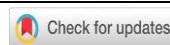


# DEVELOPING AN INTEGRATIVE LEADERSHIP CAPACITY MODEL IN EDUCATION: A SYSTEMATIC SYNTHESIS OF EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE AND STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS FOR INDONESIA

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## ABSTRAK

*Objective: This study aims to bridge this gap by systematically synthesizing empirical findings from a diverse set of studies to construct a comprehensive and integrative model for building educational leadership capacity. Methods: Employing a systematic literature synthesis approach, this research critically analyzed 10 empirical studies (3 from Indonesian national journals, 7 from international publications) using a comparative thematic analysis framework to identify core constructs, effective practices, and contextual variables. Results: The synthesis culminated in the development of an integrative model composed of four interconnected pillars: (1) Foundational Values and Ethical Character, (2) Collaborative and Relational Competencies, (3) Enabling Organizational Systems and Structures, and (4) Continuous, Job-Embedded Learning Processes. The model positions leadership as a dynamic, developmental capacity that is cultivated at the intersection of individual growth and systemic support. Implications: The proposed model provides an actionable framework for policymakers, educational leaders, and teacher training institutions in Indonesia to design targeted leadership development initiatives, revise existing policies, and foster a sustainable culture of collective leadership.*

## ABSTRAK

*Objektif: Studi ini bertujuan untuk menjembatani kesenjangan ini dengan mensintesis temuan empiris dari berbagai studi secara sistematis untuk membangun model yang komprehensif dan integratif bagi pengembangan kapasitas kepemimpinan pendidikan. Metode: Dengan menggunakan pendekatan sintesis literatur sistematis, penelitian ini menganalisis 10 studi empiris (3 dari jurnal nasional Indonesia dan 7 dari publikasi internasional) melalui kerangka analisis tematik komparatif untuk mengidentifikasi konstruk inti, praktik efektif, dan variabel kontekstual. Hasil: Sintesis ini menghasilkan sebuah model integratif yang terdiri dari empat pilar yang saling terhubung: (1) Nilai Dasar dan Karakter Etika, (2) Kompetensi Kolaboratif dan Relasional, (3) Sistem dan Struktur Organisasi yang Mendukung, serta (4) Proses Pembelajaran Berkelanjutan yang Terintegrasi dalam Pekerjaan. Model ini memposisikan kepemimpinan sebagai kapasitas dinamis dan perkembangan yang dikembangkan melalui interaksi antara pertumbuhan individu dan dukungan sistemik. Implikasi: Model yang diusulkan memberikan kerangka kerja yang dapat ditindaklanjuti bagi pembuat kebijakan, pemimpin pendidikan, dan lembaga pelatihan guru di Indonesia untuk merancang inisiatif pengembangan kepemimpinan yang terarah, merevisi kebijakan yang ada, dan memupuk budaya kepemimpinan kolektif yang berkelanjutan.*

**Keywords:** Kapasitas Kepemimpinan, Model Integratif, Sintesis Literatur, Pendidikan

## INTRODUCTION

The 21st century has ushered in an era of unprecedented change and complexity in education, characterized by technological disruption, shifting societal demands, and heightened accountability (Harris, 2020). Within this context, the concept of **educational leadership** has undergone a profound transformation. The traditional, hierarchical model of the singular, heroic leader has given way to a more distributed, collaborative understanding where **leadership capacity**—defined as the broad-based, skillful participation of stakeholders in the work of leadership—is paramount (Lambert, 2003; Spillane, 2006). This aligns with contemporary leadership frameworks that emphasize leadership as a measurable set of practices rather than merely personal traits (Kouzes & Posner, 2017), and particularly with models designed for developing leadership capacity among students and educational stakeholders (Komives et al., 2013).

The significance of robust leadership capacity is underscored by a substantial body of research linking it to improved school climate, enhanced teacher efficacy, and, ultimately, better student outcomes (Leithwood et al., 2020; Louis & Murphy, 2018). Research over the past two decades has consistently shown that quality leadership is the second most important school-level factor, after teaching, in influencing student learning outcomes (Marzano et al., 2005; Robinson et al., 2008). However, a critical challenge persists: the transferability of leadership models across diverse cultural contexts. Many leadership frameworks, predominantly developed in Western contexts, may not fully resonate with or effectively address the realities of educational systems in countries like Indonesia (Suryadi & Budiman, 2021).

Indonesia's ongoing and ambitious educational reforms, notably the *Merdeka Belajar* (Freedom of Learning) policy, place a premium on effective leadership at all levels. These reforms demand school principals and teachers who are not only managers but also instructional leaders, innovators, and capacity-builders within their communities. Yet, as Priyanto (2022) notes, efforts to develop leadership often remain fragmented, relying on imported models without sufficient adaptation to the nation's rich cultural tapestry and complex bureaucratic landscape. Despite international evidence demonstrating that leadership effectiveness is highly influenced by the local context in which it is practiced (Bush, 2018; Hallinger & Heck, 2010).

This study is driven by the need to address this contextual gap. It moves beyond a simple review of literature to actively construct a new, integrative model. Three primary questions guide our research:

1. What are the core components and effective practices of leadership capacity building identified in recent empirical studies, both within Indonesia and internationally?
2. How can these elements be synthesized into a coherent, integrative model that is both evidence-based and contextually relevant for the Indonesian education system?
3. What are the practical and strategic implications of this model for policy, practice, and future research?

## RESEARCH METHOD

To address these questions, a rigorous and transparent methodology was employed, designed to ensure both the credibility and relevance of the findings. This study adopted a **systematic literature synthesis** design. The systematic approach to literature synthesis and

analysis was informed by established qualitative research principles (Bryman, 2016). Unlike a traditional narrative review, this approach uses explicit, systematic procedures to locate, evaluate, and synthesize existing research, minimizing bias and providing a comprehensive audit trail (Jesson et al., 2011). The goal was not merely to summarize but to integrate findings to develop a new conceptual model.

A purposive sampling strategy was used to select 10 empirical studies that provided rich insights into leadership capacity across various educational levels and contexts. The selection was guided by the following criteria:

1. Publication type: Peer-reviewed empirical studies include qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-methods.
2. Publication date: 2020 to 2024, to ensure the inclusion of recent trends and practices.
3. Focus: Explicit investigation of leadership capacity development in K-12 or higher education settings.
4. Context: A mix of Indonesian national studies (3 articles from Sinta 2 and 3 indexed journals) and international studies (7 articles), with one international article focusing specifically on Indonesia.

The analysis was conducted in three sequential, yet iterative, phases: (1) Thematic Analysis: Each of the 10 studies was coded inductively to identify key themes, definitions of leadership capacity, reported outcomes, and influential factors. This involved multiple close readings and note-taking to capture the essence of each study. (2) Comparative Analysis: The identified themes were then compared across studies. This phase looked for points of convergence (where findings from different contexts aligned), divergence (where contextual differences led to varying outcomes), and complementarity (where studies addressed different but related aspects of the same construct). This cross-comparison is crucial for distinguishing universal principles from context-dependent practices. (3) Model Development: Based on the synthesized themes, a preliminary model was drafted. The components and their interrelationships were refined through an iterative process of checking back against the original studies to ensure the model was firmly grounded in the empirical evidence. This analytical approach adopts principles from contemporary educational leadership research that emphasize the importance of deeply understanding leadership practices within their specific contexts (Day et al., 2016; Harris & Jones, 2019).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### *Result*

#### Profile of Selected Studies

The synthesis of the 10 studies revealed a complex but coherent picture of the multifaceted nature of leadership capacity. The findings are presented below, culminating in the proposed integrative model. These findings reinforce previous research indicating that a 'one-size-fits-all' approach is ineffective in leadership development, and that successful strategies must be tailored to the specific characteristics of each educational context (Bush, 2018; Fullan, 2014).

**Table 1** provides a detailed overview of the 10 studies that form the evidence base for this synthesis. The table highlights the diversity of the sample, encompassing various geographical contexts (Indonesia, USA, Grenada, China, Vietnam), methodological approaches, and focal points (student, teacher, principal, and organizational leadership). These findings align with the concept of 'contextual leadership,' which emphasizes that

leadership effectiveness depends heavily on the leader's ability to understand and respond to the unique characteristics of their operating environment (Hallinger & Heck, 2010; Supriyanto & Mahfud, 2023).

**Tabel 1. Synthesis of 10 Empirical Studies on Leadership Capacity**

Authors (Year)	Context & Sample	Methodology	Key Findings	Contribution to Model
Hamidaturrohmah et al. (2024)	53 elementary students, Jepara, Indonesia	Qualitative (Case Study)	Interactive game-based learning significantly improved Leadership values (83% of students showed improvement).	Demonstrates the efficacy of experiential, engaging pedagogical methods for early leadership development.
Carswell (2021)	Teachers, Grenada	Qualitative (Best Practices Essay)	Authentic relationships, intentional mentorship, and granting autonomy are fundamental to teacher leadership growth.	Highlights the critical role of relational trust and empowerment as foundational elements.
Meyer-Looze & Vandermolen (2021)	17 School Principals, Michigan, USA	Qualitative (Case Study)	Job-embedded professional learning and personalized coaching were highly effective in building principal capacity.	Underscores the importance of contextual, ongoing support systems over one-off training.
Markova et al. (2024)	Educational Organizations	Quantitative	A structured framework for developing leadership capacity directly contributes to successful organizational outcomes.	Provides evidence for linking capacity building to tangible organizational results and offers a structural component.
Yue & Feng (2021)	104 Vocational Teachers, Yunnan, China	Quantitative (Survey)	Overall leadership capacity scores were moderate; collaborative vision-building was a particular area for improvement.	Emphasizes the need for diagnostic assessment and the challenge of fostering shared vision.
Santoso & Wijaya (2023)	Teachers, Indonesia	Mixed Methods	Collaborative, context-based approaches were most effective for teacher leadership development within the "Merdeka Belajar" curriculum.	Reinforces collaboration and contextual adaptation as key principles for the Indonesian setting.
Rahayu et al. (2022)	Principals & Teachers, Indonesia	Quantitative	Transformational leadership practices of principals significantly strengthened the collective capacity of teacher teams.	Links specific leadership behaviors (transformational) to the enhancement of collective capacity.
Fauzi & Sari (2023)	Secondary Students, Indonesia	Qualitative	Extracurricular activities served as a powerful platform for developing student leadership through experiential learning.	Validates co-curricular involvement as a vital pathway for practical leadership experience.

Isoye & Wasonga (2024)	161 High Schools, Illinois, USA	Quantitative (Survey, Regression)	While overall leadership capacity did not directly correlate with test scores, specific leadership behaviors (e.g., inquiry-based practice) were significant predictors.	Distinguishes between general capacity and specific, high-impact practices, arguing for a focused approach.
Duong (2020)	266 Faculty & Students, Vietnam	Quantitative (Survey)	Students' university experiences, particularly curricular engagement and social service, significantly impacted their leadership capacity development.	Connects formal and informal learning experiences within the institution to leadership growth.

## The Integrative Leadership Capacity Model

Drawing on the synthesized evidence, we propose an Integrative Leadership Capacity Model composed of four dynamic, interconnected components, visualized as a cycle of continuous growth. The model is depicted in Table 1 and described in detail below.

### Component 1: Foundational Values and Ethical Character

This is the moral and ethical core of the model. The studies consistently show that technical skills are insufficient without a strong foundation of character (Carswell, 2021; Hamidaturrohmah et al., 2024). This component includes:

- Integrity and Congruence: Aligning actions with stated values.
- Local Wisdom and Ethos: Integrating culturally resonant values such as *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation) and *kearifan lokal* (local wisdom) in the Indonesian context.
- Self-Awareness and Confidence: The development of high self-esteem and self-efficacy, as seen in the outcomes of the game-based learning (Art 1) and student leadership (Art 8, 10) studies.

Explanation: This component answers the question, "Who are we as leaders?" It ensures that leadership is exercised with ethical grounding and cultural sensitivity, making it authentic and sustainable.

### Component 2: Collaborative and Relational Competencies

Leadership capacity is inherently social. This component focuses on the skills necessary to work effectively with others to achieve common goals. Evidence from multiple studies (Carswell, 2021; Meyer-Looze & Vandermolen, 2021; Rahayu et al., 2022) highlights:

- Effective Communication: Dialogue, active listening, and clear articulation of ideas.
- Teamwork and Co-creation: The ability to build consensus, share responsibility and leverage diverse strengths.
- Conflict Resolution and Negotiation: Navigating disagreements constructively.

Explanation: This moves beyond the "lone hero" myth. It emphasizes that the work of leadership is done with and through others, requiring sophisticated interpersonal skills. Developing these competencies is crucial in the era of 'collaborative professionalism,' where educational quality improvement is achieved through cooperation and mutual learning among educators (Hargreaves & O'Connor, 2018). Research by Lieberman & Miller (2020) further confirms that effective teacher leadership is characterized by the ability to build productive collaborative relationships.

### **Component 3: Enabling Organizational Systems and Structures**

Individual will and skill are not enough; they must be supported by the organization. This component, strongly supported by studies on principals and organizations (Art 3, 4, 9), includes:

- a. **Supportive Policies:** Policies that explicitly encourage distributed leadership and provide time for collaboration.
- b. **Strategic Resource Allocation:** Dedicating financial and human resources to professional development and leadership initiatives.
- c. **Inclusive Structure:** Representative governance groups, professional learning communities (PLCs), and flattened hierarchies that broaden participation.

**Explanation:** This is the "architecture" that allows leadership capacity to flourish. Without supportive systems, even the most motivated individuals will face significant barriers. This component emphasizes the importance of creating 'professional capital' in educational organizations where resources, knowledge, and networks are systematically developed to support leadership growth (Fullan, 2014). Implementing effective support systems has been proven to significantly enhance schools' collective capacity (Jacobson & Bezzina, 2018).

### **Component 4: Continuous, Job-Embedded Learning Processes**

Capacity is built through practice and reflection, not just theory. This component champions ongoing, contextualized learning, as demonstrated powerfully by the studies on job-embedded learning (Art 3) and interactive methods (Art 1, 8). It involves:

- a. **Mentoring and Coaching:** Personalized guidance from experienced peers or leaders.
- b. **Action Research and Inquiry Cycles:** Using data and reflection to solve real-world problems of practice.
- c. **Collaborative Reflection:** Structured opportunities for teams to debrief, analyze, and learn from both successes and failures.

**Explanation:** This component ensures that leadership development is not a static event but a dynamic process of continuous improvement, firmly rooted in the daily realities of educational practice.

## **Discussion**

The power of the model lies in the synergistic interaction of its four components. For example, a teacher's collaborative competencies (Component 2) are amplified by a school structure that provides time for team planning (Component 3) and a learning process that includes peer coaching (Component 4), all grounded in a shared value of student success (Component 1).

The model is deliberately presented within the outer ring of "Indonesian Cultural and Policy Context." This signifies that the implementation of the model is not a one-size-fits-all prescription. The findings from the Indonesian studies (Art 1, 6, 7, 8) strongly suggest that successful implementation requires weaving Indonesian cultural principles like *kebersamaan* (togetherness) and *musyawarah* (deliberation) into the fabric of each component. Furthermore, national policies such as Merdeka Belajar can serve as powerful levers to create the enabling systems (Component 3) needed to sustain this work.

This model addresses the critique of imported frameworks by being both **evidence-based** (drawing on global research) and **culturally responsive** (adapting to the local context). It provides a coherent framework for aligning various leadership development initiatives in Indonesia, from ministry-level programs to school-based projects. The emerging patterns show that although there are universal principles in leadership, their implementation

requires adaptation to local values and the Indonesian education system, as emphasized in transformational leadership frameworks (Sergiovanni, 2009) and recent research findings on Indonesian educational leadership (Wiyono & Sudjimat, 2022).

### ***Implications and Strategic Recommendations***

The proposed model offers concrete guidance for a range of stakeholders in Indonesian education.

#### **Implications for Policy**

**Ministry of Education and Culture:** The model can inform the design of national leadership standards and funding streams, shifting focus from one-off training to sustained, system-wide capacity building. Policies should incentivize schools to develop their own leadership growth plans aligned with the four components. In addition,

**Local Governments (PEMDA):** Can use the model to guide the supervision and support provided to schools, moving beyond compliance checks to fostering enabling conditions for leadership. In addition, PEMDA can build a national mentoring system inspired by international best practices (Muijs & Harris, 2007) and adapted to the context of Indonesian education policy (Kemendikbud, 2020).

#### **Implications for Practice**

**School Principals and University Rectors:** Can conduct a gap analysis using the four components to assess their institution's leadership capacity and design targeted interventions (e.g., establishing mentoring programs, restructuring meeting times for collaboration).

**Teacher Educators and Professional Development Providers:** Should redesign curriculum and training modules to balance technical skills (Component 2) with character development (Component 1) and to utilize job-embedded learning strategies (Component 4).

#### **Recommendation for Future Research**

**Empirical Validation:** The proposed model requires rigorous testing through longitudinal and action research studies in diverse Indonesian educational settings.

**Instrument Development:** There is a need to develop and validate a robust instrument to assess leadership capacity based on this four-component model.

**Cross-Cultural Studies:** Comparative studies could explore how the model's components are weighted or manifested in different cultural contexts within and beyond Indonesia.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study has responded to the critical need for a contextualized, evidence-based model for building educational leadership capacity in Indonesia. By systematically synthesizing findings from 10 empirical studies, we have developed an Integrative Leadership Capacity Model that positions leadership as a dynamic interplay of Values, Competencies, Systems, and Learning Processes.

The model's primary contribution is its holistic and synergistic nature, acknowledging that sustainable leadership capacity cannot be built by focusing on a single element in isolation. It is the interconnection of ethical character, collaborative skill, supportive structures, and continuous learning that creates a powerful engine for improvement.

While this model is grounded in empirical evidence, its ultimate test will be in its

application. We call upon researchers, policymakers, and practitioners to engage with this framework, to refine it through practice, and to contribute to the vital work of cultivating the leadership capacity necessary to navigate the complexities of 21st-century education in Indonesia and beyond.

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