

# Developing a Culturally Responsive Learning Model for the School Management Course: A North Sumatran Malay Leadership Perspective

Achmad Yuhdi<sup>1</sup>, Rosmawaty<sup>2</sup>, Atika Wasilah<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup>The Indonesian Language and Literature Education Study Program, Faculty of Language and Art, Universitas Negeri Medan, Indonesia, 20221.

Corresponding Author: Achmad Yuhdi

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.52403/ijrr.20260656>

## ABSTRACT

**Background:** This study continues the development of a learning model for the School Management course by integrating the leadership values of North Sumatran Malay culture within an ethnopedagogical framework. The main objectives are: (1) to develop culturally responsive teaching materials for the School Management course based on Malay leadership values; (2) to examine their academic and cultural feasibility; and (3) to implement the materials in classroom settings to assess students' responses to their effectiveness.

**Methodology:** The research employed a Research and Development (R&D) approach using the ADDIE model (Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, Evaluation).

**Results:** The needs analysis revealed that both lecturers and students required structured and contextually relevant materials that embed Malay leadership values. Core values such as deliberation (*musyawarah*), propriety (*adab*), honesty, and responsibility were systematically integrated into the content and learning activities. Expert validation indicated a "highly feasible" category with an average score of 91.2%, particularly on the dimensions of content relevance and material coherence. A limited trial involving 30 students demonstrated very positive

responses: 90% agreed that the materials enhanced their understanding of leadership concepts in the Malay cultural context, while 88% found the presentation engaging and applicable to their learning experiences.

**Conclusion:** Overall, the developed materials are academically and culturally appropriate and have the potential to strengthen students' character formation and cultural awareness through culturally responsive learning in higher education.

**Keywords:** ethnopedagogy; learning materials; school management; leadership; North Sumatran Malay culture

## INTRODUCTION

Higher education plays a strategic role in preparing prospective educational leaders who are ethical, adaptive, and socially as well as culturally sensitive. Within this framework, the courses Educational Leadership and School Management serve as key components in teacher education curricula. Their primary purpose is to equip students with conceptual, managerial, and reflective competencies that enable them to become effective leaders in educational institutions. The role of a school principal, for instance, extends beyond administrative management; it embodies a moral and cultural vision to drive meaningful change within educational communities. Therefore, leadership in education should not merely

be understood as a technical function but as a transformative and value-laden practice. Empirical studies reveal that leadership education in Indonesia often relies heavily on Western paradigms derived from Europe, the United States, or Japan [1]. These imported models frequently overlook the sociocultural realities of Indonesian society, resulting in leadership concepts that lack contextual relevance in local educational settings. Consequently, graduates often struggle to translate theoretical leadership frameworks into practice that resonates with community values and cultural norms. This gap between theory and practice underscores the necessity to recontextualize leadership education by embedding local cultural wisdom as a foundation for character-based leadership development. Endraswara [2] asserts that leadership is a cultural expression that mirrors a community's values, norms, and collective expectations of its leaders. Within the Malay culture of North Sumatra, leadership is viewed as a moral responsibility rooted in the principles of *amanah* (trust), *adab* (ethics), *hikmah* (wisdom), *musyawarah* (deliberation), and *keadilan* (justice). The ideal leader is not merely one who holds formal authority but one who embodies moral exemplarity, social care, and harmony. Furthermore, Malay leadership is grounded in religiosity and local wisdom, positioning morality and accountability at the core of leadership practices. This view highlights the significant potential of revitalizing Malay values to build an educational leadership paradigm that is ethical, culturally rooted, and socially responsive [3].

This perspective aligns with ethnopedagogy, an educational approach that integrates local wisdom and cultural values into learning processes to strengthen character formation, cultural identity, and meaningful learning experiences [4]. Ethnopedagogy seeks to balance modern scientific knowledge with traditional wisdom, ensuring that education remains connected to its cultural and social roots. In the context of leadership education,

ethno-pedagogical integration enables the incorporation of indigenous values into curricula, learning models, and instructional materials. As a result, students not only acquire theoretical understanding but also internalize leadership principles that are grounded in their cultural identities.

Recent research supports the pedagogical benefits of integrating local culture into learning. Siregar et al. [5] found that culturally responsive instructional models enable learners to connect academic concepts with their sociocultural backgrounds, thereby increasing the relevance of learning experiences and fostering greater cultural awareness. In addition, effective educational leadership is shaped by the ability to manage and realize cultural values in school organizations [6]. Similarly, [7] reported that culturally grounded management education fosters student motivation, self-confidence, and participatory learning. These findings collectively suggest that local culture-based education strengthens both cognitive and moral dimensions of the learning experience.

In response to these pedagogical and cultural imperatives, the present study aims to develop a culturally responsive learning model for the School Management course by integrating leadership values derived from the Malay ethnic community of North Sumatra. Specifically, the research seeks to explore how Malay leadership principles can be identified, conceptualized, and applied in higher education learning contexts. Furthermore, this study seeks to produce a practical, character-oriented instructional model and to evaluate its effectiveness in cultivating students' understanding and embodiment of culturally informed leadership.

The primary objective is to design a learning model that not only enhances students' conceptual competencies in school management but also nurtures their moral awareness and cultural literacy as future educational leaders. This development is expected to contribute to the broader

discourse on culturally responsive pedagogy by offering a localized yet theoretically grounded framework. Practically, the study provides insights for curriculum designers and teacher educators to embed indigenous values into instructional design, thereby promoting educational practices that are both relevant and transformative.

More broadly, the development of a Malay-based leadership learning model represents a significant step toward establishing a new paradigm in Indonesian higher education—one that emphasizes not only academic competence and technical skill but also cultural rootedness, social responsibility, and ethical leadership. Embedding local values into the educational process is thus envisioned as a pathway to nurturing globally minded yet culturally grounded educators and leaders. To develop culturally responsive learning materials for the School Management course that reflect the leadership values of the Malay ethnic community in North Sumatra, it is essential to review prior studies that have examined similar intersections between education, culture, and leadership. Such a review allows the identification of theoretical foundations, methodological approaches, and empirical findings that inform the present study while clarifying the existing research gap. Previous research has explored several dimensions of culture-based education, leadership in educational management, and the integration of local values into pedagogical design [6]; [7]; [3]; [8]; [9].

The development of culture-based learning modules using a systematic Research and Development (R&D) approach was also used to improve students' listening skills. Validation results confirmed that the integration of local cultural elements not only enriched student engagement but also enhanced their cognitive understanding of the course content. This finding supports the broader view that learning materials grounded in cultural contexts foster deeper learning connections and promote holistic educational outcomes. In the field of

educational leadership, Leithwood, Harris, and Hopkins argued that successful school leadership extends beyond administrative and managerial functions to encompass the development of shared values, organizational culture, and collective commitment toward educational improvement. Their comprehensive review of international evidence suggests that effective school leaders significantly influence school effectiveness by shaping motivation, fostering collaborative cultures, and creating positive organizational climates that support teaching and learning processes [10] & [11].

In a complementary manner, [7] examined the implementation of educational management in Indonesian schools and found that low managerial capacity often leads to suboptimal educational quality. They concluded that effective school management—supported by strong leadership—can significantly enhance teacher performance, student motivation, and the overall school environment. Their findings reinforce the notion that leadership and management in education are inseparable and must be cultivated through structured learning experiences that promote both technical and moral competencies. From a cultural dimension, [3] explored the philosophical and ethical foundations of Malay leadership. They argued that Malay leadership is deeply rooted in religiosity, responsibility, and moral integrity (*amanah*), positioning spiritual values as central to leadership identity. The study underscores that leadership, in the Malay worldview, is not merely administrative but moral and communal—anchored in harmony, accountability, and respect for collective welfare. Such insights provide a strong theoretical justification for integrating Malay leadership values into educational leadership curricula.

Moreover, research by [8] conceptualized school management as a holistic process of organizing and directing educational activities to achieve both short-term and long-term goals. She found that the

effectiveness of this process depends heavily on collaboration among teachers, principals, and community stakeholders. Similarly, [9] emphasized the principal's pivotal role as the highest authority in the school structure, responsible for ensuring that educational leadership translates into functional and cultural coherence within the institution. Their findings affirm that leadership is a multidimensional construct that integrates managerial, pedagogical, and cultural capacities. Taken together, these studies provide valuable theoretical and empirical foundations for developing culture-based leadership learning. However, a noticeable research gap remains in the contextual adaptation of such approaches to higher education, particularly in the field of School Management courses. While prior works have focused on general educational settings or primary and secondary schools, limited attention has been given to how local cultural leadership values—especially those derived from the Malay community of North Sumatra—can be systematically incorporated into the design of learning models in teacher education. Therefore, the present study seeks to address this gap by developing and implementing a Culturally Responsive Learning Model that integrates Malay

leadership philosophy into the School Management course. This effort aims to bridge theoretical knowledge and local wisdom, fostering future educational leaders who are not only competent and innovative but also ethically grounded and culturally conscious.

## MATERIALS & METHODS

### Research Procedure

This study employs a Research and Development (R&D) design, aimed at producing a culturally responsive learning model and teaching materials for the School Management course. The development procedure adopts the ADDIE model, which consists of five systematic stages: Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation. The ADDIE framework was selected because of its flexibility, iterative structure, and ability to ensure that every stage—from initial need assessment to product validation—undergoes expert review and empirical testing. This methodological approach allows the product to be refined continuously based on feedback from specialists and student users, ensuring that the developed teaching materials are pedagogically sound, culturally grounded, and empirically validated.

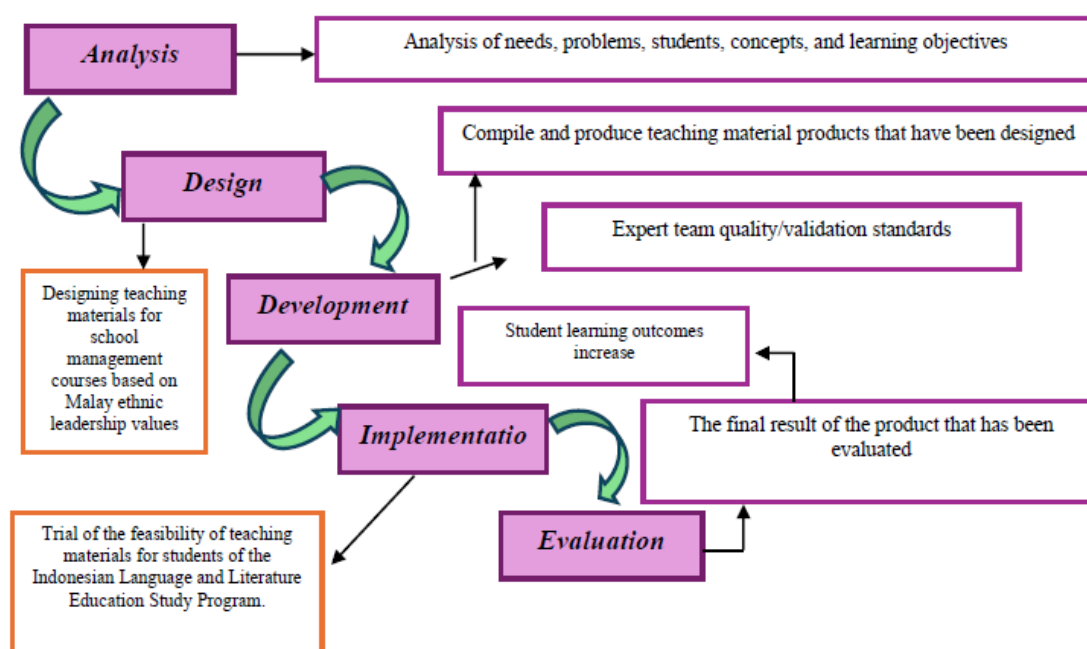


Figure 1. The flowchart illustrates the research.

The research was conducted in the Indonesian Language and Literature Education program, Faculty of Languages and Arts. The participants were undergraduate students enrolled in the School Management course (academic year 2023). Data were collected through expert validation sheets, student response questionnaires, and limited trials in classroom settings. The core theoretical foundation of this study draws upon the Melayu philosophical framework of leadership as articulated by Tenas Effendy and the Transformational Leadership Theory (TLT) proposed by Bass and Avolio (1994). The integration of these two frameworks seeks to bridge local wisdom and modern leadership theory within the context of higher education management. Tenas Effendy's conception of Melayu leadership is fundamentally moral, religious, and community-oriented. It emphasizes

*amanah* (trustworthiness), integrity, wisdom, and compassion as essential virtues of a leader. Meanwhile, Transformational Leadership Theory identifies four interrelated dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. The intersection of these two frameworks serves as the conceptual backbone for developing learning materials that not only cultivate managerial competence but also instill moral and cultural consciousness.

Based on this conceptual synthesis, four main principles of Melayu leadership philosophy were integrated into the four key dimensions of Transformational Leadership Theory (TLT). The resulting framework is summarized in Table 1, which illustrates the philosophical meaning and pedagogical implications of this integration in the context of leadership education

**Table 1. Integration of Melayu Leadership Values and Transformational Leadership Theory (TLT) Dimensions**

<b>Melayu Leadership Principles (Tenas Effendy)</b>	<b>Philosophical Meaning</b>	<b>Transformational Leadership Theory Dimension (Bass &amp; Avolio)</b>	<b>Conceptual and Pedagogical Application in School Management Learning</b>
<b>Amanah &amp; Integrity</b>	A leader must be honest, trustworthy, and morally upright. <i>Amanah</i> represents the ethical foundation of Melayu leadership, reflecting accountability and reliability.	<b>Idealized Influence</b>	Encourages students to internalize moral values and model ethical leadership behavior. Teaching materials incorporate ethical case studies to foster personal integrity and professional responsibility.
<b>Inspiration &amp; Motivation</b>	Leaders are expected to inspire collective enthusiasm, foster collaboration, and communicate a noble vision aligned with social harmony ( <i>gotong royong</i> ).	<b>Inspirational Motivation</b>	Guides students to develop visionary communication and team motivation skills. Learning activities promote positive discourse, shared goals, and enthusiasm in managing educational institutions.
<b>Intellectuality &amp; Wisdom</b>	A Melayu leader should possess intelligence, analytical capacity, and sound judgment. Knowledge and critical thinking form the foundation of effective leadership.	<b>Intellectual Stimulation</b>	Encourages students to engage in critical reflection, creative problem solving, and innovation. Classroom discussions and projects stimulate balanced reasoning between logic and empathy.
<b>Humanism &amp; Compassion</b>	A true leader serves the people with humility, empathy, and dedication to communal welfare. Leadership is seen as a form of service rather than dominance.	<b>Individualized Consideration</b>	Teaches students to develop empathy, mentoring capacity, and interpersonal awareness. Instructional design emphasizes coaching and personalized engagement in educational management.

The integration between Melayu leadership philosophy and Transformational Leadership Theory demonstrates the relevance of local cultural values in shaping leadership education within higher education institutions. By aligning the moral and communal ethos of Melayu thought with the motivational and developmental principles of TLT, this model aspires to form leaders who are both culturally grounded and globally competent. Through the ADDIE-based R&D process, each principle was operationalized into measurable indicators and embedded within teaching modules, class discussions, and assessment rubrics. The empirical phase—comprising expert validation and student response analysis—ensured that the developed materials not only met pedagogical standards but also effectively conveyed cultural values in practice. Ultimately, the integration of indigenous leadership wisdom and modern leadership theory provides a transformative learning model that strengthens students’ managerial capacity while nurturing their moral and cultural identity as future educational leaders.

## RESULT

### Needs Analysis

The needs analysis phase aimed to identify the extent to which students understand the concept of Malay leadership values and perceive the importance of integrating these values into the School Management course materials. Data were collected from 30 undergraduate students enrolled in the Indonesian Language and Literature Education program. A structured questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) was administered to measure perceptions across four key dimensions derived from the synthesis between Malay leadership philosophy and the Transformational Leadership Theory (TLT) framework. The analysis revealed that students demonstrated a very high level of awareness and agreement regarding the relevance of Malay leadership values in school management education. Overall, all four dimensions—Amanah & Integrity, Inspiration & Motivation, Intellectuality & Wisdom, and Humanistic & Empathy—obtained mean scores above 4.30, categorized as “very high.” This indicates a strong need for culturally grounded teaching materials that emphasize ethical, intellectual, and humanistic aspects of leadership

**Table 2. Summary of Needs Analysis Findings for Culturally Responsive Leadership Teaching Materials Based on Malay Values of North Sumatra**

Malay Leadership Dimension	Corresponding TLT Dimension	Core Values Assessed	Mean Score (1–5)	Category	Interpretation of Findings
Amanah & Integrity	<i>Idealized Influence</i>	Honesty, moral integrity, responsibility, trustworthiness	4.40	Very High	Students perceived <i>amanah</i> (trustworthiness) and integrity as the moral foundation of leadership. Honesty and role modeling are viewed as essential traits of respected leaders within Malay culture.
Inspiration & Motivation	<i>Inspirational Motivation</i>	Vision clarity, motivation, collective spirit, role modeling	4.46	Very High	Students emphasized the importance of inspirational leadership that strengthens teamwork and loyalty. Integrating stories of exemplary Malay leaders into the materials was deemed highly valuable.
Intellectuality & Wisdom	<i>Intellectual Stimulation</i>	Innovation, critical thinking,	4.33	Very High	Students valued leaders who promote critical thinking and collective decision-making.

		wisdom, deliberation ( <i>musyawarah</i> )			Malay philosophical values of wisdom and rationality align with reflective and adaptive leadership behavior.
Humanistic & Empathy	<i>Individualized Consideration</i>	Empathy, personal attention, social care, potential development	4.38	Very High	The dimension underscores the importance of empathy and personal engagement. Students expect leaders to understand individual needs and foster an inclusive, harmonious organizational climate.

As shown in table 2, all four leadership dimensions obtained scores within the “very high” range (4.25–4.50). The highest score emerged in the Inspiration & Motivation dimension (4.46), indicating the central role of inspirational leadership in creating a collective spirit. Meanwhile, Intellectuality & Wisdom recorded the lowest mean (4.33), though still within the “very high” category, suggesting that students equally value intellectual and moral excellence. These findings affirm that the development of culturally responsive teaching materials anchored in Malay leadership philosophy meets the authentic learning needs of students. The integration of amanah, collective spirit, wisdom, and empathy within the framework of Transformational Leadership Theory presents a promising model for nurturing leaders who are both ethically grounded and contextually relevant in multicultural educational settings.

### ***Instructional Design Model of Culturally-Responsive School Management Based on Malay Leadership Values***

The instructional design model developed in this study represents a systematic framework that integrates the philosophy of Malay leadership into the context of school management education. The model is built upon the principles of ethnopedagogy, which emphasize the alignment between pedagogical design and the sociocultural values inherent in the learners’ environment. This approach positions culture not merely as a background element, but as an epistemological foundation that shapes the construction of knowledge and leadership behavior. Conceptually, the model consists

of six major stages—Identification, Selection & Adaptation, Content Development, Implementation, Evaluation, and Output—arranged hierarchically yet interconnected through a circular flow of values. These stages collectively form a continuous, reflective cycle aimed at ensuring both the academic rigor and cultural authenticity of the developed learning materials.

***Identification:*** This initial stage involves a comprehensive analysis of learning needs, focusing on three key dimensions: student characteristics, curricular relevance, and cultural context. It seeks to determine how the philosophy of Malay leadership can be embedded meaningfully within the School Management course to cultivate culturally grounded leadership competencies among future educators.

***Selection and Adaptation:*** At this stage, the core values of Malay leadership—*musyawarah* (deliberation), religiosity, *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation), *adat* (custom), and *adab* (courtesy)—are identified and adapted to the instructional framework. These values function as pedagogical anchors that guide both the content organization and the instructional strategies used throughout the model. The adaptation process ensures that traditional leadership wisdom harmonizes with the demands of modern educational management.

***Content Development:*** This stage operationalizes the integration of cultural values into instructional design through the formulation of learning outcomes, content sequencing, and teaching methodologies.

The instructional materials are structured around four key dimensions of leadership—Amanah & Integrity, Inspiration & Motivation, Intellectuality & Wisdom, and Humanism & Empathy. Each dimension corresponds to both the transformational leadership framework and the moral-philosophical aspects of Malay thought, thereby bridging theoretical and cultural perspectives.

**Implementation:** The implementation phase involves applying the developed materials in classroom settings to assess their practical effectiveness. Teaching activities emphasize dialogic, reflective, and collaborative learning that encourages students to interpret and apply Malay leadership values in real-life school management contexts.

**Evaluation:** Evaluation is conducted through both formative and summative assessments to examine the quality, usability, and cultural coherence of the instructional materials. The process involves expert validation and learner feedback to ensure that the design meets pedagogical standards while maintaining cultural sensitivity.

**Output:** The final outcome of this instructional design process is a culturally responsive learning module that fosters leadership competencies rooted in Malay wisdom. This module not only supports cognitive learning outcomes but also nurtures affective and ethical dimensions of leadership among students.

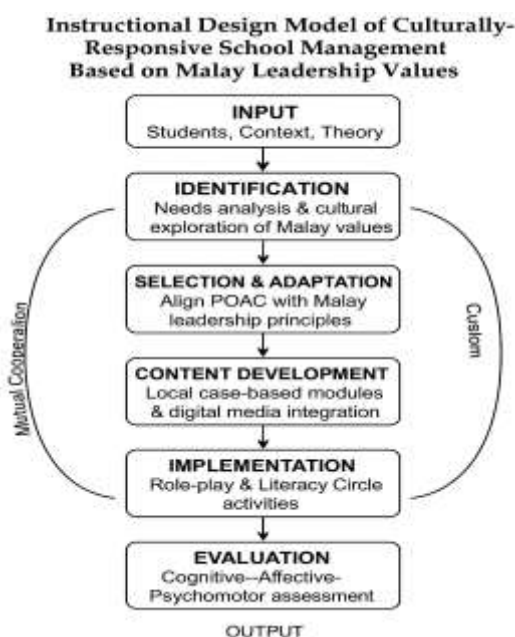


Figure 2. The flowchart illustrates the research

The circular configuration of musyawarah, religiosity, mutual cooperation, custom, and courtesy surrounding the six stages symbolizes the continuity of cultural guidance throughout the instructional process. Each value serves as an ethical compass that reinforces the integrity of leadership education. By embedding these philosophical values within the structure of instructional design, the model embodies a synthesis between global educational

standards and local cultural wisdom, ultimately contributing to the formation of reflective, ethical, and community-oriented school leaders.

### **Design and Development Phase of the Instructional Materials**

The design phase represents the continuation of the needs analysis process, aiming to construct the structure and components of the School Management

instructional materials grounded in the leadership values of the Malay ethnic group of North Sumatra. The design framework was developed by considering the results of the needs analysis from lecturers and students, the characteristics of the course, and the local cultural context that underpins the integration of values. The instructional design process encompasses four core components: (1) formulation of learning objectives, (2) organization of content structure and materials, (3) selection of instructional strategies, and (4) design of format and visual presentation.

### 1. Formulation of Learning Objectives

The learning objectives were formulated with reference to the course learning outcomes (CLOs), contextualized through Malay leadership values. In general, the instructional materials aim to help students understand the concept of school management both theoretically and practically by exemplifying leadership principles such as *musyawarah*

(deliberation), honesty, *amanah* (trustworthiness), and responsibility. Beyond managerial competence, the objectives also emphasize the development of students' moral character and social sensitivity as prospective educators and academic leaders. Thus, the instructional design seeks to balance cognitive, affective, and ethical dimensions of learning in accordance with the Malay leadership ethos that upholds *budi* (virtue), *akal* (intellect), and *adab* (courtesy).

### 2. Organization of Content and Materials

The structure of the instructional materials was designed based on four primary indicators of Malay leadership, which were systematically integrated with the four dimensions of *Transformational Leadership Theory (TLT)*—namely, Idealized Influence, Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation, and Individualized Consideration. These indicators serve as the foundational values for content organization, as illustrated in Table 3.

**Table 3. Structure of Instructional Materials for the Course “School Management Based on Malay Leadership Values”**

Unit / Chapter	Title of Material	Main Topics	Learning Objectives	Learning Activities / Strategies
Chapter I	<i>Leadership Based on Malay Philosophy: Amanah &amp; Integrity</i>	The meaning of <i>amanah</i> and integrity in Malay philosophy; principles of honesty and responsibility; case study of a school leader who upholds honesty	Students can explain and exemplify the values of <i>amanah</i> and integrity within the context of school leadership	Value discussion, case study analysis, personal reflection, short essay task
Chapter II	<i>Leadership Based on Malay Philosophy: Inspiration &amp; Motivation</i>	Values of inspiration and role modeling; strategies to build team spirit; communication that fosters trust and togetherness	Students can identify ways to build motivation and inspiration within teams based on Malay leadership values	Group presentation, inspirational leadership simulation, reflective discussion
Chapter III	<i>Leadership Based on Malay Philosophy: Intellectuality &amp; Wisdom</i>	The essence of wisdom in Malay culture; fair and prudent decision-making; deliberation ( <i>musyawarah</i> ) as a managerial principle	Students can connect wisdom and reflective thinking skills to effective decision-making processes	Case analysis, local literature study, value-based reflective activity
Chapter IV	<i>Leadership Based on Malay Philosophy: Humanism &amp; Empathy (Individualized Consideration)</i>	Humanistic, empathetic, and socially caring leadership principles in Malay culture; human-centered communication practices in school leadership	Students can demonstrate empathy, care, and interpersonal competence in leadership contexts	Empathy simulation, group discussion, reflective value assignment, role play

The table illustrates a systematic structure of instructional content arranged according to four key Malay leadership indicators. The sequence of chapters reflects a logical progression in leadership competency development: Chapter I emphasizes moral foundations (Amanah & Integrity), Chapter II strengthens the affective dimension (Inspiration & Motivation), Chapter III deepens cognitive and reflective capacity (Intellectuality & Wisdom), and Chapter IV integrates the social and interpersonal aspect (Humanism & Empathy). This structure demonstrates a deliberate balance between theoretical mastery and character formation. The use of diverse learning strategies—such as value discussions, reflections, and empathy-based simulations—supports the development of conceptual understanding and internalization of leadership values. Pedagogically, this design reinforces the paradigm of contextual and value-based learning, linking school management theory with students' cultural realities. The modular format and visual elements inspired by Malay motifs offer implementation flexibility for both face-to-face and online learning while enhancing local relevance and cultural resonance.

#### ***Development and Validation Phase***

The development phase constitutes the operationalization of the previously designed framework. It comprises three main activities: (1) drafting the initial prototype, (2) expert validation, and (3) product revision. Validation was conducted by three expert panels—content, media, and pedagogy—to evaluate the quality, presentation, and design of the instructional materials. The results revealed an average score of 91.2% (very feasible category), with experts commending the integration of Malay cultural values within the context of educational management.

#### ***Implementation and Evaluation Phase***

A limited-scale implementation was conducted with 32 undergraduate students over four instructional sessions involving

discussions, case studies, and reflective activities. Student responses demonstrated a high satisfaction rate of 89.6% (very good category). Students described the instructional materials as relevant, inspiring, and contextually grounded. They appreciated how Malay leadership values—such as amanah, wisdom, and compassion—provided new perspectives on management theories. The evaluation further showed that the integration of cultural values enhanced motivation, active participation, and self-reflection. Lecturers observed that the materials fostered a more reflective and humanistic learning atmosphere. Malay leadership values were considered to enrich educational leadership discourse with moral and social dimensions. The overall evaluation achieved an average of 90.6% (very good category), affirming the effectiveness and feasibility of the instructional materials in promoting character-based and culturally grounded learning.

The findings affirm that the development of the School Management instructional materials based on Malay leadership values represents an innovative pedagogical model that bridges academic and cultural dimensions of education. The integration of values such as amanah (trustworthiness), inspiration, wisdom, and empathy expands students' understanding of leadership beyond administrative aspects, grounding it instead in moral and cultural identity. This model demonstrates that higher education can serve as a transformative space for value internalization through the contextualization of local culture within academic practice. The implementation results reveal highly positive student engagement regarding content, presentation, and cultural relevance. The strong levels of reflection and participation indicate that local culture can serve as an epistemic resource in education. Therefore, integrating the philosophy of Malay leadership into the context of school management education can be viewed as a meaningful contribution to the paradigm of contextual learning in

Indonesian higher education—one that positions culture not merely as an object of study but as a living source of inspiration for shaping future leaders grounded in ethical and communal values.

## **DISCUSSION**

Previous studies have consistently demonstrated the importance of systematic needs analysis and instructional design in developing contextually relevant teaching materials. Research concerning the integration of 3D PageFlip media into the development of editing skills teaching materials showed that instructional innovation should combine appropriate learning content with interactive learning media to improve students' engagement and learning experiences [12]. Likewise, a preliminary study on the needs analysis of editing skills teaching materials emphasized that understanding learners' needs and instructional contexts constitutes the primary foundation for developing effective and relevant educational resources [13].

In addition, the development of literature teaching materials based on respect education highlighted that instructional materials should not merely focus on cognitive achievement but also integrate character values and sociocultural dimensions into the learning process [14]. These findings reinforce the notion that value-based teaching materials can contribute to the development of students' attitudes and ethical awareness alongside academic competence.

Building upon this line of inquiry, the present study extends previous research by integrating local wisdom into the field of educational leadership. Unlike earlier studies that focused primarily on language and literature learning, this research reconstructs Mandailing ethnic leadership values into the design of School Management teaching materials. Through this approach, indigenous leadership philosophy is positioned not simply as supplementary content but as an epistemological foundation that guides the

formulation of learning objectives, content organization, instructional strategies, and leadership competency development [15]. Consequently, this study contributes to the growing discourse on culturally responsive pedagogy by demonstrating that local cultural values can serve as an organizing framework for higher education curriculum development.

Furthermore, the findings demonstrate that prospective teachers perceive the integration of Malay leadership values into School Management instructional materials as highly relevant and necessary. All four dimensions—Amanah and Integrity, Inspiration and Motivation, Intellectuality and Wisdom, and Humanism and Empathy—obtained mean scores above 4.30, indicating a very high level of acceptance. These results suggest that students expect leadership education not merely to develop managerial competence but also to cultivate ethical awareness and cultural identity, two dimensions that are increasingly recognized as essential in contemporary educational leadership.

The strong emphasis placed on the Amanah and Integrity dimension confirms that moral responsibility remains the foundation of educational leadership. Within Transformational Leadership Theory, this dimension corresponds to Idealized Influence, where leaders function as role models whose actions are guided by ethical principles and personal credibility [16] & [17]. The Malay concept of amanah reinforces this perspective by emphasizing honesty, trustworthiness, and accountability as inseparable attributes of leadership. Therefore, the findings indicate that local cultural wisdom does not contradict transformational leadership theory; rather, it provides a concrete moral foundation that strengthens its practical implementation.

The highest score achieved by the Inspiration and Motivation dimension (4.46) highlights the importance students place on visionary and inspiring leadership. Bass argued that transformational leaders motivate followers by articulating

meaningful goals and fostering collective commitment [16]. Similarly, Malay leadership traditions emphasize exemplary conduct and the ability to inspire communal solidarity through shared values and mutual respect. This alignment suggests that incorporating stories, philosophies, and leadership practices rooted in Malay culture may enhance students' understanding of leadership by connecting abstract theoretical concepts with authentic sociocultural experiences.

The Intellectuality and Wisdom dimension also obtained a very high score, indicating that students appreciate leadership practices grounded in critical reflection and collective deliberation. The Malay principle of *musyawarah* promotes participatory decision-making, rational consideration, and social harmony. These characteristics closely correspond to the Intellectual Stimulation component of transformational leadership, which encourages creativity, innovation, and problem-solving [17]. The findings therefore support the argument that indigenous philosophical traditions can serve as valuable pedagogical resources for fostering reflective thinking and adaptive leadership competencies.

Likewise, the Humanism and Empathy dimension demonstrates that students expect leaders to exhibit compassion, social care, and personal attention. This result is consistent with the Individualized Consideration dimension proposed by Bass and Riggio, in which leaders nurture individual growth by understanding the unique needs and potentials of each follower [17]. Within the Malay worldview, harmonious interpersonal relationships are maintained through empathy, courtesy (*adab*), and mutual respect. Consequently, integrating these values into school management education contributes not only to cognitive development but also to the formation of socially responsible educational leaders.

Beyond the needs analysis, the instructional design model developed in this study offers a significant contribution to culturally

responsive education. The six-stage model—Identification, Selection and Adaptation, Content Development, Implementation, Evaluation, and Output—positions local culture as the epistemological foundation of curriculum development rather than merely supplementary content. This perspective aligns with the concept of culturally responsive teaching, which emphasizes the importance of connecting instructional experiences with students' cultural backgrounds to increase engagement and learning effectiveness [18].

Furthermore, the present findings resonate with recent discussions concerning culturally responsive leadership. Contemporary studies argue that educational leaders should actively incorporate students' cultural experiences into leadership practices to create more equitable and inclusive learning environments. Rather than treating culture as an external variable, culturally responsive leadership recognizes it as a central element in organizational decision-making and educational transformation. Recent reviews indicate that this field continues to evolve, particularly regarding the integration of indigenous knowledge systems into educational leadership frameworks.

The implementation phase further demonstrates the effectiveness of integrating Malay leadership values into instructional materials. Students reported high levels of satisfaction and engagement, while lecturers observed increased reflection and participation throughout the learning process. These findings support ethnopedagogical perspectives that regard local wisdom as an important educational resource capable of bridging academic knowledge and lived social realities [19]. Rather than functioning solely as objects of preservation, indigenous values become active sources of meaning that shape learners' identities and professional competencies.

Another important implication of this study concerns the localization of global

leadership theories. Recent literature suggests that transformational leadership in educational contexts becomes more effective when leaders are able to leverage cultural diversity and community values as organizational strengths. Educational leadership scholars increasingly argue that diversity and local identity should be viewed as strategic assets rather than contextual constraints. The present study contributes to this discourse by demonstrating that the philosophical principles of Malay leadership—amanah, musyawarah, wisdom, and empathy—can operationalize the four dimensions of Transformational Leadership Theory within higher education learning environments.

The novelty of this study lies in its systematic integration of indigenous leadership philosophy into the entire instructional design process. Previous studies have largely examined Malay leadership values from sociocultural or philosophical perspectives, whereas the present research reconstructs these values into a culturally responsive instructional model encompassing needs analysis, content development, implementation, and evaluation. Thus, local wisdom is positioned not merely as learning content but as an organizing principle for leadership education.

Practically, these findings suggest that higher education institutions should incorporate local cultural values into curriculum development as part of broader character education initiatives. Such integration enables prospective teachers to develop not only managerial competence but also ethical awareness, cultural sensitivity, and social responsibility. In multicultural societies such as Indonesia, this approach offers a promising pathway for bridging global educational theories with local community values, ultimately fostering educational leaders who are intellectually competent, morally grounded, and culturally responsive.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study concludes that the development of the School Management instructional materials based on Malay leadership values of North Sumatra provides a culturally grounded and pedagogically effective approach to leadership education in higher education. The integration of amanah (trustworthiness), integrity, inspiration, wisdom, and empathy within the instructional framework has proven to enhance students' understanding of leadership not merely as an administrative function but as a moral, intellectual, and cultural practice. The implementation results demonstrate that the designed materials are well-received by students, showing high levels of satisfaction, engagement, and reflective learning. Students perceived the materials as relevant, inspiring, and contextually meaningful to their academic and professional development. The inclusion of Malay philosophical values successfully bridges modern educational management theories with local cultural wisdom, fostering a deeper awareness of ethical and humanistic leadership among prospective educators. From a pedagogical perspective, the model confirms that contextual and value-based learning can serve as an effective strategy for character formation in teacher education. It establishes culture as an epistemic source—one that informs, enriches, and humanizes the learning process. Consequently, this research contributes to the discourse on ethnopedagogical innovation by presenting a replicable framework for developing instructional materials that align global educational standards with local wisdom traditions. In sum, the instructional design model developed through this study not only enhances academic learning outcomes but also nurtures the moral and cultural identity of future educational leaders. Its success highlights the importance of embedding indigenous values in curriculum design to promote education that is reflective, ethical,

and responsive to the sociocultural realities of its learners.

### **Declaration by Authors**

**Acknowledgement:** The authors would like to thank the Institute for Research and Community Service (LPPM) of Universitas Negeri Medan for providing research funding, which enabled the successful implementation of this study in 2025. Sincere gratitude is also extended to all participants and stakeholders who contributed their time and expertise throughout the research process. Furthermore, the authors would like to express their appreciation to colleagues, academic peers, and all individuals who provided constructive feedback, technical support, and encouragement, as well as to the editorial team and reviewers of the journal for their invaluable insights that significantly improved the quality of this article

**Source of Funding:** None

**Conflict of Interest:** No conflicts of interest declared.

### **REFERENCES**

1. Kurniawan AF. Falsafah kepemimpinan pendidikan. *Ri'ayah*. 2019;4(2):195-207. Available from: <https://e-journal.metrouniv.ac.id/riayah/article/view/1882>
2. Endraswara S. Falsafah kepemimpinan Jawa. Yogyakarta: Narasi; 2013. Available from: [https://fliphtml5.com/icyqx/rlal/Falsafah\\_Kepemimpinan\\_Jawa\\_by\\_Dr.\\_Suwardi\\_Endraswara%2C\\_M.Hum/](https://fliphtml5.com/icyqx/rlal/Falsafah_Kepemimpinan_Jawa_by_Dr._Suwardi_Endraswara%2C_M.Hum/)
3. Pama VI, Jamilah II, Yasnel Y. Jati diri dan sistem kepemimpinan Melayu. *Al-Amin: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan dan Sosial Humaniora*. 2024;1(2):100-109. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.53398/alamin.v1i2.277>
4. Sakti SA, Endraswara S, Rohman A. Revitalizing local wisdom within character education through ethnopedagogy approach: A case study on a preschool in Yogyakarta. *Heliyon*. 2024;10(10):e31370. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2024.e31370>
5. Siregar LK, Mayun I, Rahmawati Y. Culturally responsive English teaching: Developing a model for primary school EFL teachers in Indonesia. *Issues Educ Res*. 2023;33(4):1582-1600. Available from: <https://search.informit.org/doi/10.3316/informit.T2024050100001501664978137>
6. Sahabuddin M, Syahrani S. Kepemimpinan pendidikan perspektif manajemen pendidikan. *Educational Journal: General and Specific Research*. 2022;2(1):102-112. Available from: <https://jutepejolo.net/index.php/JURPERU/article/view/237>
7. Efendi N, Sholeh MI. Manajemen pendidikan dalam meningkatkan mutu pembelajaran. *Academicus: Journal of Teaching and Learning*. 2023;2(2):68-85. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.59373/academicus.v2i2.25>
8. Sabariah, S., Khair, A., Hizri, M., Rufi'i, R. I., Sulistiami, S., & Rahmi, A. Kepemimpinan Transformasional Kepala Sekolah dalam Meningkatkan Motivasi dan Komitmen Guru. *An-Nidzam: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan dan Studi Islam*. (2024);11(1):69-80. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.33507/an-nidzam.v11i1.1972>
9. Siregar W, Lubis MJ. Kepemimpinan kepala sekolah dalam pelaksanaan manajemen sekolah. *Jurnal Basicedu*. 2022;6(3):3867-3874.
10. Leithwood K, Harris A, Hopkins D. Seven strong claims about successful school leadership. *School Leadership and Management*. 2008;28(1):27-42
11. Leithwood, K. A Review of Evidence about Equitable School Leadership. *Education Sciences*. (2021);11(8):360-377. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci11080377>
12. Yuhdi, A., Lubis, M., & Nasution, M. I. S. Integration of 3D Pageflip Media in the Development of Editing Skills Teaching Materials: A Design and Development Research. *Journal of Global Research in Education and Social Science*. (2025);19(4):75-88.
13. Yuhdi, A., Lubis, M., Rosmaini, & Joharis, M. Needs Analysis of Teaching Materials for Editing Skills by Using 3D Page Flip

- Media: A Preliminary Study. Proceedings of the 6th International Conference on Innovation in Education, Science, and Culture, ICIESC 2024, 17 September 2024, Medan, Indonesia. Available from: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4108/eai.17-9-2024.2352837>
14. Wasilah, A., Harahap, S.H., & Yuhdi, A. Need Analysis of Teaching Materials on Literature Based on Respect Education in Indonesian Language and Literature Education Study Program. Proceedings of the 6th International Conference on Innovation in Education, Science, and Culture, ICIESC 2024, 17 September 2024, Medan, Indonesia. Available from: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4108/eai.17-9-2024.2352840>
  15. Joharis, M, Lubis, M. & Yuhdi, A. Teaching Materials Design for School Management Based on Mandailing Ethnic Leadership Values. Proceedings of the 6th International Conference on Innovation in Education, Science, and Culture, ICIESC 2024, 17 September 2024, Medan, Indonesia. Available from: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4108/eai.17-9-2024.2352833>
  16. Bass BM. Leadership and Performance Beyond Expectations. New York: Free Press; 1985.
  17. Bass BM, Riggio RE. Transformational Leadership. 2nd ed. Mahwah (NJ): Lawrence Erlbaum Associates; 2006.
  18. Gay G. Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research, and Practice. 3rd ed. New York: Teachers College Press; 2018.
  19. Alwasilah AC, Suryadi K, Karyono T. Etnopedagogi: Landasan Praktik Pendidikan dan Pendidikan Guru. Bandung: Kiblat Buku Utama; 2009.
- How to cite this article: Achmad Yuhdi, Rosmawaty, Atika Wasilah. Developing a culturally responsive learning model for the school management course: a North Sumatran Malay leadership perspective. *International Journal of Research and Review*. 2026; 13(6): 580-594. DOI: [10.52403/ijrr.20260656](https://doi.org/10.52403/ijrr.20260656)

\*\*\*\*\*