

# Management of early childhood leadership character education through Leadership Soul for Kids program

Rejokirono Rejokirono<sup>1\*</sup>, Didi Supriadi<sup>1</sup>, Maryono Maryono<sup>2</sup> and Heni Nurwindah<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Universitas Sarjanawiyata Tamansiswa, Jl. Batikan No.1043, UH-III, Tahunan, Umbulharjo, Kota Yogyakarta, Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

<sup>2</sup>Universitas Sains Al-Quran, Jawa Tengah, Indonesia. \*Author for correspondence. E-mail: rejokirono@ustjogja.ac.id

**ABSTRACT.** The research aims to analyze character education management in the Leadership Soul for Kids program. Analyze factors that support the Leadership Soul for Kids program and the impact on changes in students' character after participating in the Leadership Soul for Kids program. The type of research is descriptive qualitative. The techniques utilized to collect the data included interviews, observation, and documentation. Salsabila Primary School Klaseman Sleman, Indonesia, carried out this research. The data analysis technique used is the Miles and Huberman model of qualitative analysis. Checking the validity of the data is done by increasing persistence and using source and technical triangulation. Based on the results of data analysis, it can be concluded that Salsabila Primary School Klaseman Sleman, Indonesia, has implemented the four management functions (planning, organizing, implementing, and supervising) very well in the Leadership Soul for Kids program. Supporting factors include school human resources, parents, and the funds needed. Students and teachers can feel the impact or change in character based on leadership values that the school has prepared. Teachers see good changes in leadership, independence, responsibility, and high commitment to tasks. Students are seen as having the fighting power to complete tasks well.

**Keywords:** management character; leadership character; character education; through leadership soul for kids; leadership program.

## Gerenciando a educação do caráter de liderança na primeira infância por meio do programa Leadership Soul for Kids

**RESUMO.** A pesquisa tem como objetivo analisar a gestão da educação do caráter no programa Leadership Soul for Kids. Analisar os fatores que apoiam o programa Leadership Soul for Kids e o impacto nas mudanças no caráter dos alunos após participarem do programa Leadership Soul for Kids. O tipo de pesquisa é qualitativa descritiva. As técnicas utilizadas para a coleta de dados incluíram entrevistas, observação e documentação. A Escola Primária Salsabila Klaseman Sleman, na Indonésia, realizou esta pesquisa. A técnica de análise de dados utilizada é o modelo de análise qualitativa de Miles e Huberman. A verificação da validade dos dados é feita aumentando a persistência e usando fonte e triangulação técnica. Com base nos resultados da análise de dados, pode-se concluir que a Escola Primária Salsabila Klaseman Sleman, na Indonésia, implementou muito bem as quatro funções de gestão (planeamento, organização, implementação e supervisão) no programa Leadership Soul for Kids. Os fatores de apoio incluem os recursos humanos da escola, os pais e os fundos necessários. Alunos e professores podem sentir o impacto ou a mudança de caráter com base nos valores de liderança que a escola preparou. Os professores veem boas mudanças na liderança, independência, responsabilidade e alto comprometimento com as tarefas. Os alunos são vistos como tendo o poder de luta para concluir bem as tarefas.

**Palavras chave:** caráter gerencial; caráter de liderança; educação de caráter; através da alma de liderança para crianças; programa de liderança.

## Gestión de la educación del carácter del liderazgo en la primera infancia a través del programa Leadership Soul for Kids

**RESUMEN.** La investigación tiene como objetivo analizar la gestión de la educación del carácter en el programa Leadership Soul for Kids. Analizar los factores que respaldan el programa Leadership Soul for Kids y el impacto en los cambios en el carácter de los estudiantes después de participar en el programa. El tipo de investigación es cualitativa descriptiva. Las técnicas utilizadas para la recopilación de datos incluyeron entrevistas, observación y documentación. La escuela primaria Salsabila Klaseman Sleman en Indonesia

llevó a cabo esta investigación. La técnica de análisis de datos utilizada es el modelo de análisis cualitativo de Miles y Huberman. La verificación de la validez de los datos se realiza mediante el aumento de la persistencia y el uso de la técnica de fuente y triangulación. Con base en los resultados del análisis de datos, se puede concluir que la escuela primaria Salsabila Klaseman Sleman en Indonesia ha implementado muy bien las cuatro funciones de gestión (planificación, organización, implementación y supervisión) en el programa Leadership Soul for Kids. Los factores de apoyo incluyen los recursos humanos de la escuela, los padres y los fondos necesarios. Los estudiantes y maestros pueden sentir el impacto o el cambio de carácter basado en los valores de liderazgo que la escuela ha preparado. Los docentes perciben cambios positivos en liderazgo, independencia, responsabilidad y un alto compromiso con las tareas. Se percibe que los estudiantes tienen la capacidad de lucha para completar las tareas con éxito.

**Palavras chave:** carácter directivo; carácter de liderazgo; educación del carácter; a través del alma del liderazgo para niños; programa de liderazgo.

Received on January 31, 2024.

Accepted on June 3, 2025.

Published in September 23, 2025.

## Introduction

The attitudes and conduct of Indonesian students are deteriorating at present. Schools play a crucial role in character development by imparting moral and ethical principles, fostering noble character, and cultivating strong and resilient character. Character education in elementary schools encompasses the following: leadership, responsibility, religion, and discipline (Aningsih et al., 2022). The degree to which Indonesian schools are capable of addressing students' character education remains significantly below anticipated levels. The curriculum merely cultivates students' idealized character traits and fails to encourage their active participation in the community. The acquisition of character by students is limited to state-imposed dominant values (Abdullah et al., 2019).

The national awareness deficit can be overcome through character-based education and nationality insight (Anwar, 2016). Character education is not only related to moral education but also to instilling habits of good things in children so that they have awareness and understanding of carrying out good things in everyday life (Mulyasa, 2018). Schools prioritize academic achievement and the formation of students' character. Character education management is a management process that always pays attention to and integrates character values that originate from good, moral, cultural, and local wisdom values – manifested in every educational management action. Character education in elementary schools is a long-term investment to build a quality future generation for the nation.

Character values must be cultivated in a never-ending process to show continuous quality improvement to form a person rooted in the nation's cultural values (Arifin & Rusdiana, 2019). Integrating character values with the student's personality is expected to become capital in facing global challenges. An evaluation of the efficacy of indicators that support character education should be conducted, such as the provision of character-specific educational facilities and the availability of teaching personnel to bolster character education (Zakso et al., 2021).

Character education requires cooperation from all educational components, including government, school principals, teachers, curriculum, infrastructure, and society (Amalia & Zuhro, 2022). One of the characteristics that needs to be instilled is leadership and justice. Leadership attitude education is essential to change the current order in the world of education, which is mainly only concerned with academic aspects—the capacity and dedication necessary for school administrators to incorporate character education into every facet of the school environment. Educational leadership programs are essential for developing character education leadership capacity and serve as a training ground for future school leaders (Tichnor-Wagner, 2022).

In numerous circles, the character crisis that is engulfing the nation is causing growing concern. A close connection exists between the crisis of culture and the crisis of character. Character education should be provided at an early age, as this formative period will ultimately shape an individual's development into adulthood. The early years of a child's life are referred to as the 'golden age' due to the rapid development of the child's brain (Tussubha & Hadiyanto, 2020). These pillars of character values should be applied from childhood to the golden age.

Leadership quality does not just come; it must be built through a long process. Cultivating the spirit of leadership should be instilled from an early age, supported by the family and school environment. A school is a

place to seek knowledge and to develop a personality, one of which is cultivating a leadership spirit. Developing a leadership spirit should be an inseparable part of the educational process for students. This leadership attitude education does not merely pursue quantity but focuses on quality and personal characteristics (Robbins & Judge, 2015). Therefore, leadership attitude education must be familiarized through practice. Student will be trained in responsibility, discipline, and perseverance through education in leadership attitudes.

Extensive scholarly inquiry has been devoted to the conceptualization of leadership in the context of early childhood education and care. The authors contend in this article that while these efforts are beneficial and make a contribution to the discourse on leadership, they must be regarded in an abstract and pragmatic manner. Numerous scholarly investigations have presented compelling justifications for conceptualizing leadership within its proper framework and utilizing a pedagogical perspective (Heikka & Waniganayake, 2011; Palaiologou & Male, 2012).

Further investigation is warranted to determine how to effectively apply what is currently understood to be effective in character education to the systemic development of approaches that promote the desired outcomes in a variety of contexts (Tichnor-Wagner, 2022). Leadership Soul for Kids is one of the superior programs created by Salsabila Primary School Klaseman Sleman, Indonesia. This program was created to train student to become leaders and also be led. Students are taught to have vision and idealism, sensitivity to reading situations and potential, maturity and a sense of responsibility, organizing ability, ability to mobilize with effective communication, commitment, fighting power, and militancy. The principal's role as a leader in the school is to conduct continuous guidance in the development of character education.

## Literature review

### Character education management

Character education in schools is one method of anticipating and mitigating the nation's moral decline, a problem in education, particularly in Indonesia (Marsakha et al., 2021). Character education management is the management of educational values and activities which are described in management stages, namely planning, implementation, and evaluation. Character education must be supported by adequate education management to be carried out optimally. Character education management education is required for planning, implementation, control, and assessment (Yuliana et al., 2020).

Management of character education is more effective when incorporated into school administration, particularly school-based administration. The integration of character education and school management is a subject of close connection. The matter at hand pertains to the manner in which character education organizes, implements, and assesses academic activities within the school. Character education management begins with planning students' character education by establishing goals, developing programs or school activities, and incorporating character values (Aini & Fitria, 2021). A program planning meeting involving all school components kicks off character education management planning (Rahmalina et al., 2023).

The development of character education programs in schools should be grounded in the subsequent principles (Budimansyah, 2011):

- Continuous character education must be implemented in schools. It indicates that the development of character values is a lengthy process, beginning with students' enrollment and continuing until they graduate within an educational unit.
- The cultivation of character education ought to permeate every academic discipline (integrated), individual growth, and the institutional ethos. The cultivation of these character values is the objective of every subject in the curriculum, which is how national character development is accomplished. Additionally, character values can be developed through extracurricular activities and self-help counseling.
- Character values are not imparted through the transmission of knowledge. The objective of character education is to cultivate the overall behavior of students.

Character education management methods must depart from the empirical world as manifested in phenomena from the empirical world as manifested in the practical phenomena and operational implementation of character education management in the curriculum, management, financing, teacher, and student components. The spirit of character education must be enhanced by improving teachers' abilities to integrate character values into the development of learning materials (Suardin et al., 2023). Character education management is integrated in the curriculum process, including student interactions in the school environment.

Character value integration in learning is accomplished by employing an active, creative, effective, and enjoyable learning approach to discover students' experiences as a foundation for positive character value habitation (Yunus et al., 2021). Integrating character education into daily school activities; 1) Incorporating character education content that has been developed into all subjects; and (4) Employing four alternative strategies to implement character education in schools in an integrated fashion. 3) Incorporate character education into activities that are premeditated or scheduled. 4) Foster cooperation and communication between the educational institution and the parents of the student. Character education can be integrated into any subject and linked to real-life situations (Ernawati et al., 2018).

### **Leadership character**

The primary objective of character education is to fortify and elevate the moral and ethical standards of the nation, with a specific focus on students who will shape the trajectory of the nation and ensure its triumphs are accompanied by integrity (Marsakha et al., 2021). The integration of character education into school curricula represents an endeavor to augment the constructive disposition of pupils. The findings indicated that character education was consistently implemented through the development of learning program plans and school discipline programs that incorporated character education. In addition to enforcing the implementation of school discipline, they are implementing the learning program plan by emphasizing the importance of character in the curriculum and fostering an environment conducive to character development (Suardin et al., 2023).

Student leadership is frequently misunderstood as a pedagogical exercise centered on simulated political arenas (Patrick, 2022). Student need leadership characteristics from an early age: knowing dreams, self-controlling, independence, and working with others. Every child has the potential to become a leader. Therefore, leadership skills in student must be applied from an early age as a solid foundation for realizing their dreams and life goals. The spirit of leadership in student can train a sense of responsibility, discipline, and perseverance, which benefits the child's future. Therefore, the spirit of leadership needs to be formed and built from an early age. Student can be class presidents, lead study groups, and coordinate events at school.

Participation in activities and student engagement are frequently associated with student leadership development. Students can participate in extracurricular activities involving groups to help develop and empower student leadership that promotes positive social change (Kim & Holyoke, 2022). Primary school student leadership experience significantly impacts current academic achievement (Deng et al., 2020).

### **Leadership soul for kids**

Not every child is a born leader, but every child can learn leadership skills, even if there is no desire to lead anyone or anything. Leadership for Kids is a leadership development program for student. Train their leadership while improving the child's personality. One of them is an honest attitude. In this student 's leadership class, they learn using methods that adapt to the development of today's student. Student are also trained to become the best version of themselves. Forming student 's character early can help them explore their talents and potential to become mentally strong individuals (Tichnor-Wagner, 2022). More confident and have the spirit to achieve. This program focuses more on student 's character education. The goal is for student to adapt to various situations in the future.

Leadership is the ability to influence a group to achieve the expected goals. Leadership Soul draws on three principles—lead with love, care, and vulnerability – to counter conventional leadership archetypes that promote inequality and fail to meet the needs of all students (Moreno, 2023). Leadership requires teamwork, and many teamwork skills are also leadership skills (Wolfenbarger, 2022).

Leadership Soul for Kids can be interpreted as a leadership soul for student. Leadership is one of the superior activities implemented at Salsabila Primary School Klaseman Sleman, Indonesia. Table 1 shown the character values and indicators of leadership soul for kids program. Students are taught to have vision and idealism, sensitivity to reading situations, potential, maturity, a sense of responsibility, organization, and the ability to mobilize with effective communication, commitment, fighting power, and militancy. Kids with well-developed leadership skills are more confident, responsible, and not afraid to make mistakes. They learn creative coping skills, the art of compromise, empathy toward others, and good decision-making skills. Whether leadership comes naturally to your student or could use some work, parents can help develop and teach these crucial qualities that will serve them well in the future.

**Table 1.** The character values and indicators of leadership soul for kids program.

No.	Character Values	Indicators	Formula & Strategy	Activities
1	Visionary and Idealist	a. Have noble aspirations b. Thinking big builds obsessions far into the future c. Adhere to noble values l. Namely in the direction of the struggle	Iconic motto	Includes a special core for each class with a leadership theme
			Screams of leadership vision	Each class makes chants with a leadership theme.
			Biographies and personality stories of great leaders	Biography or story of the leader after the dhikr prayer.
			Motivational apple containing concern and self-determination	The apple material is filled with leadership themes that have been compiled for one year or appropriate holiday commemoration themes.
			Vision & dream achievement	Each child is asked to give reasons for these goals and their usefulness in the future.
			Visits and lectures from figures	Take a walk around the village and visit village figures.
2.	Sensitive to read situations and potential	a. Be sensitive to the atmosphere and circumstances b. Sensitive to see threats and problems c. Sensitive to see the potential of team members and institutions d. Sensitive to seeing opportunities e. Responsive and ready to anticipate	Five minutes to listen and observe. What is not correct? (classroom, mosque, terrace, yard, garden, kitchen, library, toilet)	Every time you start a lesson, after the lesson opens
			Guess (identify) the good qualities and strengths of friends	Write about the good qualities of friends (assessment between friends)
			Today's message of appreciation to all friends	Praising a friend's greatness through a piece of paper
			Simulation: problems & solutions	Scientific learning and problem-solving based
			Project: observing repairing (nearby mosque, people's houses)	School picket
3	Maturity and Responsibility	a. Demonstrate an exemplary attitude and guiding spirit to stand out b. Have a nurturing and fighting spirit c. Show up to take responsibility d. Can be trusted e. Confident and brave in making decisions	Teach and train underclassmen	The science movement
			Teaching assignments during school holidays (videorecording)	Make teaching vlog videos during the holidays
			Leading task forces and committees	Preparing for the apple and ceremony
			Lead checking and evaluation.	Market day
			Notes this week: Happy to help (at home, mosque, class, village)	List five things you were grateful for during the past week
4	Able to organize	a. Be careful in making plans b. Skilled at dividing tasks and synergizing potential c. Place team members appropriately d. Work systematically e. Oriented to the completeness of goal achievement	Become rotating class president	Election of class administrators
			Arranging picket schedules, class administrators	Arrange picket and class management schedules.
			Form a committee	Market Day and Knowledge Transmission Movement
			Dividing tasks (job desk) is simple	Market Day and Knowledge Transmission Movement
			Create a mind map action plan	Market Day and Knowledge Transmission Movement
			Published in location storage, room settings & properties for certain events	Market Day and Knowledge Transmission Movement
5.	Mobilize through effective communication.	a. Able to manage forums (meetings, debates, discussions) b. Master public speaking c. Master interpersonal communication techniques d. Effective use of spoken/written language e. Has the charisma of persuasion to influence	Guided interviews, negotiations, and lobbying	Research the environment around the school
			Rotating briefings	Ceremony and ceremony preparations
			Counseling for underclassmen	The science movement
			Little ceremonial supervisor	Reading hadith, biographies/stories of great leaders, etc.
			Create formal letters and simple proposals.	Create simple letters and proposals
			Write simple reports and opinions.	Life skills activity report
6.	Fighting and militant commitment	a. Strong determination b. Strong self-discipline c. Full of enthusiasm and optimistic spirit d. Firm, tenacious, persistent, focused, solution e. Consistent, loyal to institutions, values & goals	Prepare a speech script.	Speech
			Outing events: outbound, nature exploration, hiking, camping, life skills	Outbound & life skill
			Scouting, Boy Scouts, obstacle courses, trail hunting	Scout

## Method

This type of research is qualitative descriptive research. Qualitative research intends to understand the phenomena experienced by research subjects (Moelong, 2018). This research describes everything related to character education management at Salsabila Primary School Klaseman Sleman, Indonesia. The subjects and informants of this research are people related to character education management in creating students with character, such as school principals, teachers, staff, students, and parents.

Observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation carried out data collection techniques in this research. Observations were carried out by observing activities carried out at school related to the Leadership Soul for Kids program. Good habits or activities are observed according to relevance to the research to support the data collected. Interviews in this research will be conducted with school principals, teachers, parents, and students. Documentation searches for data relating to matters through notes, reports, meeting minutes, agendas, and photos of activities. The documentation method in this research was used to complement the data obtained from interviews and observations.

In qualitative research, the research instrument or tool is the researcher himself (Sugiyono, 2020). Qualitative or human instrument researchers have the function of determining the focus of the research itself, selecting informants, assessing data quality, analyzing, interpreting, and drawing conclusions on what has been found in the research. Furthermore, the data's validity uses triangulation, a technique for checking the validity of the data for checking purposes or as a comparison of the data.

This research employs source triangulation in addition to method triangulation. Triangulating sources is an approach to assessing the reliability of information. This method is tried by checking information obtained from various sources. The triangulation method tests the honesty of information by checking similarities in origin but using different methods.

The Miles and Huberman data analysis model is implemented by the data analysis method: data reduction, data display, conclusion drawing, and verification. Data reduction was carried out by examining the implementation of character education management in the Leadership Soul for Kids program. Data display is to systematize data clearly to explain the picture of the Leadership Soul for Kids program. After being explained systematically, conclusions are drawn through verification to determine the results achieved in the Leadership Soul for Kids program.

## Results

### Planning leadership soul for kids program

Indicators of the success of character education management planning based on Leadership Soul for Kids are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Indicators of planning success.

No	Indicators	Assessment
1	Making decisions regarding methods or strategies to realize the program	Available
2	Making decisions for various alternative activities to be implemented	Available
3	They are preparing educational components for the effective and efficient implementation of the Leadership Soul for Kids program.	Available

Indicators for decision-making regarding methods or strategies for realizing the program are available; this can be seen from the implementation strategies being implemented. Indicators for decision-making for various alternative activities to be implemented already exist. This can be seen from the leadership program, which includes daily, semester, and annual programs. Indicators prepare educational components for implementing an effective and efficient Leadership Soul for Kids-based education program. The educational components here include teachers, students, parents, facilities, and infrastructure. Before the program is socialized to student, the teacher holds a meeting and discusses the students. Students also receive socialization, guidance, and practice regarding the program that will be implemented. Based on the fulfillment of these planning indicators, it can be concluded that the planning function in character education management based on Leadership Soul for Kids already exists.

### Organizing leadership soul for kids program

Indicators of success in organizing character education management based on Leadership Soul for Kids are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Indicators of organizing success.

No	Indicators	Assessment
1	Details of all activities	Already
2	Division of workload	Already
3	Procurement and development of mechanisms to coordinate work	Already

Indicators detailing all activities already exist in school programs, including the Leadership Soul for Kids program. Activities are written clearly, along with targets. Details of all activities with modules or technical instructions for the soul leadership program for kids. Indicators of dividing the workload with the Leadership Soul for Kids program coordinator team so it runs smoothly. During evaluation and teacher coordination meetings, a mechanism is also provided and developed to coordinate work. Based on the fulfillment of these organizing indicators, it can be concluded that the organizing function in character education management based on Leadership Soul for Kids already exists.

### Actuating leadership soul for kids program

Indicators of success in actuating character education management based on Leadership Soul for Kids are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4.** Actuating success indicators.

No	Indicators	Assessment
1	Carrying out planned activities	Already
2	Provides strong motivation to move people	Already
3	Organizing meetings that can stimulate work	Already

Implementation indicators consist of carrying out planned activities. Researchers can find the implementation of planned activities when observing activities at school. The leadership coordinator team carries out activities following the modules or technical instructions that have been prepared. These activities are passed on to students. All officers carry out according to the teacher's briefing and also the checklist that has been provided. Indicators provide strong motivation to mobilize people, which can be seen from the role of the school principal, who provides strong motivation to mobilize teachers and students. Likewise, the accompanying teachers also provide strong motivation to motivate students – indicators of holding meetings that can stimulate work. The school also holds coordination meetings every Friday, activity evaluation meetings every month, and school work meetings at the start of the new school year or the start of the first semester. It can be concluded that the management implementation function already exists.

### Controlling leadership soul for kids program

Indicators of success in actuating character education management based on Leadership Soul for Kids are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5.** Controlling success indicators.

No	Indicators	Assessment
1	Know whether work processes are going or not according to plan	Fulfilled
2	Able to correct errors	Fulfilled
3	Know how to use the budget that has been set	Fulfilled
4	Know how to carry out work according to established plans	Fulfilled
5	Know the work results that have been achieved with the planned target results.	Fulfilled
6	Provide suggestions or input for follow-up work	Fulfilled

Supervision has indicators which include knowing whether the work process is going or not going according to plan, knowing the use of the budget that has been determined, knowing that the implementation

of the work is following the plan that has been determined, knowing the results of the work that have been achieved with the planned target results, providing advice or input for follow-up work. All of these indicators have been fulfilled at SDIT Salsabila Klaseman Sleman. So it can be concluded that the supervisory function in character education management based on Leadership Soul for Kids already exists.

### **Impact of leadership soul for kids program**

Supporting factors for character education management through leadership soul for kids based on the results of interviews with school principals:

The supporting factor, I am grateful that my fellow teachers are willing and have the technical skills to be able to realize this leadership program. The second supporting factor is that children can follow along well. The children were also happy with the school picket leadership program, they learned to work together and didn't feel like they were a burden, instead they were waiting for it because the joint assignment was only once a month so they were really looking forward to it. They can use vests as leadership officers, which is really fun. Another supporting factor is the existence of supporting facilities and support from foundations and parents or guardians of students.

The results of interviews conducted with the activity coordinator stated that:

In my opinion, the first supporting factor for implementing this program is that the foundation is very supportive, yes, it is important for me. This program was initiated and inspired by the chairman of the foundation. Finally, now all Salsabila agree that they really want to hold this kind of activity, which means that all K3S school principals must do it. The support system from the foundation is very large, so then it goes to the Salsabila units. Another supporter is the school principal. He always gives directions in the WhatsApp group and in person. The cooperation of the teachers at SDIT Salsabila also makes this program run well. Another supporting factor is of course the enthusiasm of the students and the school facilities, one of which, to make it more convincing, is the existence of special vests worn by children who are on leadership program duty.

The teachers' opinions also support this statement that the supporting factors for the Leadership Soul for Kids program are the foundation and the school's human resources, including school principals, teachers, students, and employees. School facilities and infrastructure are also supporting factors that should not be forgotten. Meanwhile, the parents who initially became obstacles in implementing the school picket have been overcome and given understanding.

The impact or change in students' character after participating in the Leadership Soul for Kids program based on the results of interviews with the school principal stated:

I observed the most prominent change in courage, for example the courage to meet new people or guests. Courage to perform something, for example a speech, appearing for certain competitions. It becomes easier for schools to prepare students because they are used to appearing in front of many people. Children are also involved in school events and serve as small committees. Representatives of the small committee practiced how to give speeches at the event. It's not awkward to meet other people. Another change is the sensitivity to helping others. Respond quickly to help others or be responsive if you see other people needing help. Also sensitivity to the surrounding environment. Children also find it easier to share roles and tasks so that they carry out them responsibly. Because in this leadership the spirit of leadership and willingness to be led is also trained. Overall, we are still in the process, but it doesn't necessarily mean that the character is good, it also depends on whether there is a connection with assistance and control at home.

The activity coordinator also conveyed the impact of the Leadership Soul for Kids program during the interview.

The change that I observed and saw was the child's independence starting to form. When initially carrying out leadership activities, they are given direction, so that in the future they can carry out it well and with full responsibility. Students can practice sharing tasks, deliberating to determine the chairman and their respective roles. Respond to the situation and surrounding conditions. Have a clear vision and complete it well. Students also have the courage to appear in front of many people. Apart from that, students also become more diligent and disciplined, able to complete their assignments well on time.

The class teacher stated that there was a positive change or impact with the Leadership Soul for Kids program. Students have the confidence to express opinions and dare to appear in class or at school events. Students have sensitivity, are quick, and responsive to the surrounding situation. Students want to help others and be responsible. The results of interviews with students also stated that they were happy with the Leadership Soul for Kids activities. They are enthusiastic about coming early and carrying out their duties.

Students feel more independent and diligent after participating in this activity. Students learn to divide roles and tasks in a group and carry them out responsibly. Students also learn to communicate in this division of roles.

The first value is visionary and idealism, which includes indicators such as having noble aspirations, adhering to noble values, and being confident in the direction of the struggle. Students have noble aspirations in carrying out this program to play a role in the school, teachers, fellow students, and the environment. Students adhere to noble values, are religious, and want to help others. Religious manifested by the Dhuha prayer in congregation, the Dhuhur prayer in congregation followed by cult, and regular infaq activities. Morning assembly contains motivation for students – introduction to biographies and personal stories of great and noble leaders. Students perform the task of filling the cult and as master of ceremony at the mosque. Students become neater and calmer when praying together.

The second value is sensitivity to reading situations and potential. This value has indicators, including being sensitive to the atmosphere and circumstances, sensitive to seeing opportunities and the potential of team members and institutions and being responsive and ready to anticipate. Students are sensitive to the atmosphere and circumstances; for example, when observing the class and classroom environment, what is not right is then observed, noted, and explained. Identify the good qualities and strengths of friends. School picketing, for example, involves checking the lights; if some are still on, turn them off; if there are shoes or footwear that are not neat, tidy them up and put them on the shoe rack. Students are responsive and ready to help while being picked up by parents or guardians; students can be responsive and alert in breaking up friends if there is a fight. Students are sensitive to seeing the potential of team members, including by deliberation to determine the chairman and distribution of tasks to the members at the start of carrying out leadership duties in school pickets.

The third value is maturity and responsibility. This value has indicators, among others, showing exemplary attitudes and a spirit of leading to standing out, appearing to take responsibility, being trustworthy and self-confident. In line with the results of previous data, by carrying out leadership activities, students have responsibilities that must be carried out and completed. For example, they lead a task force and have a small committee in school activities. Mature in carrying out tasks to completion. Leading checks and evaluations on daily tasks during school picket. Demonstrate an exemplary attitude and guiding spirit for other members and appear confident.

The fourth value is organizing, which includes being careful in making plans, skilled at dividing tasks, placing team members appropriately, working systematically, and being oriented towards completeness. It can be seen from school pickets, for example, the division of group leaders, where each member is divided to carry out their duties entirely and then report or fill in the activity checklist that has been provided.

The fifth value is mobilizing through effective communication. This value has indicators, including being able to manage forums, mastering public speaking, and being able to use spoken or written language effectively. Students who are used to mastering forums and can use spoken or written language well can represent the school in certain activities. The scope of the class is, for example, being a rotating class leader. Simple division of tasks and, job descriptions, and action plans. For example, in school activities as a small committee and competitions at higher levels, whether at sub-district or even district level. Students also practice socializing and communicating with friends across classes because they meet friends from different classes and grade levels on school picket.

The sixth value is commitment, fighting power, and militancy. Indicators of this value include being firm in your stance, strong self-discipline, enthusiasm, toughness, tenacity, persistence, and focus on finding solutions and breakthroughs to achieve goals, consistent, loyal to institutions, values, and goals of struggle. Students are enthusiastic about taking part in the leadership program. There are outing events, for example, outbound, nature exploring, camping, and training student's fighting skills. In school picket leadership activities, this can be seen from students who admit they cannot wait for their turn as school leadership picket officers. Students are committed to working seriously, have strong self-discipline, leave early, and carry out their duties on time. Strict and tireless in carrying out duties properly and correctly.

## Discussion

Planning can be defined as the systematic arrangement of human and material resources to coordinate the program's activities (Nizkodubov & Evseeva, 2015). Planning indicators include decision-making from various alternative activities (Shi, 2017) that will be implemented to prepare for the effective implementation

of the Leadership Soul for Kids program. Good planning has been linked to success in all program design and implementation (Mahmud & Saad, 2022). The strategy for realizing the program is by preparing technical instructions for the activities to be carried out, conducting trials with students, and then holding outreach to student guardians and students. An educational component is also prepared to implement an effective and efficient Leadership Soul for Kids-based character education program by placing teaching staff according to their competencies. In connection with the soul leadership program for kids, an activity guide and student activity checklist have also been prepared.

According to Akpan (2011), planning is looking ahead and devising or mapping out a plan of action to achieve specific goals and objectives. Program planning activities are carried out during one academic year and are held during work meetings before starting the new academic year or first semester. The optimization of program planning is necessary to develop programs at the school level (Ismail et al., 2021). School components, including principals, teachers, and employees, will attend the work meeting. Internal coordination for educators is carried out regularly every Friday, and program evaluation meetings are held every month. This evaluation meeting is held to identify developments and problems encountered in the field so that they can be identified immediately, and if there are problems, a solution can be found. Internal coordination shows the fulfillment of all indicators created by researchers, namely coordination carried out regularly, structured work plans, clear definition of roles and responsibilities, and use of technology and information systems.

Research has found that education organizing has increased equity, improved teachers' working conditions, and improved achievement (Oakes & Rogers, 2006). Organizing has several indicators: detailing all activities, workload distribution, procurement, and developing a mechanism for coordinating work. Salsabila Primary School Klaseman Sleman, Indonesia, can meet all these indicators. Detailing all activities with modules or technical instructions for the soul leadership program for kids, then a morning assembly at the start of the new school year to determine what activities will be carried out. For officers who are new to leadership duties, a briefing is also held by the accompanying teacher regarding the steps and tasks that must be carried out. It was dividing the workload with a team of coordinators for the Leadership Soul for Kids program so that it ran smoothly. During evaluation and teacher coordination meetings, a mechanism is also provided and developed to coordinate work.

Implementation indicators consist of carrying out planned activities, providing strong motivation to mobilize people, and holding meetings that can stimulate work. An organizational culture can make individuals better and support the development of human resources in the school environment (Herayati, 2023). Researchers can find the implementation of planned activities when observing activities at school. The coordinating team carries out activities following the modules or technical instructions that have been prepared. These activities are passed on to students. All officers carry out according to the teacher's briefing and also the checklist that has been provided. The principal provides strong motivation to mobilize teachers and students. Likewise, the accompanying teachers also provide strong motivation to motivate students. The school also holds meetings that can be a stimulus for doing work, namely by holding coordination meetings every Friday, activity evaluation meetings every month, and school work meetings at the start of every new school year.

Controlling is an essential aspect of management because it allows one to determine whether or not a program is running smoothly. Supervision involves doing everything possible to ensure the planned programs run smoothly and efficiently (Wiliyanto, 2022). Supervision has indicators which include knowing whether the work process is going or not going according to plan, knowing the use of the budget that has been determined, knowing that the implementation of the work is by the plan that has been determined, knowing the results of the work that have been achieved with the planned target results, providing advice or input for follow-up work. These indicators have been fulfilled at Salsabila Primary School Klaseman Sleman, Indonesia.

The impact or change in students' character according to leadership values in the Leadership Soul for Kids program at Salsabila Primary School Klaseman Sleman, Indonesia, can be seen from the activities carried out and their benefits. It is not based on the teacher's perception but on the student's experiences. Salsabila Primary School Klaseman Sleman, Indonesia, created six leadership characteristics: vision and idealism; sensitivity to reading situations and potential; maturity and responsibility; organizing; ability to mobilize with effective communication; and commitment, fighting power and militancy. Character education should be developed through all integrated subjects, self-development, and school culture (Safi'i, 2023). Teachers, parents, and the community need cooperation to implement character education in elementary schools

(Tichnor-Wagner, 2022). Teachers have a significant role in designing, implementing, and evaluating character-based learning. Teachers can integrate character values in curriculum, methods, media, and learning evaluation. Teachers can also provide examples, guidance, and positive reinforcement to students in various activities in and outside of class. Parents are important in supporting and supervising student's character development at home. Parents can provide examples, love and discipline to student and communicate and coordinate with teachers and schools. The community has a strategic role in creating a conducive environment and supporting character education.

## Final considerations

Salsabila Primary School Klaseman Sleman, Indonesia, has implemented four management functions, namely planning, organizing, implementing, and supervising very well in the Leadership Soul for Kids program. Internal coordination in the Leadership Soul for Kids program at Salsabila Primary School Klaseman Sleman, Indonesia, is going well. This is demonstrated by coordination being carried out regularly, clear roles and responsibilities, structured work plans, and the use of technology and information systems. Internal coordination is carried out regularly: coordination meetings every Friday, evaluation meetings every month, and work meetings at the start of the new school year.

The supporting factors for character education management based on Leadership Soul for Kids are school principals, teachers, and students with strong enthusiasm and determination to work together and synergize to carry out the leadership program well. Facilities, infrastructure, and funds used in school activities are also very important for supporting the implementation of a school program. There is support from the foundation, which also provides inspiration and initiates the implementation of the leadership program at Salsabila Primary School Klaseman Sleman, Indonesia. Meanwhile, external supporting factors include good support and cooperation with parents. A school program will not run smoothly and successfully without support from parents.

The impact or change in character based on leadership values that have been prepared by the school, which students and teachers can feel, makes them even more enthusiastic in implementing this school's superior program. Teachers see good changes in leadership, independence, responsibility, and high commitment to tasks. Student are seen as having the fighting power to complete tasks well.

Suggestions for school principals: it is hoped that improving the management of character education will become one of the priorities of every school because character is significant for personal identity and plays a role in social life. As the main role holders in implementing Leadership Soul for Kids-based character education, teachers and employees must always seek cooperation in implementing and coordinating the school's internal scope.

## References

- Abdullah, I., Hudayana, B., Setiadi, Kutaneegara, P. M., & Indiyanto, A. (2019). Beyond school reach: character education in three schools in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 9(3), 145-159. <https://doi.org/10.2478/jesr-2019-0032>
- Aini, M., & Fitria, R. (2021). Character education management in improving education quality in state senior high school. *Journal of Islamic Education Students (JIES)*, 1(2), 66. <https://doi.org/10.31958/jies.v1i2.2972>
- Akpan, C. P. (2011). *Fundamentals of school business management*. Hill Irwin.
- Amalia, N. F., & Zuhro, D. H. (2022). Analisis manajemen pendidikan karakter madrasah ibtidaiyah dalam mewujudkan generasi berakhlakul karimah. *Jurnal Basicedu*, 6(2), 2370-2379. <https://doi.org/10.31004/basicedu.v6i2.2450>
- Aningsih, Zulela, M. S., Neolaka, A., Iasha, V., & Setiawan, B. (2022). How is the education character implemented? the case study in Indonesian Elementary School. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 12(1), 371-380. <https://doi.org/10.36941/jesr-2022-0029>
- Anwar, C. (2016). Character education insightful nationality: a multi cultural approach. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 7(2 S1), 182-187. <https://doi.org/10.5901/mjss.2016.v7n2s1p182>
- Arifin, B. S., & Rusdiana, H. A. (2019). *Manajemen pendidikan karakter*. Pustaka Setia.
- Budimansyah, D. (2011). *Pendidikan karakter: nilai inti bagi upaya pembinaan kepribadian bangsa*. Widaya Aksara Press.

- Deng, W., Li, X., Wu, H., & Xu, G. (2020). Student leadership and academic performance. *China Economic Review*, 60(C). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chieco.2019.101389>
- Ernawati, T., Siswoyo, R. E., Hardyanto, W., & Raharjo, T. J. (2018). Local-wisdom-based character education management in early childhood education. *The Journal of Educational Development JED*, 6(3), 348-355. <https://doi.org/10.15294/JED.V6I3.25078>
- Heikka, J., & Waniganayake, M. (2011). Pedagogical leadership from a distributed perspective within the context of early childhood education. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 14(4), 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603124.2011.577909>
- Herayati, H. (2023). The influence of organizational culture on the quality of education. *Cendikia: Media Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan*, 13(3), 515-520. <https://doi.org/10.35335/cendikia.v13i3.3337>
- Ismail, F., Pawero, A. M. D., & Umar, M. (2021). Education planning and its implications for education policy during the Covid-19 pandemic. *International Journal for Educational and Vocational Studies*, 3(2), 110-115. <https://doi.org/10.29103/ijevs.v3i2.4441>
- Kim, J., & Holyoke, L. (2022). The contribution of collegiate activity experiences on student leadership development. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Leadership Studies*, 3(4), 66-81. <https://doi.org/10.52547/johepal.3.4.66>
- Mahmud, A., & Saad, K. M. (2022). Planning implementation and evaluation of adult and non-formal education programme in Nigeria. *International Journal of Social Science and Human Research*, 5(8). <https://doi.org/10.47191/ijsshr/v5-i8-26>
- Marsakha, A. T., Hariri, H., & Sowiyah, S. (2021). Management of character education in school: a literature review. *Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan*, 8(2), 185-194. <https://ejournal.uksw.edu/kelola/article/view/5185>
- Moelong, L. J. (2018). *Metode penelitian kualitatif*. Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Moreno, C. R. (2023). *Finding your leadership soul: what our students can teach us about love, care, and vulnerability*. ASCD.
- Mulyasa, H. E. (2018). *Manajemen pendidikan karakter*. Bumi Aksara.
- Nizkodubov, G. A., & Evseeva, A. M. (2015). Planning and implementation of the process aimed at teaching english to adult learners. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Science*, 6(2). <https://doi.org/10.5901/mjss.2015.v6n2p643>
- Oakes, J., & Rogers, J. (2006). *Learning power: organizing for education and justice*. Teachers College Press.
- Palaiologou, I., & Male, T. (2018). Leadership in early childhood education: The case for pedagogical praxis. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, 20(1), 23-34. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1463949118819100>
- Patrick, J. (2022). Student leadership and student government. *Research in Educational Administration and Leadership*, 7(1), 1-37. <https://doi.org/10.30828/real.951165>
- Rahmalina, R., Syam, H., Iqbal, M., Yani Harahap, N. I., & Devi, I. (2023). Management of character education in schools. *GIC Proceeding*, 1, 163-169. <https://doi.org/10.30983/gic.v1i1.165>
- Robbins, S. P., & Judge, T. A. (2015). *Organizational behavior* (16th ed.). Pearson Education, Inc.
- Safi'i, A. (2023). *Saya siap memimpin, saya siap dipimpin*. Salsabila Press.
- Shi, H. (2017). Planning effective educational programs for adult learners. *World Journal of Education*, 7(3), 79-83. <https://doi.org/10.5430/wje.v7n3p79>
- Suardin, Mulianti, W. O., & Sulisworo, D. (2023). Character education management of elementary school students. *International Journal of Learning Reformation in Elementary Education*, 2(1), 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.56741/ijlree.v2i01.140>
- Sugiyono. (2020). *Metode penelitian kualitatif*. Alfabeta.
- Tichnor-Wagner, A. (2022). Accelerating character education learning through a networked approach: insights from the kern partners for character and educational leadership. *Journal of Education*, 202(2), 198-207. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/00220574211026902>
- Tussubha, N., & Hadiyanto, H. (2020). Integrated character education model in early childhood education based on Minangkabau local culture: Randai. *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research*, 449, 5-12. <http://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.200715.002>

- Wiliyanto, N. R. (2022). Manajemen pendidikan inklusi di SMAN 1 Padangan. *Mudir: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan*, 4(1), 144-152. <https://doi.org/10.55352/mudir.v4i1.130>
- Wolfinbarger, K. G. (2022). Team leadership in engineering education. *New Directions for Student Leadership*, 2022(173), 53-61. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ysd.20479>
- Yuliana, L., Sugiyono, S., & Mehta, K. (2020). Comparative study in character education management models in Indonesia and India. *Harmoni Sosial: Jurnal Pendidikan IPS*, 7(2). <https://doi.org/10.21831/hsjpi.v7i2.37143>
- Yunus, S., Masaong, A. K., Ansar, Panai, A. H., Uno, H. B., & Djafri, N. (2021). An analysis on the implementation of multiple intelligence-based character education management model in junior high schools in Gorontalo Province. *International Journal of Advanced Engineering, Management and Science*, 7(4), 23-27. <https://doi.org/10.22161/ijaems.74.4>
- Zakso, A., Agung, I., Susanto, A. B., & Capnary, M. C. (2021). The effect of strengthening character education on tolerance increasing and development of pancasila students in Border Area: case of West Kalimantan Province. *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, 10(5), 232-248. <https://doi.org/10.36941/ajis-2021-0136>

### INFORMATION ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**Rejokirono Rejokirono:** Magister and Doctoral education in educational management at Yogyakarta State University. His research interests are linked to education management of special schools or students with special needs, learning for children with mild mental retardation, integrated quality management, principal management, educational leadership. ORCID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-2918-9807>  
E-mail: [rejokirono@ustjogja.ac.id](mailto:rejokirono@ustjogja.ac.id)

**Didi Supriadi:** Magister and Doctoral education in educational management at Yogyakarta State University. His main line of research is education management, principal leadership, vocational school, school school management information system, and decision support system for principal. ORCID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-4363-2692>  
E-mail: [didi.supriadi@ustjogja.ac.id](mailto:didi.supriadi@ustjogja.ac.id)

**Maryono Maryono:** Magister and Doctoral education in educational management at Yogyakarta State University. His lines of research are linked to education management, learning based on local potential, character education, scout extracurricular, and religious education. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1866-7204>  
E-mail: [maryono@unsig.ac.id](mailto:maryono@unsig.ac.id)

**Heni Nurwindah:** Magister education in educational management at Universitas Sarjanawiyata Tamansiswa. Her research interests are linked to managemen education, school leadership, and character education. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0001-9674-0868>  
E-mail: [nurwindah@gmail.com](mailto:nurwindah@gmail.com)

### Note:

**Rejokirono Rejokirono:** Conceptualization, methodology, instrument validation, data collection, data analysis, writing original draft, reviewing, supervision, project management. **Didi Supriadi:** Conceptualization, methodology, instrument validation, data collection, data analysis, writing the original draft, reviewing, and editing. **Maryono Maryono:** Conceptualization, methodology, instrument validation, data collection, data analysis, writing the original draft, review and editing, supervision, project administration. **Heni Nurwindah:** Conceptualization, literature review, methodology, qualitiative data collection, and translate original draft.

### Associate editor responsible:

Terezinha Oliveira (UEM)  
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9841-7378>  
E-mail: [teleoliv@gmail.com](mailto:teleoliv@gmail.com)

Maria Terezinha Bellanda Galuch (UEM)  
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5154-9819>  
E-mail: [mtbgaluch@uem.br](mailto:mtbgaluch@uem.br)

Solange Franci Raimundo Yaegashi (UEM)  
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7666-7253>  
E-mail: [sfryaegashi@uem.br](mailto:sfryaegashi@uem.br)

Vania Fátima Matias De Souza (UEM)  
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4631-1245>  
E-mail: [vfmsouza@uem.br](mailto:vfmsouza@uem.br)

**Evaluation rounds:**

R1: Thirteen invitations; three opinions received

**Standardization reviewer:**

Adriana Curti Cantadori de Camargo

**Data availability:**

Not applicable!