

## The Role of Collaborative Leadership in Enhancing Educational Management Systems in Primary Schools

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### Abstract

This study examines the impact of collaborative leadership in improving the quality of education in public elementary schools. The background of this research highlights the growing need for effective school leadership, especially in rural areas, to address challenges in educational quality. The study adopted a qualitative case study approach, utilizing desk reviews, observations, and semi-structured interviews with school leaders, teachers, parents, and students to collect data. The findings show that implementing collaborative leadership has led to a more effective decision-making process, fostering a sense of ownership and commitment to educational goals among all stakeholders. Effective communication within the school community was also identified as an important factor in improving leadership practices and ensuring alignment between teachers, parents, and students. Parental involvement in school decision-making and activities significantly contributes to student success, emphasizing the importance of collaboration outside of the classroom. The study further shows that this leadership model has fostered a more inclusive and supportive school culture, improving teaching effectiveness and student outcomes. This research offers implications for understanding collaborative leadership in Indonesian primary schools, a relatively underexplored context.

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## INTRODUCTION

The quality of education has become a critical issue, especially in primary schools, where basic learning takes place. Despite ongoing efforts to improve education, many schools still face challenges in ensuring high-quality management and effective teaching practices (Alam et al., 2021; Ataman et al., 2024; Umar et al., 2023). Research shows that education systems often struggle to align their theoretical framework with practical implementation (Al-Thani et al., 2021; Darmawan et al., 2024; Yeboah et al., 2020), resulting in differences in student outcomes across schools. This gap between theory and practice creates an environment in which many schools, especially those in underserved areas, fail to achieve educational excellence. Because education plays a crucial role in shaping a country's future, addressing these disparities is critical to ensuring equitable opportunities for all students. Therefore, the core of this problem lies in finding effective leadership and management strategies to bridge these gaps and build systems capable of delivering high-quality education.

Collaborative leadership has emerged as a promising approach to addressing these challenges in schools. Unlike traditional hierarchical leadership models (Vlachou & Tsiirantonaki, 2023), Collaborative leadership emphasizes shared responsibility and decision-making among all stakeholders, including teachers, staff, students, and parents (Shula & Heystek, 2024). This approach fosters a sense of collective ownership over educational outcomes and encourages cooperative problem-solving. Research has shown that collaborative leadership can lead to a more inclusive and cohesive school culture, where the contributions of all individuals are valued (Trihantoyo et al., 2023). The theory behind collaborative leadership holds that when individuals work together toward a common goal, they can achieve better results than when working in isolation (Sánchez et al., 2021; Shu & Wang, 2021). This model fosters trust, transparency, and effective communication, which are essential components of successful school management. As educational settings become increasingly diverse, collaborative leadership can help meet the complex needs of modern schools by building strong, cooperative communities.

Schools with collaborative leadership models result in more effective teaching, improved student performance, and better overall management (Jong et al., 2020). This is because collaborative leadership encourages shared decision-making, in which input from multiple perspectives yields more informed, balanced decisions. Additionally, when leadership is distributed across stakeholders, teachers feel more empowered and motivated to innovate, while students benefit from a more engaging and supportive learning environment. Schools with a collaborative leadership approach are better able to implement change and foster a culture of continuous improvement (Aini et al., 2025; Hafeez & Akhtar, 2022; Saharani & Diana, 2024). Additionally, parental involvement in decision-making has been shown to positively impact student learning outcomes, reinforcing the idea that collaborative leadership creates a more holistic and effective education system (Amir et al., 2022; Anggraeni & Hina, 2024). The relationship between collaborative leadership and educational quality is well-documented, underscoring the potential of this leadership model to drive school improvement.

Several studies have explored the role of leadership in improving educational outcomes. Schools with a distributed leadership model, where responsibilities are shared among various stakeholders, show improved academic performance and a more positive school culture (Braun et al., 2021; Sanjani, 2024). Salim et al. (2024) conclude that leadership that involves collaboration between teachers, parents, and students leads to higher levels of Engagement and better educational outcomes. Supports the idea that collaborative leadership fosters a sense of community in schools, which in turn improves the quality of education (Gimbert et al., 2023; Shula & Heystek, 2024). Siwiyanti and Senen (2023) emphasize the importance of leadership in setting clear goals, offering professional development for teachers, and fostering a culture of collaboration to promote student success. The positive effect of parental involvement in the school decision-making process on student outcomes (Fatmawati et al., 2024; Sanjani et al., 2024). Although this study highlights the importance of leadership in improving education, the specific relationship between collaborative leadership and the quality of education in primary schools is still underexplored in the Indonesian context.

Although substantial research demonstrates the effectiveness of collaborative leadership in improving educational quality, the literature remains sparse on its application in primary schools, particularly in the Indonesian context. Most research has focused on secondary education or Western education systems, leaving little empirical evidence on how collaborative leadership models operate in elementary schools, especially in rural or underdeveloped areas. Additionally, existing research tends to focus on student leadership or outcomes in isolation, rather than examining how collaborative leadership approaches simultaneously affect teaching practices and student achievement. This study fills this gap by exploring how collaborative leadership in public elementary schools impacts school management and the quality of education. The novelty of this research lies in its focus on basic education in Indonesia, a context that has not been widely studied in the literature.

The purpose of this study is to analyze and answer how collaborative leadership affects the quality of education at SD Negeri Kedawung II Kuripan. Specifically, this study will examine how the leadership model implemented by principals, along with the involvement of teachers, staff, and parents, contributes to the development of quality management systems within schools. Focusing on the application of collaborative leadership in the elementary school setting, this study will examine the various mechanisms by which this leadership style impacts teaching effectiveness, student Engagement, and overall school performance.

## RESEARCHS METHOD

The research design follows a qualitative approach with a case study methodology (Maxwell, 2020). This design allows for an in-depth exploration of practice at SD Negeri Kedawung II Kuripan, providing rich insights into how collaborative leadership impacts various aspects of school management, teaching, and learning outcomes. The school serves as a case study to explore the implementation of collaborative leadership in improving the quality of education and school management. The focus is on understanding how collaborative leadership practices, involving teachers, staff, parents, and students, contribute to the development of an effective education system in these schools.

The main sources of information for this study are respondents, informants, and texts related to school management and leadership practices. Key informants will include principals, teachers, staff members, parents, and students who are directly involved in the collaborative leadership process. These individuals will provide insight into leadership dynamics, communication practices, and the impact of collaborative efforts on the school's overall functioning. Data will be collected using a variety of techniques, including desk reviews, observations, and semi-structured interviews (Table 1). The desk review will involve analyzing existing documents related to the school's leadership, policies, and performance reports. Observations will be conducted to understand, in real time, the daily routine, interactions, and practices of school leadership. In addition, semi-structured interviews will be conducted with key informants using interview guidance to ensure that the data collected answers the research questions and captures a variety of perspectives on the collaborative leadership process. Data Collection Matrix adalah sebagaimana ditampilkan pada **Table 1**.

**Table 1. Data Collection Matrix**

Data Collection Method	Source of Information	Purpose	Frequency/Duration
Desk Review	School documents	To understand existing leadership practices and policies	One-time review
Observation	School environment	To observe daily interactions and leadership practices	Several visits over 1-2 months
Semi-Structured Interviews	Principal, teachers, parents, students	To gather insights on the experiences and perceptions of collaborative leadership	1-2 interviews per participant

Data analysis will follow the stages described by Miles and Huberman (1994), which include data reduction, data display, and data verification (Leko et al., 2021). The first stage, data reduction, involves selecting, focusing, and simplifying the collected data to ensure they are relevant to the research question. The second stage, data display, will involve organizing data into meaningful categories, such as leadership practices, communication processes, and educational outcomes. The data will be presented in a way that allows for easy interpretation and comparison across different informants. The final stage, data verification, will involve cross-checking findings against sources and using triangulation methods to ensure the data's validity and reliability. This analysis will also use content analysis, discourse analysis, and interpretive methods to explore the patterns, themes, and meanings underlying the data, providing a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of collaborative leadership at SD Negeri Kedawung II Kuripan.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Result

#### Model Collaborative Strategy

Collaborative leadership emphasizes the active participation of all stakeholders in the educational process, including teachers, staff, parents, and students. This leadership model has been widely recognized for its effectiveness in improving educational quality. It operates on the principle of shared decision-making, where each individual can contribute their ideas, perspectives, and expertise. By fostering an environment of inclusivity, school leadership ensures that everyone invests in educational goals, thereby fostering a more cohesive and productive school. This approach helps align the interests of all parties involved and builds a strong foundation for continuous improvement in school educational outcomes.

The collaborative leadership model at SD Negeri Kedawung II Kuripan is effectively implemented by the principal, who consistently encourages teacher, staff, and parent involvement in decision-making. Observations during school meetings revealed that each stakeholder had the opportunity to voice their opinions during the discussion. The principal facilitates these conversations, ensuring that all viewpoints are considered before a decision is made. This strategy is especially evident in school event planning and curriculum adjustments, where collective input yields more practical and thorough decisions. Teachers reported feeling more empowered, and parents expressed a greater sense of connection with the school. This participatory approach also fosters a sense of mutual respect among the school community, reinforcing the school's commitment to collaboration. The roles of stakeholders involved in collaborative decision-making within the school environment are summarized in **Table 2**.

**Table 2. Collaborative Strategy**

Appearance	Role in Decision-Making
Main	Facilitator, Decision-Maker
Teachers	Curriculum Design, School Activities
Parents	Annual Meetings, Evaluations
Students	Feedback on Learning Environment

**Table 2** shows that each stakeholder plays an important and complementary role in the school's decision-making process. The principal acts as the main facilitator and decision-maker, directing all activities to align with the school's vision and mission. Teachers play an active role in curriculum design and school management. Parents also play an important role through their involvement in annual meetings and school evaluations. Meanwhile, students provide valuable feedback through their opinions about the learning environment. With the involvement of all these stakeholders, the school's decision-making process becomes more transparent, participatory, and oriented towards continuous improvement of the quality of education.

Research shows that the collaborative leadership model at SD Negeri Kedawung II Kuripan has significantly improved the management of school education. The active participation of all school stakeholders, especially in decision-making, promotes a sense of shared responsibility towards educational goals. The involvement of parents and teachers in school development creates a supportive, inclusive environment that leads to better educational outcomes for students. This collaborative process reflects the school's commitment to a holistic and inclusive approach to education. The collaborative leadership model adopted at SD Negeri Kedawung II Kuripan has proven to be a key factor in improving overall education management. Shared responsibility among teachers, staff, parents, and students has led to more effective decision-making and a greater sense of community within the school. The success of this model highlights the importance of collaboration in creating a positive school environment and improving the quality of education.

### Effective Communication

Collaborative leadership enhances communication among principals, teachers, parents, and students. Open and transparent communication facilitates the exchange of information essential to designing the right education policy. Effective communication is an important aspect of collaborative leadership, ensuring that information flows smoothly between all parties involved in the educational process. In a school setting, communication helps in aligning goals, expectations, and strategies among principals, teachers, parents, and students. When communication is open and transparent, it builds trust and ensures that everyone is on the same page. Additionally, effective communication enables timely feedback, which is critical for identifying areas for improvement and making necessary adjustments to enhance the quality of education.

Interviews with key stakeholders at SD Negeri Kedawung II Kuripan highlighted the importance of communication in school leadership strategies. The principal stated that regular meetings and updates help ensure that all teachers and parents are informed about ongoing projects and student progress. One teacher revealed that clear lines of communication are available, especially when they need feedback on teaching strategies. One parent mentioned feeling more involved in their child's education because the school provides regular updates and meetings.

These statements show that effective communication strengthens the relationship between the school and parents and ensures that all parties are aligned in their educational goals. This has created a more cooperative environment where feedback and suggestions can be freely exchanged.

The study found that effective communication plays an important role in the success of collaborative leadership at SD Negeri Kedawung II Kuripan. Transparent and open communication channels between school leaders, teachers, parents, and students ensure that all parties are well-informed and able to contribute meaningfully to the educational process. This fosters an environment of trust and collaboration, which is critical to improving the quality of education. The findings suggest that when communication is prioritized, all stakeholders in the education process can work together more effectively. Teachers, parents, and students are better equipped to collaborate, share feedback, and contribute to decision-making. Information transparency not only strengthens the bond between schools and parents but also empowers teachers and students to be actively involved in the learning process. Effective communication thus acts as a key driver of collaborative leadership and improves the overall quality of education at SD Negeri Kedawung II Kuripan.

The emphasis on effective communication has become a fundamental element of the collaborative leadership model at SD Negeri Kedawung II Kuripan. Clear, open, and transparent communication channels have enabled the school to align its goals, expectations, and strategies effectively. This practice not only strengthens the relationship between the school and parents but also increases stakeholder involvement, contributing to a more successful and inclusive educational environment.

### **Parent Involvement**

Collaborative leadership encourages parental involvement in the educational process. By involving parents in decision-making and school activities conducted through annual meetings and evaluations, principals can create an environment that supports student development more holistically. Build partnerships between schools and parents based on two-way communication to ensure students' well-being and academic progress. Parental involvement in the educational process is another important component of collaborative leadership. Involving parents in decision-making, school activities, and regular evaluations ensures that they are not only passive observers of their child's education but also active participants in shaping it. This collaboration between schools and parents supports a more holistic approach to student development, addressing academic and social-emotional needs. Additionally, parental involvement in school activities and meetings can increase a sense of community and shared responsibility for student success.

Parental involvement is the foundation of the school's collaborative leadership approach at SD Negeri Kedawung II Kuripan. Observations of school events reveal that parents actively participate in annual meetings, where they can provide input on school policies and discuss their children's progress. Parents are also involved in extracurricular activities, such as helping organize school events or volunteering during school celebrations. The principal regularly communicates with parents through newsletters and meetings, ensuring that they are kept informed of their child's academic progress. This active involvement of parents has led to a greater sense of community and has strengthened partnerships between schools and families. The forms of parental involvement in supporting school activities and educational processes at SD Negeri Kedawung II Kuripan are summarized in **Table 3**.

**Table 3. Parent Involvement**

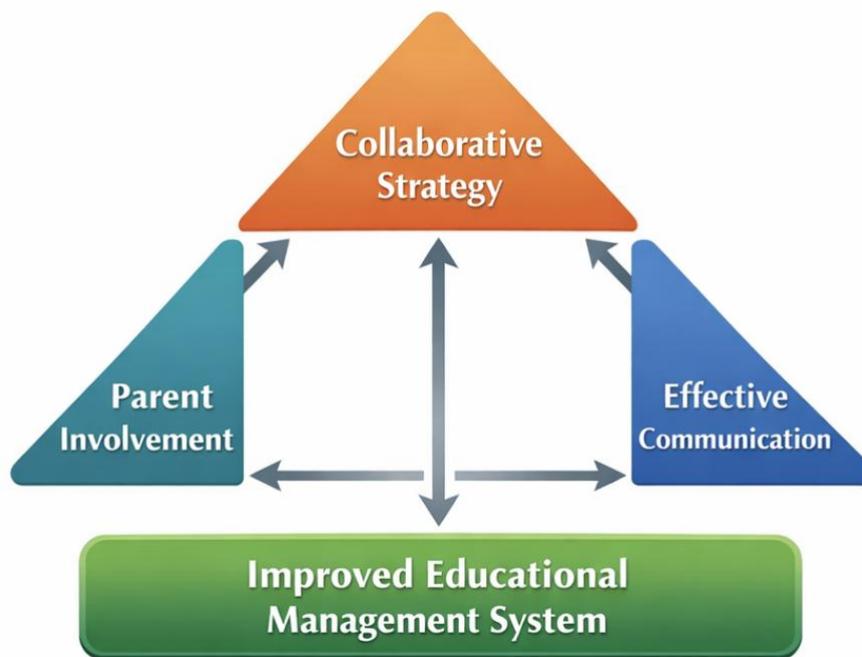
Parent Role	Activity	Frequency
Participation in Meetings	Annual Meetings, Parent-Teacher Conferences	Regular
Contribution to Events	Volunteering, Organizing School Celebrations	Casual
Communication with Teachers	Feedback on Student Progress, School Policies	Frequent

**Table 3** shows that parental involvement in school activities is essential to support students' academic development and character. One of the main forms of Engagement is participation in meetings, such as annual meetings and parent-teacher conferences. Parents also contribute to various school events, for example, by volunteering or helping to organize school celebrations. Parents also communicate frequently with teachers to provide feedback on student progress and school policies. These interactions help foster an open and supportive relationship between home and school. With this active involvement, parents become important partners in creating a harmonious, collaborative, and successful learning environment.

This study highlights the important role played by parental involvement in improving the quality of education at SD Negeri Kedawung II Kuripan. By actively participating in school activities and decision-making processes, parents contribute to the school's overall success. This Engagement fosters a collaborative environment that supports students' academic and personal development. School leadership recognizes the importance of maintaining strong relationships with parents and actively encourages their participation. Parental involvement is very important for the success of collaborative leadership at SD Negeri Kedawung II Kuripan. Parents' active participation in meetings, school activities, and feedback processes has strengthened partnerships between schools and families, creating a supportive and collaborative learning environment. These findings underscore the importance of fostering strong school-community relationships to improve the quality of education and overall student success.

The synthesis of the research findings shows that implementing collaborative leadership in schools involves three main dimensions: collaborative strategies, effective communication, and parental involvement. The relationship between these dimensions in improving the education management system is shown in **Figure 1**.

**Figure 1** illustrates the collaborative leadership model implemented in improving the educational management system. The model highlights three key dimensions that interact within the leadership process: collaborative strategy, effective communication, and parent involvement. A collaborative strategy emphasizes participatory decision-making led by the principal, involving teachers, parents, and students in planning and evaluating school programs. Effective communication facilitates transparent information exchange among stakeholders, aligns goals, and strengthens trust within the school community. Meanwhile, parent involvement reflects parents' active participation in school meetings, activities, and feedback processes that support students' academic development. The interaction among these three dimensions collectively strengthens the educational management system and creates a more inclusive, participatory, and effective school governance structure.



**Figure 1. Collaborative Leadership Model in Improving Education Management Systems**

### Discussion

The collaborative leadership model at SD Negeri Kedawung II Kuripan has shown positive implications in improving the school management system. The active participation of all stakeholders, such as teachers, parents, and students, has led to a more cohesive and inclusive decision-making process. This collaborative approach not only fosters a sense of shared responsibility but also encourages commitment to educational goals among all parties involved. Schools with high levels of collaboration among staff and parents show stronger educational outcomes and greater community involvement (Kyereh et al., 2023; Mahmud & Malik, 2024). Therefore, the practical implications are clear: collaborative leadership creates a more inclusive and accountable educational environment, which is critical for the growth and improvement of schools.

The cause behind the positive effects of collaborative leadership lies in the decision-making structure at SD Negeri Kedawung II Kuripan. By involving teachers, parents, and students in the decision-making process, schools foster a sense of ownership among all stakeholders. This shared responsibility encourages greater cooperation and collective problem-solving, which ultimately improves the quality of education. Noer (2023) supports this structure by explaining that schools with distributed leadership structures, where responsibilities are shared, lead to better outcomes as they encourage innovation and adaptability among staff. Thus, the underlying structure of shared leadership and decision-making plays a crucial role in driving the success of the school's management system.

Effective communication is another key element that positively influences the school's management system. Open and transparent communication between school leaders, teachers, parents, and students at SD Negeri Kedawung II Kuripan has resulted in more informed decisions and stronger relationships among stakeholders. The immediate implication of these results is that effective communication facilitates a

better flow of information and increases trust within the school community. Clear and open communication in schools leads to better decision-making and fosters a collaborative school culture (Karim et al., 2023; Nahar et al., 2022). Therefore, encouraging effective communication is a fundamental strategy to improve the overall functioning of educational institutions.

The success of effective communication depends on the organizational structure of the school, which encourages frequent interaction among all stakeholders. Regular meetings, newsletters, and feedback mechanisms ensure that parents and teachers are aligned with the school's goals and progress. Effective communication is linked to stronger school leadership and improved educational outcomes (Faiz et al., 2023; Zamroni et al., 2020). The principal's efforts to maintain open communication channels have fostered an environment of trust, ensuring that everyone is informed and engaged. This structure of continuous feedback and communication is directly correlated with increased effectiveness of school management and decision-making processes.

Parental involvement in the educational process is another important factor identified in this study. Parents' active participation in decision-making, school activities, and routine evaluations directly contributes to the holistic development of students. These results imply that involving parents creates a more supportive environment for student learning. Parental involvement in school activities leads to increased academic achievement and a stronger sense of community (Poudel et al., 2024; Safitri & Lateh, 2025). Therefore, the practical implication is that schools should prioritize parental involvement as a strategy to improve student outcomes and the overall educational environment.

The correlation between parental involvement and improved student outcomes can be attributed to the school's deliberate efforts to integrate parents into the decision-making process. By involving parents in school activities and ensuring regular communication, schools create a support system that nurtures student growth both academically and socially. Nwoko et al. (2024) shows that parental involvement in education is directly correlated with improved student achievement. The underlying cause of this positive correlation is the school's leadership structure, which prioritizes building partnerships with parents (Purwanto & Wafa, 2023; Rodliyah et al., 2024). This structure encourages parents to take an active role in their child's education, resulting in better outcomes in both the academic and social domains.

The practical implications of this study highlight the importance of collaborative leadership, effective communication, and parental involvement in improving school management and educational quality. Schools that adopt this strategy can create a more inclusive, supportive, and accountable environment that encourages student achievement and growth. Theoretically, these findings are in line with the literature on distributed leadership and community-based education, which suggests that shared leadership across a range of stakeholders leads to better decision-making and school performance. Thus, this study contributes to a growing body of evidence supporting the value of collaboration and stakeholder engagement in school leadership. Schools looking to improve their management systems should consider adopting these practices, as they have shown tangible benefits in improving the quality of education and fostering a positive school culture.

## CONCLUSION

The turpentine findings from this study are the substantial impact of collaborative leadership in improving the quality of education at SD Negeri Kedawung II Kuripan. The study highlights how shared decision-making and active engagement from teachers, parents, and students foster a more inclusive and effective educational environment. This collaborative approach not only improves management practices but also fosters a sense of ownership among stakeholders, which ultimately contributes to improved student outcomes. The strength of this research lies in its contribution to existing bodies of knowledge, especially by providing a new perspective on collaborative leadership in primary schools in the Indonesian context. It also introduces qualitative approaches and case study methodologies, which have not been explored extensively in this setting, thus enriching the field with new insights.

The study has certain limitations, including its focus on a single case in a single location, which may not be generalized to other regions or contexts. In addition, the study did not consider factors such as gender, age, or community diversity, which can affect collaborative leadership dynamics. Future research is needed to address these limitations, perhaps through broader studies that combine gender, age, and diverse methodologies, such as surveys, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the topic. This will help in formulating more nuanced and effective policies for educational leadership that serve broader variables and contexts.

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