builds a character culture through habituation based on transformational leadership. This is done through four managerial stages: planning by integrating the values of the 7 habits into the school's vision and curriculum, organizing through the formation of an implementation team involving teachers and students, implementation through various positive habituation activities, and supervision through monitoring and evaluation, although the reward system still needs improvement. Referring to Terry et al. (2019), the principal plays a role in determining the direction and strategy of the program as well as managing the organizational structure and division of tasks.

This study aims to in-depth describe the principal's role in implementing the Tujuh Kebiasaan Anak Indonesia Hebat (7KAIH) Movement at SMP Salafiyah Pekalongan, specifically in carrying out managerial functions including planning, organizing, motivating, and supervising. Furthermore, this study aims to identify the supporting and inhibiting factors faced by the principal in internalizing the 7KAIH values into the school culture. Theoretically, this research is expected to enrich the study of educational management, particularly regarding principal leadership in implementing character education programs, and serve as a reference for further research in similar contexts. Pragmatically, this study is expected to provide a concrete picture of the principal's managerial strategies for implementing 7KAIH, thus enabling principals, teachers, and school administrators to use them as a basis for evaluating and developing more effective and sustainable character education programs.

METHOD

The research was conducted at SMP Salafiyah Pekalongan in Pekalongan City, Central Java, and is one of the schools strategically implementing the 7KAIH Movement. The study period was from October to December 2025. Subjects included the principal, vice principal for curriculum, vice

principal for student affairs, vice principal for facilities and infrastructure, vice principal for public relations, teacher representatives, student representatives, and parent representatives.

The data in this study are qualitative data obtained directly from the field through observation, interviews, and documentation techniques. Observational data include information on the condition of the school environment, facilities, and infrastructure, and activities related to the principal's role in implementing the 7KAIH Movement at SMP Salafiyah Pekalongan. Interview data consist of questions and answers with informants such as the principal and related parties, which contain opinions, experiences, and perceptions regarding the implementation of the program. Meanwhile, documentation data includes various archives, photographs, notes, and official documents that support and strengthen the research findings, thus providing a complete and in-depth picture of the phenomenon being studied.

Interviews were conducted with the principal, vice principal, teachers, students, and parents to obtain information related to the planning, organization, implementation, and evaluation of programs at SMP Salafiyah Pekalongan. Documentation was used to supplement the data, including school documents, activity photos, and important notes related to program implementation.

The data validity in this study was carried out concretely by comparing the results of field observations, such as daily activities and the role of the principal, with the results of interviews with the principal, teachers, students, and parents, and supported by documents such as school programs, activity photos, and archives related to the 7KAIH Movement at SMP Salafiyah Pekalongan. In its operation, there was alignment of information between sources and techniques to ensure the accuracy of the data. Furthermore, data analysis was carried out in stages, starting from data reduction by selecting and focusing on important information, then presenting the data in the form of systematic descriptions, and finally drawing conclusions based on the patterns and findings that emerged related to the implementation of the 7KAIH Movement in schools.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Implementation of the 7KAIH Movement at SMP Salafiyah Pekalongan

Data on the implementation of the 7KAIH Movement at SMP Salafiyah Pekalongan is presented in the following table.

Table 1. Implementation of the 7KAIH Movement at SMP Salafiyah Pekalongan

No.	7 KAIH Movement Implementation Strategy	Role of Schools	The Role of Parents
1.	Up Early	<p>a) All 21 homeroom teachers reminded their children to wake up at 4:00 a.m. WIB daily via WhatsApp group, which was monitored by the 7KAIH Team.</p> <p>b) The principal, along with all teachers and staff (100% of the total 57 people), set an example by arriving on time for morning religious practice (6:45 a.m. WIB).</p> <p>c) The school rewarded students who left early and consistently participated in morning religious practice.</p>	<p>a) The majority of parents (90% of 710 students) have made an agreement with their children to set a wake-up alarm at 4:00 a.m. WIB;</p> <p>b) 90% of parents have made an agreement with their children to help each other wake up at 4:00 a.m.;</p> <p>c) 90% of parents have reminded their children to complete a control journal in the GF 7KAIH app; 60% of parents reward children who consistently wake up early.</p>
2.	Worship	<p>a) 100% of the 767 school members (the Principal, teachers, staff, and all students) consistently participated in the morning prayer routine in the field.</p> <p>b) 100% of first-period teachers accompanied students in Quran recitation in their respective classrooms.</p> <p>c) The Principal, teachers not teaching first-period, and staff members performed Quran recitation in the Teachers' Room.</p> <p>d) 100% of the 767 school members (the Principal, teachers, staff, and students) performed the Dhuhr prayer in congregation at the Grand Mosque located on the school grounds.</p> <p>e) All 21 homeroom teachers monitored the Fajr prayer and other obligatory prayers performed at home using the GF application on 7KAIH.</p> <p>f) 100% of the 767 school members (the Principal, teachers, staff, and students) participated in religious activities such as the</p>	<p>a) 100% of 710 parents teach prayer and Quran reading at home;</p> <p>b) 100% of 710 parents supervise and help control their children's worship.</p>

3. Exercising	<p>commemoration of religious holidays.</p> <p>a) 100% of the 767 school members (principals, teachers, staff, and students) participate in the Great Indonesian Children's Gymnastics program for 15 minutes every Tuesday and Saturday;</p> <p>b) 100% of the school members (principals, teachers, staff, and students) participate in a monthly fun walk.</p> <p>c) 42 students, members of the Great Indonesian Children's Gymnastics Agency, actively serve as instructors in their respective classes;</p> <p>d) 100% of homeroom teachers monitor the implementation of extracurricular sports activities.</p>	<p>a) 60% of 710 parents have encouraged their children to exercise at home or in public places;</p> <p>b) 60% of 710 parents have created a home exercise schedule for their children to follow.</p>
4. Healthy and Nutritious Eating	<p>a) 100% of homeroom teachers assisted in the implementation of the Free Healthy and Nutritious Meal Program in accordance with established SOPs.</p> <p>b) Eight canteen and cooperative staff ensured that the food and beverages sold in the canteen were healthy and nutritious;</p> <p>c) The principal created a collaborative program with the community health center to educate students about the importance of healthy and nutritious food, and to evaluate and reflect on the program's implementation.</p>	<p>a) 100% of 710 parents teach their children to choose healthy and nutritious foods;</p> <p>b) 100% of 710 parents monitor their children's meals to ensure that they eat healthy and nutritious foods; Scheduled once a month</p> <p>c) 80% of 710 parents provide their children with a healthy and nutritious breakfast</p>
5. Like to Learn	<p>a) 100% of the 35 teachers implemented safe, comfortable, and enjoyable learning environments, motivating students to learn because they felt comfortable.</p> <p>b) 100% of the 35 teachers provided appropriate and</p>	<p>a) 100% of 710 parents limit cell phone use;</p> <p>b) 100% of 710 parents do not prohibit the use of the TV during study hours;</p> <p>c) 70% of parents guide their children in studying according to the home study schedule;</p>

	<p>enjoyable homework assignments.</p> <p>c) 100% of homeroom teachers guided students in creating home study schedules.</p> <p>d) 100% of homeroom teachers routinely checked students' learning progress via the GF 7 KAIH spreadsheet.</p>	<p>d) 90% of parents have supervised and assisted their children in studying;</p> <p>e) 80% of 710 parents engage in learning activities with their children, such as reading books, watching YouTube videos about study materials, etc.</p>
<p>6. Community</p>	<p>a) 100% of the school community (principal, teachers, staff, and students) participate in community service activities in accordance with the school program;</p> <p>b) Through co-curricular activities, 100% of subject teachers (35) guide students to socialize with the community around the school and their homes.</p> <p>c) 100% (21) homeroom teachers routinely check on students' activities, including attending religious study groups at home at least once a week;</p> <p>d) 100% (21) homeroom teachers encourage students to join the Student Council (OSIS) and Pramuka (Scouting) and participate in school activity committees.</p>	<p>a) 70% of 710 parents have invited their children to pray in congregation at the mosque/prayer room;</p> <p>b) 60% of parents have invited their children to actively participate in social activities in their neighborhood.</p>
<p>7. Sleep Early</p>	<p>a) 100% (21 students) The homeroom teacher reminded students via the class WhatsApp group to go to bed early at 9:00 PM WIB; under the supervision of the 7KAIH Team</p> <p>b) 100% (21 students) The homeroom teacher helped remind students that before going to bed, they were encouraged to perform ablution, pray, and commit to waking up early at 4:00 AM WIB.</p>	<p>a) 710 parents have restricted cell phone use.</p> <p>b) 710 parents have instructed their sons and daughters to go to bed early.</p> <p>c) 710 parents have restricted their sons and daughters' consumption of caffeinated beverages (coffee).</p>

Source: Observation and Interview Results

The implementation of the morning wake-up habit demonstrates strong involvement between the school and parents. All homeroom teachers consistently remind students via WhatsApp group to wake up at 4:00 a.m. WIB, and this activity is monitored by the 7KAIH team. At school, the principal, along with teachers and staff, sets an example by arriving before the morning routine and rewarding students who consistently arrive early. On the family side, most parents have made agreements with their children to set alarms, wake each other up, fill out a control journal on the app, and reward children who consistently wake up early.

The entire school community is fully involved in religious practices. All students, teachers, and staff participate in morning prayers together, recite the Quran, and pray the Dhuhr prayer in congregation on the school grounds. Teachers and homeroom teachers also monitor students' religious practices at home through a provided app. The role of parents is very dominant, as all parents guide their children in prayer and Quran reading at home and provide direct supervision.

Exercise is implemented routinely and structured. The entire school community participates in weekly group exercise and monthly healthy walks. Several students are also involved as exercise agents, acting as instructors in their respective classes. Homeroom teachers monitor student involvement in school sports activities. At home, some parents have encouraged their children to exercise and created exercise schedules, although not all parents consistently implement them.

Regarding healthy and nutritious eating habits, the school demonstrates systematic management. Homeroom teachers assist with the implementation of the healthy eating program according to established procedures. Cafeteria staff ensure that the food served is healthy and nutritious, while the principal collaborates with the community health center to educate students. At home, all parents teach the importance of healthy eating, monitor their children's eating habits, and most have made it a habit for their children to eat breakfast before going to school.

A love of learning is demonstrated through the learning process, which is made comfortable and enjoyable by all teachers. Assignments are given proportionally, and homeroom teachers guide students in developing home study schedules and monitor their progress through an app. Parents also play an active role by limiting cell phone use, managing study time, and assisting their children in learning at home. Most parents even participate in learning activities with their children, such as reading or watching learning materials. In terms of community habits, schools encourage students to participate in social activities through community service programs and co-curricular activities. Teachers and homeroom teachers also encourage students to be active in school organizations and

religious activities at home. Parents' role is evident through their efforts to encourage their children to participate in social activities and congregational worship in the community, although the level of parental involvement remains uneven.

Finally, the habit of going to bed early is enforced through regular reminders from homeroom teachers to ensure students are in bed by 9:00 PM. Homeroom teachers also guide students in bedtime routines such as ablution and prayer. At home, parents support this by limiting cell phone use, setting a bedtime for their children, and controlling the consumption of beverages that can disrupt rest. This demonstrates a strong partnership between schools and families in fostering disciplined sleep habits.

Discussion

The principal's role in implementing the 7KAIH Movement at Salafiyah Pekalongan Middle School reflects a comprehensive managerial function, encompassing planning, organization, mobilization, and monitoring and evaluation. During the planning stage, the principal establishes program objectives and systematically organizes activities, involving various stakeholders, including the school management team and parents, and integrating these activities into the school's vision, mission, and curriculum. The organizing stage involves a clear division of tasks according to each individual's role and the provision of supporting facilities and infrastructure. Furthermore, during the mobilization and direction stages, the principal acts as the driving force by providing motivation, direction, coordination, and role modeling to the entire school community to ensure the program runs optimally. During the monitoring and evaluation stages, the principal routinely conducts supervision, data analysis, and periodic evaluations to assess program achievement and implement continuous improvement. Therefore, the successful implementation of the 7KAIH Movement is inextricably linked to the principal's strategic, collaborative leadership, which is oriented toward improving the overall character of students.

The results of this study are in line with various studies in the last decade, which confirm that principal leadership is a key factor in the successful implementation of educational programs. Research by Rohyadi & Rosmilati (2024) shows that principals have a strategic role in providing inspiration, empowering teachers, and building cooperation with various parties in implementing school programs. This is reinforced by the findings of Riftandi et al. (2024), who stated that the success of program implementation is greatly influenced by the principal's ability to manage resources, coordinate teams, and encourage the active role of school residents. In addition, research

by Fauzi & Samrin (2025) emphasized that principals play an important role in forming a solid team, optimizing human resources, and creating a conducive learning environment to improve the quality of education. Furthermore, the findings of this study are also supported by the study of Nuruddin & Joko Subondo (2025), which revealed that participatory and visionary principal leadership is able to improve the quality of learning through academic supervision, teacher professional development, and the creation of a positive school climate. Meanwhile, Mukaddamah's (2024) research shows that the principal's transformational leadership contributes to improving teacher performance through providing motivation, role models, and support for learning innovation.

The research findings indicate that the principal's role in implementing 7KAIH at SMP Salafiyah Pekalongan is carried out through systematic managerial functions, namely planning, organizing, implementing, and controlling. This finding aligns with the concept of the principal as an educational manager proposed by Mulyasa (2019), who emphasized that the principal's role is not merely as an administrator, but also as an educator, motivator, and driver of change in the school. In this study, the 7KAIH program planning is not merely administrative but integrated with the school's vision, mission, and curriculum. This reinforces the concept of educational management, which states that planning is the foundation of a program's success.

The research findings on the planning aspect can also be compared with the POAC (Planning, Organizing, Actuating, Controlling) management model described by Hamalik (2019). The 7KAIH program is strategically designed, involving all school components, and maintaining a balance between academic learning and character development. This indicates that the principal not only developed the program but also integrated it into the school system, thus becoming part of the educational culture. Research by Suharsaputra (2018) shows that principals who implement comprehensive management functions (planning, organizing, implementing, and supervising) can significantly increase the effectiveness of school programs. This is reinforced by research by Bush (2020), which states that principals' managerial leadership plays a crucial role in ensuring systematic and sustainable program implementation through integration with school policies. Furthermore, research by Hallinger (2021) confirms that effective principal instructional leadership is demonstrated through the ability to plan programs, coordinate implementation, and conduct data-driven monitoring and evaluation. Similarly, research by Leithwood et al. (2020) shows that structured and collaborative leadership can improve the quality of learning and foster a positive school culture. In the context of character education, these findings are also relevant to research by

Berkowitz & Bier (2017), which states that the success of character programs in schools is strongly influenced by the principal's leadership in consistently integrating character values into the curriculum and school activities.

In terms of organization, the research findings indicate that the principal established a clear 7KAIH team structure involving teachers, homeroom teachers, and parents. This finding reinforces the view that the success of character education is strongly influenced by collaboration between schools and families. Theoretically, this aligns with the concept of the principal as a manager capable of managing human resources and building effective collaboration. In this study, parental involvement through WhatsApp groups and digital journals indicates that the program's organization is not only internal but also involves the broader educational ecosystem.

Compared with previous research, this study's findings align with those of Tiyas et al. (2025), who stated that the 7KAIH program is a strategic step in shaping the character of the generation towards Indonesia Emas 2045. However, Tiyas et al.'s research emphasized program implementation and evaluation, while this study highlights the principal's managerial role as a key factor in the program's success. Research by Hasanah & Islamiyati (2025) also showed that 7KAIH implementation relies heavily on integration into the curriculum and parental involvement. This study's findings reinforce these findings but also add that the success of this integration is strongly influenced by the principal's leadership.

Furthermore, research by Syahni et al. (2025) showed that the 7KAIH program had a positive impact on student discipline, particularly in time management and responsibility. The findings of this study support these findings, as the implementation of 7KAIH at Salafiyah Junior High School in Pekalongan also demonstrated improved student discipline, particularly in the habit of waking up early, praying, and enjoying learning. However, this study provides a broader perspective by emphasizing that this success is influenced not only by the program itself, but also by the role of the principal in managing and monitoring the program on an ongoing basis.

Research by Purwanti et al. (2025) also emphasized the importance of collaboration between schools and parents in developing positive student habits. The results of this study reinforce these findings, as the implementation of 7KAIH at Salafiyah Junior High School in Pekalongan demonstrates strong collaboration between schools and families. In the context of human resource management, research by Harris (2020) shows that collaborative leadership involving teachers, staff, and external stakeholders can increase the success of school program implementation. Harris's

(2020) findings align with the formation of the 7KAIH team, which involves various school elements and parents as strategic partners. Furthermore, parental involvement through digital journals and monitoring of student activities at home demonstrates that character education takes place not only at school but also within the family environment. This also aligns with research by Rajibi et al. (2025) which emphasizes the crucial role of teachers, particularly physical education (PJOK) teachers, in instilling healthy lifestyle habits through the 7KAIH program.

Based on the research findings, the author argues that the successful implementation of 7KAIH is determined not only by a strong program but more importantly by the principal's ability to carry out comprehensive managerial functions. The principal serves not only as a program manager but also as a school culture leader who consistently instills character values. Therefore, the implementation of 7KAIH must be understood not merely as a character education program but as a strategy for building a sustainable school culture. Research by Fullan (2020) shows that the principal acts as an agent of change, determining the success of school culture transformation through visionary leadership.

Thus, this study provides a novel contribution to the study of educational management, specifically the principal's managerial role in implementing character education programs. While previous research has focused more on program implementation and its impact on students, this study demonstrates that the success of the 7KAIH program depends heavily on the principal's role in systematically and sustainably planning, organizing, implementing, and controlling the program.

CONCLUSION

The 7KAIH program at SMP Salafiyah Pekalongan is implemented through a comprehensive and sustainable management function. In terms of planning, the principal involves various parties such as teachers, students, curriculum, public relations, and parents, so that the program is not merely administrative, but also part of a structured and mutually supported school culture. In terms of organization, the program is carried out systematically and collaboratively with a clear division of tasks, integration of values into learning, utilization of digital journals, and partnerships with parents. This demonstrates a management model that combines formal structure, distributive leadership, religious values, and technological innovation. During the implementation stage, 7KAIH is integrated into religious activities, curriculum, academic supervision, and supported by facilities and a reward system. The principal's active and transformative leadership strengthens program

implementation by involving parents within an open framework. Meanwhile, control is carried out systematically and based on data through supervision, observation, digital journals, and routine evaluations. Control is reflective and constructive, thus contributing to increased discipline, religious awareness, and student achievement, while strengthening the study of values-based educational management.

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