

## Pela-Based Principal Leadership in Building a Peaceful School Culture: Evidence from Ambon City

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### Abstract

Education in multicultural and post-conflict regions such as Maluku faces persistent challenges in fostering sustainable peace within school environments. Despite efforts to promote tolerance, the institutionalization of peaceful school culture remains weak, often relying on formal regulations rather than relational and cultural approaches. Although Pela, a local wisdom emphasizing brotherhood, solidarity, and restorative reconciliation, has been widely recognized in social life, it has not been systematically operationalized as a framework for school leadership. This study aims to analyze how Pela values shape principal leadership and contribute to the development of a peaceful school culture. Employing an interpretive qualitative approach with a multi-site design, the research was conducted in two public secondary schools in Ambon City. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis, and analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings reveal that Pela-based leadership is manifested through humanistic orientation, participatory decision-making, and relational governance. Its implementation is reflected in curriculum integration, communal activities, and restorative conflict resolution practices involving school and community actors. These practices contribute to improved student behavior, strengthened social relationships, and the creation of an inclusive and harmonious school climate. This study demonstrates that Pela functions not only as cultural identity but as an operational leadership model for building sustainable peaceful school culture.

**Keywords:** Pela-based leadership; school leadership; school culture; local wisdom; peace education; conflict management; Ambon

### 1. Introduction

Education in multicultural and post-conflict regions such as Maluku carries a strategic responsibility not only for academic development but also for rebuilding social cohesion and sustaining peace (Afdhal, 2024; Sumardi, 2020). Following the communal conflicts that affected Ambon and surrounding areas, schools have increasingly been positioned as critical sites for reconciliation, where values of tolerance, mutual respect, and coexistence can be cultivated among younger generations (Hasudungan, 2020; Hasudungan, 2022). However, the persistence of social fragmentation and the potential for student conflict indicate that the development of a peaceful school culture remains an ongoing challenge. While various initiatives have promoted interfaith interaction and cultural understanding, these efforts are often episodic and have not consistently translated into deeply institutionalized school practices. Within this context, leadership emerges as a central variable in shaping school culture. School principals play a decisive role in translating values into organizational norms, behavioral expectations, and conflict management practices. Unlike curriculum-based interventions, which may remain confined to classroom activities, leadership influences the broader social environment of the school through decision-making, policy formation, and daily interactions (Somech & Ohayon, 2019). A critical gap exists between formal disciplinary approaches, which tend to be procedural and punitive, and relational approaches that emphasize dialogue, empathy, and social restoration. This gap highlights the need for leadership models that are capable of embedding peace-oriented values into the lived experiences of school communities. Local wisdom offers a potentially powerful yet underutilized resource in addressing this challenge (Ibo, 2023). In Maluku, Pela represents a long-standing socio-cultural system that binds communities through principles of brotherhood, solidarity, mutual responsibility, and conflict reconciliation. As a living social institution, Pela has historically functioned as a mechanism for maintaining harmony across religious and ethnic boundaries. Despite its relevance, the application of Pela within educational settings has largely remained symbolic or limited to ceremonial and activity-based practices, such as cultural events or interfaith gatherings. Its potential as a structural and operational framework for school leadership has not been systematically explored. Previous studies have demonstrated the role of Pela in fostering social cohesion, supporting peace education, and strengthening multicultural awareness in schools. Research has also shown that local wisdom can enhance tolerance and reduce social tension when integrated into learning processes (Supriyanto & Amrin, 2022). However, these studies predominantly position Pela as content within curriculum or as a tool for student character formation. The critical linkage between Pela values, leadership practices, and the formation of school culture remains insufficiently examined. In particular, there is a lack of empirical research that conceptualizes and analyzes Pela as a leadership framework guiding principal actions, decision-making processes, and conflict management strategies within school organizations in Ambon (Annet, 2025). In response to this gap, this study aims to analyze how Pela-based values shape principal leadership orientation, influence leadership practices, guide conflict management mechanisms, and contribute to the development of a peaceful school culture. The study focuses on two public secondary schools in Ambon City, providing an in-depth examination of leadership practices within a post-conflict multicultural educational context. This research contributes to the literature in three significant ways. Theoretically, it extends the understanding of educational leadership by positioning local wisdom as an operational framework rather than merely a cultural backdrop (Gde & Metera, 2025). Empirically, it provides context-specific evidence from post-conflict schools in Maluku, an area that remains underrepresented in leadership studies. Practically, it offers a model of peace-oriented school management that integrates cultural values into leadership processes, thereby supporting the development of sustainable and inclusive school environments. These contributions provide a foundation for further conceptual and empirical exploration of culturally embedded leadership in education (Sugiarti et al., 2024).

### 2. Literature Review and Conceptual Framing

Educational leadership research consistently emphasizes that school culture is not an autonomous construct but is actively shaped through leadership practices, institutional norms, and social interactions. School culture refers to shared values, beliefs, and behavioral expectations that guide how members of a school community interact and respond to challenges (Brooks & Brooks, 2024). Within this perspective, leadership functions as a central mechanism through which these values are interpreted, reinforced, and institutionalized. Empirical studies show that principals influence school climate not only through formal policies but also through relational practices, communication patterns, and conflict management approaches (Burhan et al., 2018; Suryaman & Suharyanto, 2020). This suggests that the development of a peaceful school culture is contingent upon leadership that can translate normative values into everyday organizational practices.

Building on this understanding, recent scholarship has increasingly recognized the importance of culturally embedded leadership, particularly in multicultural and post-conflict contexts (Fathurrozi, 2023). Culturally embedded leadership refers to leadership practices that are grounded in local values, traditions, and social norms, enabling leaders to align organizational processes with the cultural realities of their communities. Studies in Indonesia demonstrate that leadership models rooted in local wisdom—such as *sippakatau*, *sippakalebbi*, and *sippakainga*—enhance participation, strengthen social cohesion, and improve institutional performance through humanistic and dialogical approaches (Burhan et al., 2018). Similar findings across the Global South indicate that leadership grounded in indigenous values fosters trust, legitimacy, and social integration, particularly in settings characterized by diversity and historical conflict (Sumarni, 2018; Mu'ti & Amirrachman, 2021). These insights highlight that leadership effectiveness is closely tied to its cultural resonance and its capacity to mobilize shared values. In the context of Maluku, Pela represents a deeply rooted normative system that governs social relations across communities. Pela embodies principles of brotherhood, solidarity, mutual responsibility, and collective commitment, functioning historically as a mechanism for maintaining harmony and resolving conflicts. Its normative strength lies in its moral legitimacy, as it is widely recognized and internalized by community members as a binding social contract. Research has shown that Pela plays a significant role in post-conflict reconciliation by fostering interfaith cooperation and rebuilding trust between communities (Hartimah et al., 2021; Hasan & Sulasman, 2022). Furthermore,

Pela-based practices emphasize restorative approaches to conflict resolution, prioritizing dialogue, mutual understanding, and the restoration of social relationships over punitive measures (Garing et al., 2023). These characteristics position Pela as a potential ethical foundation for leadership practices within educational institutions. The concept of a peaceful school culture further reinforces the importance of relational and value-based leadership. A peaceful school culture is characterized by inclusivity, tolerance, mutual respect, and the absence of violence, where differences are managed constructively rather than suppressed (Alzouebi et al., 2025). Studies on peace education indicate that such a culture cannot be sustained solely through formal rules or disciplinary systems but requires the internalization of shared values and the development of social-emotional competencies (Mu'ti & Amirachman, 2021; Mariyono et al., 2023). In multicultural settings, this necessitates leadership approaches that prioritize empathy, dialogue, and participatory decision-making (Tarman, 2022). Punitive or rule-based management alone often fails to address the underlying causes of conflict and may even reinforce social divisions. In contrast, relational leadership approaches grounded in cultural values are more effective in fostering long-term harmony and social cohesion. Despite the growing recognition of local wisdom in education, existing literature largely treats cultural values as supplementary elements within curriculum or character education programs (Listiwati, 2021). The role of local wisdom as a structural and operational framework for leadership remains underexplored. This gap is particularly evident in studies of Pela, where its application has been predominantly limited to learning activities, interfaith programs, and symbolic cultural practices (Özkul, 2026). There is limited empirical evidence examining how Pela values shape leadership orientation, guide decision-making processes, and influence institutional practices within schools. To address this gap, this study adopts a conceptual framework that positions Pela as the foundational value system influencing leadership and organizational outcomes. Specifically, Pela values inform leadership orientation by shaping principals' ethical perspectives and relational approaches (Sudrajat et al., 2018). This orientation is translated into leadership practices, including decision-making, communication, and the organization of school activities. These practices, in turn, guide conflict management mechanisms, particularly through restorative and participatory approaches. Ultimately, these interconnected processes contribute to the formation of a peaceful school culture characterized by inclusivity, harmony, and social cohesion. The framework can be summarized as follows:

**Pela values → Leadership orientation → Leadership practices → Conflict management → School culture**

This framework ensures that all constructs examined in this study are conceptually aligned and empirically traceable, providing a coherent basis for analyzing the role of Pela-based principal leadership in building a peaceful school culture.

### 3. Methodology

**3.1 Research Design.** This study employed an interpretive qualitative approach to explore how Pela-based values shape principal leadership and contribute to the development of a peaceful school culture. An interpretive design was considered appropriate because the research seeks to understand meanings, values, and social practices embedded in leadership behavior within a specific cultural context. The study adopted a multi-site case study design involving two schools in Ambon City (Fitriani et al., 2023). This design enabled comparative analysis across different institutional settings while maintaining sensitivity to contextual variation. By examining similarities and differences in leadership practices between sites, the study provides a more nuanced understanding of how Pela values are interpreted and operationalized in diverse school environments.

**3.2 Research Sites.** The research was conducted in two public secondary schools in Ambon City, Maluku Province. These schools were purposively selected based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives. First, both schools operate within a multicultural student population characterized by religious and social diversity, reflecting the broader post-conflict context of Ambon. Second, the schools have demonstrated prior engagement with local wisdom practices, particularly through activities or programs related to Pela or inter-community relations. Third, both institutions have experienced or managed student interactions that required conflict prevention or resolution mechanisms, making them suitable contexts for examining leadership practices related to peacebuilding. The selection of these sites ensured that the study captured leadership dynamics in environments where the integration of cultural values is both relevant and necessary.

**3.3 Participants.** Participants in this study were selected using purposive sampling to ensure that they possessed direct knowledge and experience relevant to the research focus (Rasmitadila et al., 2022). The primary participants were the school principals, as they serve as the central actors in leadership decision-making and organizational management. To complement and triangulate the perspectives of principals, additional participants included teachers, guidance and counseling staff, and other school actors involved in student management and school activities. These participants were chosen because of their active roles in implementing leadership directives, managing classroom and social interactions, and supporting conflict resolution processes. This combination of participants allowed for a comprehensive understanding of how Pela-based leadership is enacted and experienced within the school environment.

**3.4 Data Collection.** Data were collected through multiple qualitative methods to capture the complexity of leadership practices and ensure the credibility of findings. In-depth interviews were conducted with principals and selected participants to explore their understanding of Pela values, leadership orientations, and experiences in managing school culture and conflict. Participant observation was carried out to document everyday interactions, leadership practices, and school activities that reflect the internalization of Pela values. In addition, document analysis was undertaken to examine school policies, regulations, program descriptions, and other institutional records that provide evidence of value integration (Hindaryatiningsih et al., 2025). The use of multiple data sources enabled triangulation, allowing the researcher to cross-validate findings and reduce the risk of bias by comparing information obtained from different methods and participants.

**3.5 Data Analysis.** The data were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify patterns and meanings related to Pela-based leadership and school culture. The analysis process was conducted iteratively and systematically. First, all interview transcripts, observation notes, and documents were read repeatedly to achieve familiarity with the data. Second, initial coding was performed by assigning labels to segments of data that were relevant to the research focus, particularly those related to leadership orientation, leadership practices, conflict management, and school culture. Third, the codes were grouped into broader categories based on conceptual similarity, allowing the identification of recurring patterns across the data. Finally, these categories were developed into overarching themes that correspond directly to the analytical structure of the study, including principals' understanding of Pela values, leadership orientation, implementation practices, conflict management mechanisms, and their impact on school culture. This alignment ensured that the analytical process remained consistent with the conceptual framework and facilitated a coherent presentation of findings.

**3.6 Trustworthiness.** To ensure the trustworthiness of the study, several strategies were employed addressing credibility, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility was enhanced through data triangulation across interviews, observations, and documents, as well as through prolonged engagement in the research sites to gain a deeper understanding of the context and practices being studied. Dependability was supported by maintaining a clear audit trail documenting the research process, including data collection procedures, coding decisions, and theme development. Confirmability was ensured by systematically linking interpretations to empirical data, thereby minimizing researcher bias and maintaining transparency in the analytical process. These measures collectively strengthen the validity and reliability of the study's findings and support their relevance for understanding Pela-based leadership in multicultural school settings.

### 4. Results

**4.1 Understanding of Pela in Leadership Context.** The findings indicate that both principals possess a deep and contextualized understanding of Pela as a guiding value system in leadership. Pela is interpreted not merely as cultural knowledge but as a moral commitment that governs interpersonal relations and decision-making within the school. One principal emphasized that *"Pela is not just tradition; it is a binding commitment that teaches us to treat others as family and avoid conflict"* (Principal A). Similarly, another principal stated that *"we are obligated to respect and care for each other because Pela connects us beyond differences"* (Principal B).

These statements reflect that Pela is internalized as a cultural obligation that shapes ethical awareness and leadership sensitivity. Observational data further show that principals consistently refer to values of brotherhood and solidarity when addressing student behavior and social interactions. This understanding establishes the foundation for leadership orientation and practices observed in both schools.

**4.2 Leadership Orientation.** The principals' understanding of Pela translates into a leadership orientation characterized by humanistic, participatory, and relational approaches. Leadership is enacted through empathy, dialogue, and mutual respect rather than hierarchical authority. One principal explained, "we prioritize the human side; leadership must make people feel valued and heard" (Principal A).

Decision-making processes in both schools involve consultation and deliberation with teachers and staff. A teacher noted that "the principal always invites discussion before making decisions, especially when it concerns students" (Teacher 1). This reflects a participatory leadership style rooted in collective agreement. In addition, relational governance is evident in daily interactions, where principals position themselves as facilitators rather than controllers. Observations reveal that principals engage informally with students and teachers, fostering open communication and trust within the school environment.

**4.3 Leadership Practices.** The leadership orientation is operationalized through specific practices embedded in school activities and policies. First, Pela values are integrated into curriculum-related activities, particularly through assignments requiring students to explore local cultural relationships and present their findings (Sakti et al., 2024). For instance, a teacher explained that "students are asked to interview community elders about Pela relationships and present them in class" (Teacher 2).

Second, communal and interfaith activities serve as key platforms for value internalization. Both schools organize joint religious celebrations, communal prayers, and social gatherings such as shared meals and cultural events. Observations indicate that these activities encourage interaction across religious and social groups, reinforcing values of tolerance and solidarity.

Third, discipline is implemented through a value-based approach. Instead of relying solely on formal sanctions, principals emphasize moral reflection and dialogue. A student reported that "when there is a problem, we are asked to talk and understand each other, not just punished" (Student 1). These practices demonstrate how Pela values are embedded in everyday school management.

**Table 1. Implementation of Pela-Based Leadership Practices**

Domain	Observed Practices	Supporting Evidence (Examples)
Curriculum Integration	Cultural assignments, interviews with elders	Student presentations on Pela relationships
Communal Activities	Joint prayers, interfaith events, cultural programs	Observed participation across groups
School Discipline	Dialogue-based resolution, moral reflection	Reduced reliance on punitive sanctions

**4.4 Conflict Management Mechanisms.** Conflict management in both schools reflects a combination of preventive and restorative approaches grounded in Pela values. Preventive mechanisms focus on the internalization of values through continuous reminders, socialization activities, and daily interactions. A principal noted that "we constantly remind students to live peacefully because they are connected through Pela" (Principal B). When conflicts occur, restorative practices are prioritized. These include dialogue, mediation, and the involvement of relevant stakeholders. One case observation showed that a student conflict was resolved through a mediated discussion involving teachers and parents, leading to mutual agreement and reconciliation. Stakeholder involvement is a distinctive feature of conflict management. Principals involve parents, community leaders, and, in some cases, traditional figures to ensure broader social resolution. This multi-level approach strengthens the legitimacy and effectiveness of conflict resolution processes.

**Table 2. Pela-Based Conflict Management Mechanisms**

Stage	Approach	Key Actors Involved	Outcome
Prevention	Value internalization	Principals, teachers	Reduced conflict potential
Resolution	Dialogue and mediation	Teachers, parents, principals	Restored relationships
Reinforcement	Community involvement	Traditional leaders, community	Sustained harmony

**4.5 Impact on School Culture.** The integration of Pela values through leadership practices has a visible impact on school culture. First, changes in student behavior are observed, particularly in increased respect, tolerance, and self-regulation. Teachers reported that "students are more aware of maintaining harmony and avoiding conflict" (Teacher 3). Second, teacher-student relationships become more supportive and familial. Observations show that teachers interact with students in a manner resembling parental guidance, emphasizing care and protection. A student stated that "teachers treat us like their own children, not just as students" (Student 2). Third, the overall institutional climate reflects inclusivity and harmony. Routine activities, shared experiences, and open communication contribute to a positive school environment where diversity is accepted and managed constructively. These findings indicate that Pela-based leadership plays a significant role in shaping a peaceful and cohesive school culture.



**Figure 1. Process of Pela-Based Leadership in Building School Culture**

## 5. Discussion

**5.1 Pela-Based Leadership as a Cultural Leadership Model.** The findings of this study demonstrate that Pela-based principal leadership constitutes a form of culturally embedded leadership that extends beyond conventional leadership models (Effendi et al., 2020). Unlike generic leadership frameworks that emphasize formal authority or organizational efficiency, Pela-based leadership is grounded in socially legitimized values that shape both leadership orientation and practice. The results show that principals internalize Pela as a moral commitment and translate

it into humanistic, participatory, and relational leadership behaviors. This extends existing leadership theory by illustrating that cultural values do not merely contextualize leadership but actively structure leadership logic, decision-making processes, and interpersonal dynamics.

While previous studies have acknowledged the role of local wisdom in education, they have largely positioned cultural values as supplementary elements within curriculum or character education (Litaay & Manuputty, 2025; Mu'ti & Amirachman, 2021). In contrast, this study provides empirical evidence that *Pela* operates as an organizing principle of leadership itself. This distinction is critical, as it shifts the analytical focus from culture as content to culture as governance. By demonstrating how *Pela* values guide leadership orientation, shape institutional practices, and influence school culture, this study contributes to the refinement of culturally embedded leadership theory, particularly in post-conflict and multicultural contexts.

**5.2 Restorative Leadership in School Management.** The study further reveals that *Pela*-based leadership aligns closely with restorative approaches to conflict management, offering an alternative to conventional punitive systems in school governance. The findings show that principals prioritize dialogue, mediation, and the restoration of social relationships when addressing student conflict. This approach reflects the core principles of restorative justice, which emphasize accountability, reconciliation, and the repair of social harm rather than punishment (Darwis, 2018; Mulyadi & Chan, 2024).

The effectiveness of this approach lies in its cultural legitimacy and relational orientation. Unlike formal disciplinary measures, which often address symptoms rather than underlying causes, restorative practices grounded in *Pela* values engage students in reflective processes that promote empathy and mutual understanding. The involvement of parents, teachers, and community actors further strengthens the social dimension of conflict resolution, ensuring that outcomes are collectively recognized and sustained. These findings suggest that restorative leadership is not only normatively desirable but also practically effective in multicultural school settings where social cohesion is a central concern.

### **5.3 Leadership as Mediator of Cultural Values**

A key insight from this study is that leadership functions as the mediating mechanism through which cultural values are transformed into institutional practices. The findings indicate that *Pela* values do not automatically shape school culture; rather, their influence depends on how principals interpret, operationalize, and embed them within organizational processes. Leadership orientation determines whether cultural values remain symbolic or become integrated into curriculum, activities, discipline, and conflict management. This mediating role highlights the agency of school leaders in translating abstract values into concrete practices. Without such leadership intervention, *Pela* risks being reduced to ceremonial expressions or isolated activities that lack structural impact. Conversely, when principals actively incorporate *Pela* into decision-making, communication, and governance, it becomes a living framework that shapes daily interactions and institutional norms. This finding reinforces the argument that leadership is not only a driver of school culture but also a critical bridge between cultural values and organizational reality.

### **5.4 Implications for Educational Management**

The findings have several implications for educational management, particularly in multicultural and post-conflict contexts. At the policy level, the study suggests the need to recognize local wisdom as a legitimate foundation for leadership development rather than treating it solely as cultural enrichment. Educational authorities can incorporate culturally grounded leadership models into principal training programs, ensuring that leadership practices are aligned with local social realities. At the institutional level, school management practices should move beyond rule-based discipline toward relational and restorative approaches that foster long-term social cohesion. The integration of cultural values into curriculum, school activities, and governance structures requires deliberate leadership strategies and organizational support (Supriyanto & Amrin, 2022). Furthermore, the involvement of community actors in school processes highlights the importance of extending school management beyond institutional boundaries, creating collaborative networks that reinforce shared values.

These implications underscore the potential of culturally embedded leadership to enhance not only school climate but also broader social integration in diverse educational settings.

**5.5 Theoretical Contribution.** This study makes a significant theoretical contribution by repositioning *Pela* from a cultural artifact or pedagogical resource to an operational framework of leadership. Existing literature on local wisdom in education has predominantly focused on its role in curriculum design, character education, or multicultural learning. However, this study demonstrates that *Pela* can function as a foundational logic that shapes leadership orientation, guides organizational practices, and influences institutional outcomes. By articulating the process through which *Pela* values inform leadership orientation, translate into practices, and ultimately shape school culture, the study extends the conceptual boundaries of culturally embedded leadership. It contributes to leadership theory by emphasizing that effective leadership in multicultural contexts requires not only technical competence but also cultural grounding and social legitimacy. In this sense, *Pela*-based leadership represents a contextually responsive model that integrates ethical, relational, and organizational dimensions of leadership.

### **5.6 Limitations**

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the research is based on a limited number of sites, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings to other contexts. Second, the study is context-specific, focusing on schools in Ambon City, where *Pela* has a particular historical and cultural significance. As such, the applicability of the findings to regions with different cultural systems may require careful consideration. Third, the qualitative design, while providing in-depth insights, does not allow for statistical generalization or measurement of causal relationships. These limitations suggest the need for further research that expands the scope of analysis, incorporates comparative designs across regions, and employs mixed or quantitative methods to examine the broader applicability and impact of local wisdom-based leadership models.

## **6. Conclusion**

This study set out to analyze how *Pela*-based values shape principal leadership and contribute to the development of a peaceful school culture in Ambon City. The findings demonstrate that *Pela* functions as a foundational value system that informs leadership orientation, guides leadership practices, and influences school culture outcomes. In terms of leadership orientation, principals internalize *Pela* as a moral and cultural commitment, which is reflected in humanistic, participatory, and relational approaches to leadership. This orientation emphasizes empathy, dialogue, and collective responsibility, shaping how decisions are made and how relationships are managed within the school environment. At the level of implementation, *Pela*-based leadership is operationalized through curriculum-related activities, communal and interfaith programs, and value-based disciplinary practices that prioritize moral reflection over punitive measures (Luturmas et al., 2024). These practices are further reinforced through conflict management mechanisms that combine preventive value internalization with restorative approaches involving dialogue, mediation, and stakeholder participation.

The integration of these elements contributes to the formation of a peaceful school culture characterized by improved student behavior, strengthened teacher-student relationships, and an inclusive and harmonious institutional climate. These findings confirm that *Pela* is not limited to symbolic cultural expression but can function as an operational leadership framework that shapes organizational processes and outcomes.

This study contributes to the development of educational leadership theory by demonstrating that local wisdom can serve as a structuring logic for leadership practice. It also provides empirical evidence from a post-conflict multicultural context, offering insights into how culturally grounded leadership can support sustainable peace within schools.

## 7. Practical Implications and Recommendations

### 7.1 Implications for School Leadership

The findings suggest that school principals should actively integrate Pela values into leadership processes, particularly in decision-making and student management. Leadership practices should prioritize dialogue, inclusivity, and relational engagement, ensuring that disciplinary approaches are aligned with restorative principles. The incorporation of Pela into curriculum activities, school routines, and interpersonal interactions can strengthen value internalization and support the development of a cohesive school culture.

### 7.2 Implications for Policy Makers

At the policy level, there is a need to recognize local wisdom as a strategic resource for educational leadership. Educational authorities can develop leadership frameworks and training programs that incorporate culturally grounded values such as Pela, ensuring that school management approaches are contextually relevant. Policies should also support the integration of community actors, including parents and local leaders, into school processes to reinforce the social legitimacy of leadership practices.

### 7.3 Recommendations for Future Research

Future research should expand the scope of analysis by examining Pela-based leadership across different regions and educational levels to assess its broader applicability. Quantitative studies are needed to validate the relationships identified in this research and to measure the impact of culturally embedded leadership on school outcomes. Longitudinal research would also be valuable in understanding the sustainability of Pela-based leadership practices and their long-term effects on school culture and conflict reduction.

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