



Enhancing Teacher Professionalism Culture through Principal Leadership Strategies

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ABSTRACT

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The culture of teacher professionalism is a crucial factor in improving educational quality, as it reflects teachers' commitment, responsibility, and continuous professional development. This study aims to examine the strategies employed by school principals in fostering a culture of professionalism among teachers. A qualitative research approach with a descriptive design was used to explore leadership practices and their influence on professional culture. Data were collected through observations of leadership practices and professional activities, in-depth interviews with the principal and teachers, and documentation analysis of school programs and organizational records. The findings reveal that principals enhance teacher professionalism through structured coaching, role modeling, supervision, professional development programs, and the cultivation of collaborative work environments. These strategies contribute to increased teacher discipline, professional responsibility, and engagement in continuous improvement. The study implies that effective principal leadership plays a central role in shaping a sustainable culture of teacher professionalism. Therefore, school leaders are encouraged to adopt strategic, participatory, and consistent leadership practices to strengthen professional culture and support long-term educational quality improvement.

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INTRODUCTION

Education is widely acknowledged as one of the main pillars in developing high-quality human resources capable of responding to social, economic, and technological changes (Dewi & Manshur, 2026; Hefniy & Alwahedi, 2025; Hikmah & Mudarris, 2026; Holidi, 2025; Khofsah & Rozi, 2025). Within educational systems, teachers hold a strategic position because they directly influence learning processes, student character formation, and the development of essential competencies needed in modern society. The

professionalism of teachers therefore becomes a crucial societal concern, as it determines not only academic achievement but also the formation of values, discipline, and work ethics among future generations. Lestari (2023) emphasizes that professional teachers are characterized by strong pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies, supported by a high level of commitment and responsibility (Kusumawati, 2025; Syafiih, 2025). Empirical evidence shows that schools with strong professional cultures among teachers tend to demonstrate better learning outcomes and organizational stability. Consequently, strengthening teacher professionalism is not merely an internal school agenda but a public necessity. In conclusion, research focusing on strategies to enhance teacher professionalism is important because it provides insights for educational leaders and policymakers in ensuring sustainable improvements in educational quality and social development.

Despite the recognized importance of teacher professionalism, many educational institutions continue to face persistent challenges related to professional work culture. Common problems include low teacher participation in school programs, weak discipline, and limited commitment to continuous professional development. These issues are not only individual concerns but reflect broader systemic and managerial problems within schools. Inconsistent attendance in academic and non-academic activities, for example, indicates that professionalism has not been fully internalized as a shared organizational value. Such conditions can negatively affect teaching quality, student engagement, and institutional credibility. According to Sutisna et al. (2023), ineffective leadership and weak management practices often contribute to the failure of schools to cultivate strong professional cultures. Therefore, the general problem underlying this research is how schools can address declining professional commitment among teachers through effective leadership strategies. Addressing this issue is essential to ensure that schools function as professional learning organizations capable of adapting to changing educational demands.

Field observations in vocational and secondary education institutions reveal that efforts to improve teacher professionalism are often uneven and inconsistently implemented (Aisyah & Trianingsih, 2023; Ikrimah, 2023; Nuraini et al., 2025; Rahmat et al., 2023). Many schools have introduced training programs, supervision activities, and competency development initiatives. However, participation levels among teachers frequently vary, and the impact of these programs is not always sustainable. Issues such as lack of discipline, minimal self-reflection, and limited instructional innovation remain evident in daily school practices. These phenomena suggest that professional culture has not yet been fully embedded within the organizational structure of schools. Although some teachers demonstrate strong dedication and responsibility,

others show passive attitudes toward professional development activities. This situation highlights the influence of leadership practices in shaping teachers' professional behavior. The inconsistency observed in the field indicates that professionalism cannot be developed through programs alone but requires strategic leadership, continuous guidance, and a supportive school climate to ensure that professional values are internalized by all teachers.

Previous studies have extensively discussed the role of school leadership in enhancing teacher professionalism. Principals are viewed not only as administrative managers but also as instructional leaders responsible for guiding teachers' professional growth. Sutisna et al. (2023) argue that effective principals play a central role in managing school resources, fostering teacher competence, and building professional commitment. Similarly, Basri et al. (2024) emphasize that leadership strategies such as coaching, supervision, continuous training, and role modeling are effective in strengthening professional work culture among teachers (Aini & Wahid, 2024; Badriyah, 2025; Holid, 2025; Naningsih et al., 2024). Research findings generally suggest that supportive and visionary leadership positively influences teacher discipline, responsibility, and engagement in professional learning. However, most studies focus on leadership effectiveness in general terms, without providing detailed descriptions of specific strategies used by principals to cultivate professionalism in particular educational contexts.

Although existing literature confirms the importance of principal leadership in shaping teacher professionalism, several research gaps remain. Many studies adopt quantitative approaches that measure the correlation between leadership style and teacher performance, while fewer studies explore leadership strategies in depth using qualitative perspectives. Additionally, previous research often examines general education settings, leaving vocational schools and faith-based institutions underrepresented. The contextual factors influencing professional culture, such as organizational values, institutional vision, and daily leadership practices, are frequently overlooked. This limitation reduces the practical applicability of research findings for school leaders seeking concrete guidance. Therefore, there is a need for qualitative research that provides a detailed and contextualized understanding of how principals design and implement strategies to enhance teacher professionalism. Addressing this gap is important to enrich leadership literature and provide actionable insights for educational practitioners.

The novelty of this study lies in its focus on principal strategies for enhancing teacher professionalism culture through a qualitative and descriptive approach. Unlike prior studies that emphasize outcomes or leadership styles, this research highlights concrete leadership practices, such as continuous guidance, motivation, supervision, and competency development, within a specific

institutional context. By examining professionalism as a cultural construct rather than merely an individual attribute, this study contributes to the state of the art in educational leadership research. It offers a holistic perspective that integrates leadership actions, teacher behavior, and organizational culture. Addressing this issue is crucial, as schools are increasingly required to function as adaptive organizations that promote continuous professional learning. This study therefore provides an updated and context-sensitive contribution to the discourse on educational leadership and teacher professionalism.

Based on the identified societal issues, field phenomena, and research gaps, this study focuses on the principal's strategies in enhancing the culture of teacher professionalism. The central research problem addresses how school principals design and implement strategies to improve teacher discipline, participation, responsibility, and professional commitment. This study is grounded in the argument that teacher professionalism is not solely an individual responsibility but an organizational outcome shaped by leadership practices and school culture. It is assumed that effective principal strategies—such as role modeling, continuous coaching, motivation, competency development, and constructive supervision—can significantly strengthen teacher professionalism culture. The findings of this study are expected to contribute theoretically by enriching leadership and professionalism literature and practically by providing school leaders with strategic insights to foster sustainable professional cultures within educational institutions.

RESEACH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research approach using a descriptive case study design (Niam et al., 2024). This design was chosen to obtain an in-depth and contextual understanding of principal strategies in shaping a culture of teacher professionalism based on real conditions in the school setting. A qualitative approach is appropriate because the research focuses on exploring processes, meanings, and leadership practices rather than measuring variables statistically. The case study design allows the researcher to investigate a single institution comprehensively, enabling a detailed examination of leadership strategies, teacher development processes, and the formation of professional culture as they naturally occur. Through this approach, the study aims to describe and interpret the phenomenon without manipulating research variables, thereby capturing authentic educational practices and leadership dynamics.

The research was conducted at SMK Ma'arif NU 02 Kemiri, a vocational secondary school under the Ma'arif NU educational foundation. This site was selected because it represents an educational institution that actively seeks to

strengthen teacher professionalism as part of its institutional development. Preliminary observations indicated that the school has implemented various initiatives such as teacher coaching, supervision, and professional development programs, yet still faces challenges related to discipline, participation, and professional work culture. These conditions make the school a relevant and information-rich case for examining how principal strategies are formulated and implemented to enhance teacher professionalism.

Data were collected using three main techniques: observation, interviews, and documentation. Observations were conducted to directly examine how the principal implements strategies for teacher coaching and how the culture of professionalism is reflected in daily school practices. In-depth interviews were carried out with the principal and teachers to obtain detailed information regarding leadership strategies, teacher experiences, and perceptions of professional culture. Documentation analysis included school profiles, organizational structures, policy documents, and records of activities related to teacher professionalism. The research subjects consisted of the principal and teachers, while the object of the study was the principal's strategy in improving the culture of teacher professionalism.

Data analysis followed an interactive model consisting of data condensation, data display, and data verification. Data condensation involved selecting, simplifying, and organizing information obtained from observations, interviews, and documentation to focus on relevant themes. Data display was carried out by presenting the organized data in narrative descriptions and thematic categories to facilitate interpretation. Finally, data verification involved drawing conclusions and validating findings through continuous comparison of data sources to ensure credibility and consistency. This systematic analysis process enabled the researcher to develop well-grounded interpretations of principal strategies and their role in shaping teacher professionalism culture.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Based on interviews with school principals, principals play an important role in enhancing the culture of professionalism among teachers through various strategies. The following are the strategies used by principals to enhance the culture of professionalism among teachers through three main stages, namely planning, implementation, and evaluation.

Table 1 planning to improve the culture of professionalism

Planning Aspect	Principal's Statement	Research Results
Teacher Needs Analysis	The principal stated that prior to designing professional development programs, a teacher needs analysis was conducted through direct observation, initial supervision, evaluation of learning administration, and discussions with the vice principal and senior teachers.	The principal conducts a systematic teacher needs analysis as the foundation for planning strategies to enhance teacher professionalism.
Identification of Teacher Problems	Based on the needs analysis, the principal identified several issues among teachers, including limited instructional innovation, low discipline, and suboptimal professional attitudes.	Identified teacher-related problems serve as the basis for determining targeted professional development programs.
Formulation of a Professionalism Vision	The principal formulates a vision of teacher professionalism aligned with the school's vision and mission as well as NU values, emphasizing discipline, responsibility, instructional quality, and moral and religious integrity.	The professionalism vision functions as a shared guideline that directs teachers' professional behavior and development.
Teacher Involvement	The formulation of the professionalism vision and strategic direction is carried out participatively through school meetings and deliberations involving all teachers.	Teacher involvement fosters a sense of ownership and shared commitment to building a professional school culture.
Program Development and Competency Improvement	The principal designs structured programs such as In-House Training (IHT), workshops, internal MGMP activities, external training, encouragement for postgraduate studies, and teacher certification.	Professional development programs are designed to be continuous in order to improve teachers' competencies and professional attitudes.
Teacher Work Rules and Standards	The principal establishes regulations, a teacher code of ethics, and standard operating procedures governing discipline, attendance, and teaching ethics, and disseminates them to all teachers.	Work rules and professional standards serve as clear guidelines for building and maintaining a culture of teacher professionalism.

During the planning stage, the principal first conducted an analysis of teacher needs as a preliminary step in improving the culture of professionalism. This analysis is carried out by identifying the actual conditions of teacher competence, which includes pedagogical, professional, social, and personality competencies through observation, initial supervision results, learning administration evaluations, and discussions with the vice principal and senior teachers. From the results of this analysis, the principal can identify the problems

faced by teachers, such as a lack of learning innovation, low discipline, or suboptimal professionalism at school.

The principal then formulated a vision and guidelines for teacher professionalism that are in line with the vision and mission of SMK Ma'arif NU 02 and NU values. This vision emphasizes the importance of professionalism, discipline, responsibility, commitment to quality learning, and moral and religious integrity in carrying out their duties as educators. The vision was formulated in a participatory manner by involving teachers through school meetings and discussions to create a sense of ownership and shared commitment. With a clear vision, teachers have the same guidelines and goals in building a culture of professionalism in the school environment.

As a follow-up to the analysis, the principal developed a structured and sustainable program to improve teacher competence. The program includes in-house training (IHT), learning workshops, internal school MGMP activities, and sending teachers to external training according to their respective fields of expertise. In addition, the principal also encouraged teachers to continue their studies to a higher level, such as a master's degree, and to pursue teaching certification as an effort to improve quality and professionalism. This program was designed so that teachers would not only improve their academic competence but also be able to develop a professional attitude in carrying out their duties.

During this planning stage, the principal also develops rules and work standards for teachers as guidelines for building a culture of professionalism. These rules are outlined in the form of rules and regulations, a teacher code of ethics, and standard operating procedures (SOPs) that regulate discipline, attendance, and ethics in the teaching process. These work standards are disseminated to all teachers so that they are understood and implemented consistently. With clear rules in place, teachers have clear boundaries and responsibilities, thereby creating an orderly, disciplined, and professional work culture at SMK Ma'arif NU 02 Kemiri.

Table 2. Implementation or work program in Enhancing the Culture of Professionalism among Teachers

Implementation Aspect	Principal's Statement	Research Results
Group Coaching	The principal conducts teacher coaching sessions every 15 days, focusing on strengthening professionalism, discipline, and understanding of teachers' duties and responsibilities.	Group coaching is implemented regularly and continuously, fostering shared reflection and collective professional commitment among teachers.

Implementation Aspect	Principal's Statement	Research Results
Individual Coaching	The principal provides individual coaching on a rotating basis, mentoring one teacher per week to address instructional challenges and professional issues.	Individual coaching is intensive and personalized, enabling teachers to receive guidance tailored to their specific needs.
Implementation of IHT and MGMP	The principal organizes In-House Training (IHT) twice a year and facilitates teacher participation in MGMP at the district and provincial levels.	IHT and MGMP activities enhance teachers' professional knowledge, pedagogical skills, and collaborative learning practices.
Academic Supervision	Academic supervision is conducted through classroom observations, assessment of learning instruments, and evaluation of teaching strategies.	Academic supervision serves as a direct mechanism for guiding and strengthening teacher professionalism.
Managerial Supervision	Managerial supervision emphasizes discipline, responsibility, and compliance with school regulations.	Teachers' discipline and professional responsibility are consistently monitored and reinforced.
Role Modeling and Motivation	The principal demonstrates exemplary discipline and professionalism while providing motivation and recognition for teachers' achievements.	Role modeling and motivation positively influence teachers' work culture and professional behavior.
Religious Culture	The principal integrates religious values into school activities and learning processes, including prayer and moral education.	Teachers' professionalism is strengthened through the internalization of religious and moral values that support ethical conduct.

During the implementation stage, the principal implements the planned teacher guidance and training program on an ongoing basis. The principal conducts regular and scheduled teacher guidance sessions every 15 days, involving all teachers. This group guidance focuses on improving professionalism, discipline, and understanding of the duties and responsibilities of educators. In addition, the principal conducts individual coaching with a system of one teacher per week on a rotating basis. This individual coaching aims to provide more intensive assistance, explore the problems faced by teachers, and provide solutions and directions according to the needs of each teacher. With this routine and rotating coaching, the principal strives to create a culture of sustainable professionalism among teachers in the school environment.

The principal also conducts regular in-house training (IHT) twice a year. These activities focus on improving the quality of learning, strengthening teacher

competencies, and aligning perceptions in the implementation of school policies and programs. The principal also facilitates teachers to participate in district or provincial MGMPs so that teachers can exchange experiences and enhance their professional knowledge. Through these activities, teachers are expected to improve the quality of learning, develop innovative teaching methods, and have an open attitude towards changes and developments in education.

The principal conducts academic and managerial supervision as a form of direct supervision and guidance on teacher professionalism. Academic supervision is carried out by observing the learning process in the classroom, assessing the readiness of learning tools, and evaluating the teaching methods and strategies used by teachers. Meanwhile, managerial supervision focuses on discipline, responsibility, and teacher compliance with school rules. The results of supervision are used as a basis for providing input, direction, and guidance to teachers in order to improve their performance and professionalism.

In promoting a culture of professionalism among teachers, the principal acts as a role model and motivator for the entire school community. The principal exemplifies discipline and professionalism by being punctual, consistent in carrying out duties, and complying with school rules. This exemplary behavior sets an example for teachers to act professionally and has a positive impact on the formation of a culture of discipline among teachers and students. In addition, the principal also provides motivation through guidance, moral support, and recognition, whether in the form of praise, appreciation, or certain incentives for teachers who demonstrate professional and innovative performance. This motivation aims to foster a spirit of work, self-confidence, and commitment among teachers in improving the quality of learning.

The principal strives to create a work culture by applying religious and professional values, integrating religious values into every school activity. Teachers are instructed to begin and end lessons with prayers, incorporate moral and ethical values into the subject matter, and maintain polite attitudes and speech when interacting with others. This religious culture is expected to shape teachers' characters to be honest, responsible, and have a strong work ethic. Thus, teachers' professionalism is not only reflected in their academic competence, but also in their daily attitudes and behavior.

Table 3. Principal's Strategy in Enhancing the Culture of Teacher Professionalism

Evaluation Aspect	Principal's Statement	Research Results
Teacher Performance Evaluation	The principal evaluates teacher performance based on supervision outcomes, attendance records,	The evaluation process is conducted comprehensively and objectively, ensuring measurable and

Evaluation Aspect	Principal's Statement	Research Results
	completeness of learning administration, and student learning outcomes.	transparent assessment of teacher performance.
Teachers' Professional Attitude	The assessment includes teachers' professional attitudes, such as discipline, responsibility, and cooperation.	Professional attitudes are key indicators of the successful establishment of a culture of professionalism among teachers.
Reflection and Evaluation Meetings	The principal conducts reflection through faculty meetings and discussion forums to review program achievements and challenges.	Reflection activities serve as a foundation for identifying strengths, addressing obstacles, and improving program implementation.
Follow-Up Actions	Evaluation results are used to formulate follow-up actions, including improvements to strategies, coaching methods, and the development of new programs.	Evaluation is continuous and improvement-oriented, supporting sustainable professional development.
Feedback and Follow-Up Coaching	The principal provides constructive feedback and designs additional training or mentoring for teachers who still experience difficulties.	Constructive feedback supports teachers in continuously improving their professionalism and instructional practices.

During the evaluation stage, the principal conducts a comprehensive assessment of teacher performance to determine the success rate of the strategies that have been implemented. The assessment is based on the results of supervision, attendance rates, the completeness of learning administration, and student learning outcomes. In addition, the principal also pays attention to the professional attitude of teachers in carrying out their duties, such as discipline, responsibility, and cooperation. The results of this assessment serve as an indicator of the extent to which a culture of professionalism has been established among teachers at SMK Ma'arif NU 02.

The principal reflects on the evaluation results through teacher council meetings and school discussion forums. During these activities, various obstacles, barriers, and successes encountered during the implementation of the teacher professionalism improvement program are discussed. The results of this reflection were then used as a basis for developing follow-up programs, including improvements to strategies, adjustments to coaching methods, and the development of new programs that are more relevant to teachers' needs. This reflection and follow-up are important to ensure that the improvement of professional culture can be sustained.

To conclude the evaluation stage, the principal provides constructive feedback to teachers based on the performance assessment results. Feedback is given individually and in groups with the aim of helping teachers understand their strengths and weaknesses in carrying out their duties. For teachers who still experience difficulties, the principal designs further guidance in the form of mentoring, additional training, or re-supervision. With feedback and further guidance, teachers are expected to continuously improve their professionalism.

Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that the principal's strategy in improving the culture of teacher professionalism is implemented in a systematic and structured manner through three main stages: planning, implementation, and evaluation. This structured approach demonstrates that the development of teacher professionalism is not a spontaneous activity but a deliberate and continuous managerial process. During the planning stage, the principal conducted a needs analysis to identify key issues related to teacher performance, such as low discipline, limited instructional innovation, and suboptimal professional attitudes. These findings align with Man & Lampung (2025), who emphasize that improving the quality of human resources in schools must be carefully planned, consistently implemented, and continuously evaluated to achieve organizational goals. Through systematic planning, the principal ensured that professional development programs were relevant to actual school conditions. This approach reflects an understanding that effective leadership in education requires evidence-based decision-making and strategic alignment between identified problems and proposed solutions. Consequently, the planning stage serves as a strong foundation for building a sustainable culture of teacher professionalism.

The needs analysis conducted by the principal plays a critical role in shaping targeted strategies for teacher professional development. The identification of issues such as lack of learning innovation, weak discipline, and inconsistent professional attitudes highlights that professionalism challenges are multidimensional. These findings support Santaria (2020), who argues that teacher professional development must be based on a clear needs analysis to ensure that programs are effective and contextually relevant. By grounding strategies in empirical school conditions, the principal was able to design programs that directly addressed existing gaps rather than applying generic interventions. Furthermore, the formulation of a shared vision of teacher professionalism aligned with the school's vision, mission, and NU values reinforces collective responsibility. The participatory process involving teachers in vision formulation fosters ownership, commitment, and shared understanding

of professional standards. This finding is consistent with Mufidah et al. (n.d.), who state that participatory leadership strengthens teachers' commitment and responsibility toward achieving institutional goals. Thus, professionalism emerges not only as an individual attribute but also as a collectively constructed organizational culture.

In the implementation stage, the principal translated planned strategies into concrete programs aimed at continuous professional improvement. These programs included in-house training (IHT), workshops, internal MGMP activities, external training, encouragement for postgraduate study, and teacher certification. Such initiatives demonstrate a comprehensive approach to competence development, encompassing pedagogical, professional, and ethical dimensions. The establishment of clear rules, codes of ethics, and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) further supports the development of an orderly and professional work culture. This finding aligns with Law Number 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers (Vedira & Pratama, 2024), which emphasizes that teacher professionalism must be supported by competence, professional ethics, and a clear management system. The clarity of rules provides teachers with explicit behavioral expectations, thereby reducing ambiguity and reinforcing discipline. As a result, professionalism is institutionalized through both developmental programs and regulatory frameworks, ensuring consistency in implementation.

The results also show that coaching and supervision are central strategies in strengthening teacher professionalism. Group coaching conducted regularly every 15 days fosters reflective practices, shared learning, and collective responsibility among teachers. In addition, individual coaching implemented on a rotating basis allows the principal to address specific professional and instructional challenges faced by teachers. This personalized approach supports Guru & Sungai (2025), who state that individual coaching is highly effective in improving teacher professionalism because it provides direct attention tailored to individual needs. Furthermore, the implementation of academic supervision through classroom observations and evaluation of learning tools, alongside managerial supervision focusing on discipline and compliance, ensures comprehensive professional guidance. These findings are consistent with Faiz et al. (2026) and Rahayu & Gusfirullah (2025), who argue that systematic supervision enhances both teacher performance and professional attitudes. Thus, supervision functions not merely as control but as a formative process for professional growth.

Another important aspect of the implementation stage is the principal's role as a role model and motivator. Exemplary behavior demonstrated through discipline, consistency, and adherence to school regulations reinforces

professional norms among teachers. In addition, motivational strategies such as recognition and rewards for innovative and professional performance further encourage positive work behavior. These findings support transformational leadership theory, which emphasizes that leaders' exemplary actions and motivational influence significantly shape organizational culture and member performance (Kerja et al., 2020). Moreover, the integration of religious values into school activities and learning processes strengthens the moral and personality dimensions of teacher professionalism. Teachers are encouraged to uphold ethical conduct, polite communication, and moral integrity, aligning professional competence with character development. This finding aligns with Pediaqu: Journal of Social and Humanities Education Vol. 4, No. 1 January 2025 (2025), which emphasizes that teacher professionalism encompasses not only academic competence but also moral and ethical integrity.

The evaluation stage demonstrates that the principal conducts continuous and comprehensive assessments of teacher professionalism. Evaluation is based on supervision results, attendance records, completeness of instructional administration, student learning outcomes, and professional attitudes such as discipline, responsibility, and cooperation. This multifaceted evaluation provides a holistic picture of teacher professionalism and serves as a basis for reflective improvement. Regular reflection through teacher council meetings and discussion forums enables the identification of program strengths and weaknesses, supporting continuous refinement of strategies. This approach is consistent with Siregar et al. (2025), who emphasize that educational evaluation should be formative and oriented toward continuous improvement. Follow-up actions include constructive feedback, mentoring, additional training, and re-supervision for teachers requiring further support. These findings support Asyifah et al. (2024), who state that clear and constructive feedback significantly improves educator performance. Overall, the evaluation process ensures sustainability in strengthening the culture of teacher professionalism.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, the most important lesson is that the principal plays a decisive and strategic role in shaping and sustaining a culture of teacher professionalism when leadership is exercised in a planned, participatory, and continuous manner. The study demonstrates that teacher professionalism does not emerge spontaneously but is constructed through systematic stages of planning, implementation, and evaluation. Key elements such as needs-based planning, participatory formulation of a shared professional vision, continuous capacity-building programs, supervision, role modeling, and the integration of moral and religious values collectively contribute to

strengthening teachers' discipline, commitment, competence, and professional attitudes. These findings underline that effective principal leadership is not limited to administrative management, but extends to instructional leadership and cultural leadership that fosters shared responsibility and long-term professional growth among teachers.

In terms of scholarly contribution, this study enriches the literature on educational leadership by providing empirical evidence from a vocational school context that highlights how principal strategies can concretely shape a culture of professionalism through structured and values-based approaches. The study contributes to qualitative leadership research by integrating organizational culture, professional development, and value-based leadership within a single analytical framework. However, this research is limited by its focus on a single case and the use of qualitative methods, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings. Future research is recommended to involve multiple school contexts, apply mixed or quantitative approaches, and examine the long-term impact of principal strategies on teacher performance and student outcomes. Such studies would strengthen the external validity of the findings and deepen understanding of sustainable professional culture development in schools.

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