



Analysis of Managerial Performance of School Principals in the Implementation of Healthy Schools to Encourage Healthy Living Behavior

Wahyu Lita Sari¹, Niswanto¹, Suparta Rasyid¹

¹Master's Program in Educational Administration, Graduate School, Universitas Syiah Kuala, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author: Suparta Rasyid

Email: supartarasyid@usk.ac.id



Article Info

Article history:

Received 20 August 2025

Received in revised form 21

September 2025

Accepted 26 October 2025

Keywords:

Managerial Performance

Principal

Healthy School

Healthy Living Behavior of

Students

Abstract

This study aims to analyze the managerial performance of school principals in the implementation of healthy school programs and its impact on the development of healthy living behaviors of students at SMA Negeri Bukit Bener Meriah. The background of this research is based on the importance of the role of school principals as leaders and education managers who are responsible for planning, implementing, and evaluating non-academic programs, including healthy school programs. This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a Research and Development (R&D) level 1 design. The data collection technique was carried out through observation, interviews, and documentation involving 12 informants, namely school principals, teachers, UKS coaches, coordinators of the Healthy School Movement (GSS), BK counselors, and students. The results of the study show that the principal has developed and implemented a healthy school program through healthy canteen activities, environmental cleanliness, health checks, routine exercise, and counseling on clean and healthy living behaviors (PHBS). Supporting factors for the implementation of the program include the commitment of the principal, teacher support, UKS coaches, and cooperation with the health center. However, there are obstacles in the form of limited infrastructure, low awareness among some students, the influence of modern lifestyles, and lack of parental support. Overall, the managerial performance of the principal at SMA Negeri 1 Bukit can be categorized as effective, while at SMA Negeri 2 Bukit still faces obstacles in the consistency of implementation. This research confirms that the success of healthy school programs is largely determined by visionary principal leadership, continuous oversight, and cross-sector collaboration.

Introduction

Education has a fundamental role in shaping the character and behavior of the younger generation (Qamita & Rahayu, 2024). Not only as a means of knowledge transfer, education is also a space for fostering values, morals, and a healthy lifestyle. At SMA Negeri Bukit Bener Meriah, education is expected to be able to produce graduates who are not only academically intelligent, but also have awareness of the importance of healthy living behaviors in daily life (Amalia Tari & Sari, 2024; Licata et al., 2023; Iksal et al., 2024). One of the important aspects in supporting these educational goals is student health (Mokoagow et al., 2024; Munir et al., 2023). Good health will affect learning readiness, concentration, and academic achievement. On the other hand, students' weak awareness of a healthy lifestyle can interfere with the learning process. Therefore, schools have a responsibility to create a healthy environment through strategic programs such as Healthy Schools (Hargreaves et al., 2022; World Health Organization, 2021).

The Healthy School Program is an integrated effort that aims to improve the physical, mental, and social health of all school residents (Olson et al., 2021; Jourdan et al., 2021). This program includes a variety of activities, ranging from the provision of health facilities, clean living behavior campaigns, to continuous health education. According to Brown et al. (2006), School Health programs have been shown to be effective in lowering the risk of disease and encouraging healthy living habits from an early age.

The success of the healthy school program is largely determined by the managerial performance of the principal (Marshall et al., 2004; Gamala & Marpa, 2022). The principal as the highest leader at the education unit level plays a strategic role in planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating programs. Good managerial performance will contribute to the creation of a school culture that supports students' healthy living behaviors (Jourdan et al., 2021; Tonich, 2021).

Managerial performance itself can be understood as the result of work achieved by a person in carrying out his main duties, functions, and responsibilities based on certain standards (Imron et al., 2021; Dragomir & Panzaru, 2014; Atmaja et al., 2022; Elisa et al., 2022). In the context of principals, managerial performance means the ability to manage school resources in order to be able to achieve the vision, mission, and goals of education. The theory of education management states that the success of schools is influenced by the competence of the principal in carrying out management functions: planning, organizing, directing, and supervising (Septriani et al., 2025; Ayyildiz & Yilmaz, 2023; Palah et al., 2022). In other words, the principal is not only an educator, but also a manager who ensures that all programs run effectively, including Healthy Schools.

According to Sudarmanto in Waruwu et al. (2025), the quality of education in schools is very closely related to the leadership of the principal. Competent school principals are able to be the driving force for change and ensure that programs run according to policy direction. This also applies to the Healthy School program which requires commitment and strong leadership. The implementation of healthy schools at SMA Negeri Bukit Bener Meriah is relevant because there are still many students who do not have full awareness of healthy living behaviors. Modern lifestyles, fast food consumption habits, lack of physical activity, and the tendency to use gadgets excessively are real challenges faced by schools.

Research Sari (2018) shows that clean living behavior among students is still relatively low. Therefore, schools are required to be more active in taking promotive and preventive approaches through health programs. For example, with healthy canteens, routine cleaning activities, reforestation, and health education through counseling guidance. WHO affirms that healthy schools must strengthen six key components, namely: healthy policies, physical environment, social environment, individual health skills, community engagement, and health services (Zubaidah et al., 2017). The implementation of these six components requires visionary and managerial leadership of the principal.

In the context of modern education management, the success of the healthy school program cannot be separated from the ability of school principals to build collaboration with various parties, both internally (teachers, students, UKS) and external (health centers, health offices, parents) (Suharmita et al., 2024). Emphasizing the importance of planning that involves many parties so that healthy school programs run effectively in the Society 5.0 era. At SMA Negeri Bukit Bener Meriah, the role of the principal in organizing healthy school activities is very important. Good organization allows for a clear division of tasks, so that each element of the school is actively involved in creating a healthy environment. This is in line with the view

Rafid & Tinus (2019) which states that school principals must be able to empower education personnel through cooperation and active participation.

However, the reality on the ground shows that there are still obstacles in the implementation of healthy schools. Inhibiting factors include students' lack of understanding of health, limited facilities, and low parental participation. Research Suryani & Payung (2017) It was also found that healthy living behavior in schools has not been optimally formed because it is influenced by environmental factors and lack of habituation. On the other hand, research Khoirudin et al. (2023) It shows that schools that successfully run healthy programs are able to form positive habits of students, such as regularly washing hands, maintaining nail hygiene, eating nutritious food, and exercising regularly. These findings are proof that the managerial role of school principals is very decisive in the success of establishing healthy student behavior. Research Ridwan & Rukaiyah (2025) It also emphasized the importance of planning, directing, and supervising school principals in the Healthy School campaign. Exemplary principals are able to encourage students to emulate healthy behaviors, while consistent supervision makes the program more sustainable.

Thus, the managerial performance of school principals in the implementation of healthy schools is not only administrative, but also transformational. School principals are required to be leaders who are able to influence school culture and create a climate conducive to changing student behavior. This research is important because SMA Negeri Bukit Bener Meriah has special conditions and challenges in the implementation of healthy schools. SMA Negeri 1 Bukit has been designated as a healthy school with various positive achievements, while SMA Negeri 2 Bukit is still in the development stage. The comparison of these two schools can provide a comprehensive picture of the effectiveness of the managerial performance of school principals.

The hope of the implementation of healthy schools is the creation of a generation of students who are physically and spiritually healthy. With good health conditions, students will be more focused on learning, achieve high achievements, and have awareness to protect the surrounding environment (Chen et al., 2021; Oe et al., 2022; Kousar et al., 2022; Hasan et al., 2025). This is in line with the vision of holistic education that emphasizes a balance between cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. From a scientific perspective, this research contributes to the development of educational administration theory. The managerial performance of school principals in managing non-academic programs, such as healthy schools, is a study that broadens understanding of the role of school principals in shaping student character. In other words, school management does not only take care of academics, but also the development of a healthy culture (Idris et al., 2021; Murcahyanto & Mohzana, 2023).

Based on the description above, research on the managerial performance of school principals in the implementation of healthy schools at SMA Negeri Bukit Bener Meriah is very relevant. This research is expected to provide an empirical overview of effective education management practices, find supporting and inhibiting factors, and formulate appropriate strategies in encouraging students' healthy living behaviors in a sustainable manner.

Methods

Research Approach and Design

The research takes the qualitative descriptive design that is based on the Level-1 Research and Development (R&D) design. The reason of this selection is based on the basic orientation of the study being understanding and not measuring; it aims at revealing how managerial performance of school principals determines the implementation of healthy school programmes

and consequently affect the healthy living behaviours of students. Such inquiry would be impossible without a qualitative lens, which would help reflect the richness and nuances of human experience, namely, how leadership is done, perceived, and bargained out on the small scale of the school culture. Qualitative research, especially when it is undertaken by Bogdan and Biklen in the example cited by Bogdan & Moleong (2001), is descriptive by nature; it makes visible the world by describing it in the terms, deeds, and views of the people who live in it.

Here the descriptive method is therefore not a technical process but a mode of observation. It enables the researcher to describe phenomena in real life and avoid exerting external control and pre-conceived variables. As opposed to the generalization, the study focuses on the contextual insight into the why and how of the managerial practices and its pedagogical implications. The contribution of an R&D perspective (Level1) helps to support this orientation: the study is placed as a first-developmental exploration, the results of which can be used in the further development or creation of a model. Accordingly, the design embodies an epistemological position that places more emphasis on processes more than products, meaning more than measurement, and depth more than breadth.

Research Site and Duration

The fieldwork was done at SMA Negeri 1 Bukit and SMA Negeri 2 Bukit in Bener Meriah Regency, Aceh Province, Indonesia. The reason why these two schools were chosen purposely is that they give a significant contrast in a common regional setting. SMA Negeri 1 Bukit has been recognized as a model of a healthy school long time whereas SMA Negeri 2 Bukit still in its formative stage of developing health-based culture. This two-sited choice produces a comparative prism where managerial leadership and program implementation may be viewed not so much in the abstract as in the concrete variety of practice.

Beyond convenience or accessibility, the selection of Bener Meriah carries contextual richness. The regency represents a semi-urban educational environment marked by strong communal traditions and a growing awareness of health and environmental sustainability, yet also constrained by limited infrastructure and socio-economic disparities. Such a milieu provides fertile ground for exploring how school leadership translates policy ideals into lived institutional realities. The study was conducted over six months, from February to July 2025, allowing adequate time for prolonged engagement, iterative data collection, and reflective analysis. The duration ensured that findings were not episodic but grounded in observed patterns of consistency and change across time.

Participants and Informant Selection

The participants were selected through purposive sampling, a deliberate strategy to identify individuals who possess direct experience and relevant knowledge of the studied phenomenon. A total of 12 informants participated, encompassing two school principals (from SMA Negeri 1 and SMA Negeri 2 Bukit), two teachers, two guidance and counseling (BK) counselors, two school health unit (UKS) advisors, two coordinators of the Gerakan Sekolah Sehat (Healthy School Movement), and four students who actively participated in school health initiatives.

This configuration was not accidental but methodological it allowed the researcher to capture the phenomenon from multiple positionalities within the school ecosystem. The principals provided insight into strategic and managerial dimensions; teachers and counselors illuminated the pedagogical and behavioral aspects; while students offered a lens into how such programs were internalized at the experiential level. Through this triangulated configuration, the study situates leadership not as an isolated act of authority but as a relational practice that takes

meaning within the collective life of the school. The inclusion of diverse voices also honors one of qualitative inquiry's most ethical commitments: giving presence to those whose daily participation sustains institutional life but often remains invisible in administrative discourse.

Research Instruments

In qualitative research, the researcher is the primary instrument the interpreter through whom meaning is constructed and validated. This centrality does not imply subjectivity in the pejorative sense, but rather reflexivity: the researcher's awareness of their interpretive position and the dialogical nature of knowledge creation. Nevertheless, to ensure procedural rigor, a set of auxiliary instruments was developed, including semi-structured interview guides, observation sheets, and documentation templates.

The semi-structured interview guide provided a flexible yet focused framework for conversation, enabling the researcher to probe deeply into emerging themes while maintaining alignment with the research objectives. Observation sheets were designed to capture both behavioral and environmental indicators of the healthy school program such as hygiene practices, canteen management, and student participation in physical and health-promoting activities. Documentation templates facilitated the systematic collection of supporting evidence, including photographs, official reports, and institutional policies. Together, these instruments established a coherent methodological structure one that allowed immersion and interpretation to coexist with discipline and traceability.

Data Collection Procedures

Data were gathered through three complementary techniques observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis which together form a triangulated framework for understanding complex organizational phenomena (Jogiyanto, 2018).

Observation was conducted in a participatory mode, meaning that the researcher entered the field not as a detached spectator but as a reflective participant. This engagement allowed for the direct witnessing of how healthy school programs were operationalized, how spaces were organized, and how students and teachers embodied the school's health ethos in everyday routines. Through observation, subtleties of interaction tone, gesture, rhythm of participation became visible, enriching the data beyond what could be captured in words.

In-depth interviews were conducted with principals, teachers, UKS advisors, GSS coordinators, and students. The conversations were dialogic rather than interrogative, designed to elicit narratives that reveal not only what participants do but what they believe and feel about their practices. The interviews allowed the researcher to trace the logic of managerial decision-making, the emotional labor of leadership, and the pedagogical meanings embedded in routine acts.

The document analysis complemented the human narratives by examining tangible artifacts of the school's administrative and cultural life: policy documents, program reports, student health records, and visual archives. This layer of data served as both contextual background and evidentiary anchor, grounding interpretive claims in institutional reality. Through the interplay of these three techniques, the data collection process achieved a holistic and textured portrayal of the phenomenon under study.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis followed the interactive model of Miles and Huberman (1994), which treats analysis not as a terminal phase but as a continuous process that unfolds alongside data collection. The model comprises three interrelated components: data reduction, data display,

and conclusion drawing/verification each forming part of a cyclical movement between interpretation and validation.

During data reduction, the researcher engaged in a process of sorting, condensing, and categorizing raw information into thematic units such as planning strategies, implementation challenges, leadership behaviors, and behavioral impacts on students. This stage was not about simplification but about making sense transforming dispersed narratives into meaningful patterns while preserving their contextual integrity.

Data display involved organizing these themes into narrative matrices and descriptive summaries, allowing interconnections and contrasts to emerge clearly. Through these displays, the researcher could identify relationships between managerial actions and behavioral outcomes, as well as contextual factors influencing the effectiveness of healthy school initiatives.

Results and Discussion

Managerial Planning and Strategic Design of the Healthy School Program

The findings of this study indicate that the principal’s managerial performance in both SMA Negeri 1 and SMA Negeri 2 Bukit Bener Meriah was grounded in the strategic integration of the Healthy School Program (HSP) into the institutional framework of each school. Rather than perceiving the program as an additional agenda, the principals embedded it within the schools’ vision and mission, thereby transforming it into an institutional culture. This deliberate embedding reflects what Mulyasa (2022) refers to as educational leadership consciousness, in which the principal’s managerial acts are informed by moral responsibility and pedagogical intention. The Healthy School Program was conceptualized as a holistic system one that connects physical health, environmental awareness, and behavioral discipline as complementary components of student development.

Planning in both institutions followed a participatory pattern that encouraged input from multiple stakeholders, including teachers, school committees, UKS coaches, and even students. This participatory approach represents a shift from a bureaucratic to a dialogical model of school management, as articulated by Septriani et al. (2025), where managerial effectiveness emerges from collective ownership rather than top-down control. SMA Negeri 1 Bukit demonstrated a particularly strong tradition of consultative leadership: before the implementation phase, the principal organized workshops and collaborative meetings to align teachers’ instructional activities with the school’s health objectives. The process ensured that the concept of a “healthy school” was not only an administrative slogan but an educational ethos lived by the entire community.

At the technical level, the principal established a systematic set of programs designed to promote cleanliness, physical activity, and nutritional awareness. These activities were operationalized through concrete mechanisms of coordination, supervision, and evaluation. The school also formed a monitoring team that tracked implementation indicators, ensuring that each health domain was realized consistently. The following table summarizes the structure and managerial planning patterns identified at both schools.

Table 1. Principal-Led Managerial Planning of Healthy School Initiatives at SMA Negeri Bukit Bener Meriah

Program Area	Key Activities	Responsible Personnel	Implementation Mechanism
--------------	----------------	-----------------------	--------------------------

Environmental Cleanliness	Clean Friday, reforestation, classroom hygiene competition	Teachers and Students	Conducted weekly under environmental committee supervision
Healthy Diet Promotion	Canteen inspection, nutrition awareness campaigns	Principal & UKS Team	Coordinated with Puskesmas nutrition officers
Health Monitoring	Routine medical checkups, health record maintenance	UKS & Counseling Staff	Twice each semester
Physical Fitness	Morning exercises, sports days, extracurricular clubs	Sports Teachers	Weekly routines and monthly events
Health Education	PHBS counseling, health literacy workshops	BK Teachers & Health Center Staff	Conducted quarterly through guidance sessions

The table above illustrates that managerial performance extended beyond the design of activities to include mechanisms of continuity, accountability, and reflection. The principal's strategic role is evident in how planning was synchronized with monitoring and evaluation processes, creating a feedback loop that allowed the school to continually refine its programs. This finding affirms Marshall et al. (2004), who contend that institutional health is achieved when leadership transforms planning into a dynamic, iterative process rather than a static blueprint.

SMA Negeri 1 Bukit excelled in this area by creating internal committees responsible for environmental cleanliness and student health promotion. The committees operated semi-autonomously under the principal's supervision, fostering what can be described as "distributed leadership" a practice where authority is shared, and innovation emerges through collective agency. Conversely, SMA Negeri 2 Bukit exhibited less structured managerial coherence; although the principal had formulated similar programs, the absence of consistent supervision limited the program's sustainability. The contrast between the two schools underscores that effective managerial planning is not merely about policy formulation but about cultivating a living system where planning becomes a shared social practice.

Program Implementation and Behavioral Transformation of Students

The implementation of the Healthy School Program represents the translation of managerial planning into lived school realities. In both institutions, this process involved the mobilization of routines and rituals that encouraged students to embody health values in their daily lives. Observation data show that SMA Negeri 1 Bukit demonstrated high consistency in applying the program through structured schedules for cleanliness campaigns, morning exercise routines, and health education sessions. Teachers and principals acted as facilitators and exemplars, reinforcing behavioral expectations through daily modeling.

By contrast, SMA Negeri 2 Bukit exhibited implementation inconsistencies, where activities were often event-based rather than routine. Some health activities depended on external visits from Puskesmas staff or short-term campaigns initiated by motivated teachers. The inconsistency reveals what Brown et al. (2006) describe as the fragility of policy internalization when managerial structures fail to transform external directives into institutional habits. The following table provides a comparative overview of student behaviors that emerged as outcomes of these differing implementation patterns.

Table 2. Comparative Indicators of Student Healthy Behavior in SMA Negeri 1 and SMA Negeri 2 Bukit

Indicators of Healthy Behavior	SMA Negeri 1 Bukit	SMA Negeri 2 Bukit
Bringing healthy meals from home	65% of students	40% of students
Washing hands before eating	80% of students	55% of students
Participation in exercise and sports	75% of students	50% of students
Choosing healthy snacks	70% of students	45% of students
Classroom cleanliness participation	85% of students	60% of students

These behavioral indicators reveal an important relational dynamic: consistent managerial presence fosters consistent behavioral engagement. At SMA Negeri 1 Bukit, the principal's direct involvement in program supervision cultivated a sense of collective responsibility among teachers and students. Students internalized healthy practices not as obligations but as expressions of school identity. This internalization aligns with Sari's (2018) finding that sustained behavioral change in educational settings requires constant reinforcement and symbolic leadership from authority figures.

At SMA Negeri 2 Bukit, however, the absence of sustained supervision led to what might be termed situational compliance—students adhered to healthy practices when monitored but regressed when oversight diminished. This suggests that health behavior formation in school environments is less a matter of cognitive understanding than of cultural habituation. The implication, consistent with Waruwu et al. (2025), is that managerial leadership in schools must operate as a cultural force capable of shaping values and habits through repetition, recognition, and emotional engagement.

Interacting Support and Constraint Factors in Program Realization

The successful realization of the Healthy School Program is influenced by a complex interplay of supporting and constraining factors. Interviews and observations revealed that while internal collaboration and principal commitment strongly supported implementation, contextual barriers such as limited facilities, low parental involvement, and lifestyle influences constrained progress.

Table 3. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors Affecting the Implementation of Healthy School Programs

Supporting Factors	Inhibiting Factors
High principal commitment and moral leadership	Limited student awareness and engagement
Active teacher participation and UKS support	Insufficient health and sanitation infrastructure
Collaboration with health institutions (Puskesmas)	Influence of unhealthy modern lifestyles
Student involvement in cleaning and greening programs	Low parental participation in reinforcing health values

The supporting factors indicate that leadership commitment is the moral and operational nucleus of the healthy school movement. Principals who consistently communicate health priorities, demonstrate personal involvement, and empower teachers to lead by example tend to create a resilient institutional culture. This dynamic reflects Rafid and Tinus's (2019) notion of empowering leadership, which argues that the effectiveness of educational programs depends on the leader's ability to distribute trust and responsibility among the team.

On the other hand, the inhibiting factors show that behavioral transformation cannot occur in isolation from broader social and material contexts. Limited infrastructure such as the unavailability of clean toilets and insufficient water facilities undermines the sustainability of health practices. Additionally, students' exposure to modern consumption patterns, including the preference for fast food and digital leisure, complicates the cultivation of disciplined health behavior. The lack of parental involvement further exacerbates the gap between school-based health messages and home-based practices. These findings resonate with Suryani & Payung (2017), who highlight that student health behavior is deeply embedded in familial and societal ecosystems, not just institutional directives.

Thus, the principal's managerial effectiveness is also measured by their ability to extend leadership beyond the school walls. Effective principals, as seen at SMA Negeri 1 Bukit, engage in advocacy organizing community health workshops, involving parents in cleanliness programs, and fostering cross-sectoral alliances. This multidimensional engagement transforms managerial leadership into what might be termed boundary-spanning leadership, where the principal acts as a connector between education, community, and public health sectors.

Managerial Effectiveness and Institutional Impact

To evaluate managerial effectiveness, this study examined the four classical management functions: planning, organizing, implementation, and supervision. The comparison between the two schools revealed marked differences in the depth and coherence of these functions.

Table 4. Comparative Effectiveness of Principal Managerial Performance

Managerial Dimension	SMA Negeri 1 Bukit	SMA Negeri 2 Bukit
Planning	Excellent participatory and data-based	Moderate policy-focused but fragmented
Organizing	Strong team structure and clear delegation	Limited coordination
Implementation	Integrated and consistent	Episodic and teacher-dependent
Supervision	Continuous and reflective	Occasional and reactive
Student Impact	High behavioral internalization	Moderate and unstable

The data suggest that managerial effectiveness at SMA Negeri 1 Bukit is systemic, sustained by a combination of structured supervision and a culture of shared accountability. The principal performs not only as an administrator but as a *pedagogical leader* a leader who uses management as a medium for shaping behavior, attitude, and community ethos. Regular evaluation meetings and feedback loops ensure that each stage of implementation is revisited and refined, turning management into a reflective learning process.

SMA Negeri 2 Bukit, however, reflects the challenges of partial institutionalization. Programs tend to depend on individual enthusiasm rather than systemic momentum. Without a culture of shared monitoring, program outcomes become inconsistent. Ridwan & Rukaiyah (2025) argue that sustainable school reform depends on the interplay between structure and spirit when formal systems are animated by moral purpose and collective commitment. The findings from this study confirm that managerial leadership in healthy school implementation is not a static role but an evolving practice shaped by reflection, adaptability, and vision.

Integrative Reflection: Managerial Performance as Transformational Educational Practice

Synthesizing the entire body of findings, it becomes evident that the managerial performance of school principals in implementing healthy school programs is both a technical and ethical enterprise. Technically, it requires mastery of planning, organizing, and evaluation. Ethically, it demands the authenticity of leadership the alignment between what the principal advocates and what they embody. The principal of SMA Negeri 1 Bukit demonstrated this authenticity by participating directly in morning exercises, engaging in cleanliness activities, and maintaining open communication with students and teachers. These practices humanized leadership, transforming managerial duties into lived examples of educational care.

The results affirm that effective managerial performance in the context of healthy school programs operates within the paradigm of *transformational leadership* a model that inspires, empowers, and cultivates intrinsic motivation. Health promotion in schools is thus not a matter of compliance but of cultural transformation, where students learn not only to act healthily but to think and value health as a collective moral responsibility. This study ultimately underscores a broader educational principle: leadership that manages well sustains systems; leadership that transforms authentically sustains people.

When we step back from the descriptive contours of the results and look at the phenomenon as a lived process, a simple conclusion emerges: school health initiatives succeed not merely because a plan exists, but because people live the plan. In the two Bukit Bener Meriah schools, the principal was the hinge around which institutional life shifted toward or away from health-centred practice. That hinge comprised three interlocking features: (1) visible moral engagement (the principal's embodied example), (2) temporal discipline (the rituals and rhythms that made practices repeatable), and (3) relational reach (the capacity to weave school, family, and health services into a cooperative web). These dimensions function less as discrete variables and more as mutually reinforcing conditions: where one is weak, the integrity of the whole declines. This framing echoes recent qualitative work in Indonesia showing that principals who combine technical planning with visible, value-laden leadership generate deeper uptake of school health programs.

To unpack the first feature moral engagement consider how leadership is experienced by teachers and students. Leadership that convinces is leadership that participates: principals who join morning exercise, inspect canteens in person, or publicly acknowledge student efforts convert policy into moral narrative. The symbolic potency of such acts should not be underestimated: they communicate what matters in ways paperwork cannot. Sasaki et al.'s Indonesia study similarly identified performative credibility the congruence of leader words and deeds as a crucial mediator of program uptake. In practice, then, managerial performance must be judged by how effectively it molds the affective climate of the school; technical plans are necessary but insufficient without the leader's ethical enactment.

Second, the present study spotlights the temporal architecture of habit formation. Habits do not flash into being after a single campaign; they are accretive phenomena that require repetition, prompt feedback, and social reinforcement. SMA Negeri 1's weekly cleaning rituals, routine canteen checks, and systematic recognition produced a temporal cadence that scaffolded students' behavior into stable practice. This observation aligns with recent systematic reviews on habit formation which emphasize that the time-course and environmental cues are decisive in whether a behaviour becomes automatic; interventions that neglect frequency and feedback show high rates of decay. Thus, an implication for school managers is straightforward: design

programs around durable rhythms (daily or weekly rituals, sustained monitoring, public feedback) rather than episodic events.

Third, the ability to span boundaries to mobilize external partners such as puskesmas or local NGOs emerges as a practical lever for schools lacking abundant internal resources. Partnership is not merely additive; it is catalytic. Where schools formalized their relationship with health centres (clear schedules for visits, shared responsibilities for screening and counselling), they gained both technical capacity and external legitimacy. The WHO's Health Promoting Schools initiative underscores the same point: effective school health is inherently cross-sectoral and benefits from institutionalized linkages to health systems. But partnerships only pay off when they are cultivated as ongoing relationships with agreed roles and mutual accountability; ad-hoc visits help little. In short, principals must be boundary-spanners network managers who translate external resources into institutional routines.

Closely related to partnership is the matter of capacity building for leaders themselves. International reviews of principal preparation note a persistent gap: leadership training often emphasizes administrative competencies but neglects health promotion, boundary management, and performative modelling. When principals receive practical, practice-based preparation coaching on community engagement, simulations of visible leadership, and tools for sustaining routines they are better positioned to enact the triadic leadership we observe here (managerial, relational, cultural). The literature calls for preservice and inservice programs that treat health promotion as a leadership competency, not an optional add-on. For contexts like Indonesia, where schools navigate limited resources and strong community norms, this reconceived training is particularly urgent.

Even when school-level leadership, schedules, and partnerships are relatively strong, the home domain often remains the weakest link. The Bukit data revealed what multiple recent studies report: without parental reinforcement, school gains are fragile. Parents' daily choices what to pack for lunch, whether to insist on handwashing either amplify or cancel school efforts. Yet engaging parents is complex: socioeconomic constraints, time poverty, and cultural differences affect participation. Evidence suggests that low-burden, actionable, and culturally sensitive engagement (e.g., short mobile messages with concrete tips, weekend family activities tied to school events, or student-led take-home tasks) tends to be more effective than generic informational meetings. Principals who treat parent engagement as a programmatic design problem testing small, practical modes of outreach and measuring responsiveness stand a better chance of closing the home-school loop.

A provoking theoretical implication emerges when we synthesize these threads: managerial performance in school health cannot be reduced to a single leadership model. It is best reconceived as a composite practice in which managerial technique (planning, monitoring), cultural work (narrative, ritual), and network governance (partnerships, parental outreach) are reciprocally constitutive. This triadic formulation refines prevailing transformational-leadership frameworks by centring practices that are uniquely salient to health promotion ritualization, ecological alignment, and boundary orchestration. Practically, this means instruments for assessing principal performance should extend beyond checklist metrics to include indicators of ritual continuity, partnership formalization, and parental engagement quality.

Turning from theory to method, the study's findings also highlight a persistent research gap: longitudinal, mixed-method evidence that traces how leadership behaviours translate into lasting health outcomes over multiple years remains sparse. Many program evaluations report short-term gains but do not capture decay or consolidation. The habit-formation literature

suggests that sustaining behaviour often requires months to years of reinforcement, and therefore impact evaluations must match that temporal horizon to be meaningful. For scholars and funders, this is a call to invest in longer trials and process evaluations that illuminate mechanisms how, for whom, and under what conditions leadership matters most.

Policy-wise, the study suggests three immediate, practical levers that education authorities can pursue: (1) reorient leadership development curricula to include boundary management and performative modelling modules; (2) incentivize schools to implement low-cost, high-frequency routines (daily handwashing prompts, weekly environmental rituals) paired with simple monitoring dashboards; and (3) create regional frameworks for sustained school–health partnerships that clarify roles, data flows, and resources. Such policy moves do not demand large budgets; they demand reallocation of attention toward sustained practice and formalized collaboration. WHO and regional initiatives increasingly promote these cost-conscious whole-school strategies as both feasible and high impact.

Finally, the Bukit Bener Meriah cases contribute to a nuanced normative claim: in contexts of constrained resources, effective leadership is less about managing scarcity and more about choreographing relational energy. The principal’s job becomes one of composition assembling people, time, and small infrastructures into a coherent, repeating performance that teaches what is valued. That ethic leadership as pedagogical composition should shape both scholarly theorizing and practical training. It reframes management as a moral craft whose success is measured in the quotidian texture of school life: the regularity of handwashing, the quiet pride when a class wins a cleanliness award, the small ritual of a principal praising a child who brings a healthy snack. These micro-moments, accumulated over months and years, are the real currency of sustainable school health.

Conclusion

This research shows that the managerial performance of school principals plays a central role in the implementation of healthy school programs. The principal plays the role of a planner, organizer, implementer, as well as a supervisor who determines the direction of the program's success. At SMA Negeri Bukit Bener Meriah, the principal has arranged various health programs, such as healthy canteens, routine hygiene activities, student health checks, and UKS coaching. The implementation of the healthy school program has a direct impact on the development of students' healthy living behaviors. The results of the study showed that students at SMA Negeri 1 Bukit had a higher awareness of healthy behavior than SMA Negeri 2 Bukit. This emphasizes that the role of the principal in overseeing the implementation of the program greatly determines the quality of student behavior changes. Supporting factors that strengthen the implementation of healthy schools include the commitment of school principals, the support of teachers and UKS coaches, and cooperation with health centers. However, there are also inhibiting factors, such as the low awareness of some students, limited infrastructure, the influence of modern lifestyles, and the lack of parental involvement. Overall, the managerial performance of the principal at SMA Negeri 1 Bukit can be categorized as effective, as seen from the consistency of supervision, careful planning, and the involvement of all school residents. Meanwhile, SMA Negeri 2 Bukit still faces challenges in the consistency of implementation and supervision.

This research emphasizes that healthy school programs not only require regulations, but also strong leadership, continuous supervision, and synergy between schools and communities. Based on the results of the research, there are several suggestions that can be proposed. First, school principals need to continue to strengthen their commitment and consistency in managing healthy school programs, especially by strengthening the supervision and

evaluation function. Second, schools need to add supporting facilities such as handwashing facilities, clean toilets, and representative UKS rooms so that students are accustomed to healthy behavior. Third, it is important for schools to increase cooperation with parents and the community, for example through health socialization, nutrition counseling, and parental involvement in school cleaning activities. Fourth, local governments through the education and health offices are expected to provide support in the form of policies, funding, and training for school principals and teachers to increase managerial capacity in managing health programs in schools. With these steps, it is hoped that the healthy school program at SMA Negeri Bukit Bener Meriah can run more optimally, be sustainable, and really be able to form a young generation that is healthy, intelligent, and has character.

References

- Amalia Tari, C., & Sari, R. (2024). Peningkatan hasil belajar siswa melalui pembelajaran Direct Instruction Plus (media flip chart) di SDIT Al-Marhamah Kota Langsa. *Toga Jurnal Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan*, 1(1), 22–29. <https://doi.org/10.56211/toga.v1i1.358>
- Atmaja, D. S., Fachrurazi, F., Abdullah, A., Fauziah, F., Zaroni, A. N., & Yusuf, M. (2022). Actualization of performance management models for the development of human resources quality, economic potential, and financial governance policy in Indonesia Ministry of Education. IAIN Pontianak Repository
- Ayyildiz, P., & Yilmaz, A. (2023). Effective school management: Leadership capacity of the school principal. In *Leadership and Management for Education Studies* (pp. 46-58). Routledge.
- Bogdan, R., & Moleong, J. S. T. (2001). *Metodologi penelitian kualitatif*. Bandung: Remaja Rosda Karya.
- Brown, T. M., Cueto, M., & Fee, E. (2006). The World Health Organization and the transition from “international” to “global” public health. *American Journal of Public Health*, 96(1), 62–72. <https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2004.050831>
- Chen, M., Jeronen, E., & Wang, A. (2021). Toward environmental sustainability, health, and equity: How the psychological characteristics of college students are reflected in understanding sustainable development goals. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 18(15), 8217. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18158217>
- Dragomir, C., & Panzaru, S. (2014). The managerial performance. *Review of General Management*, 19(1), 58-60.
- Elisa, Z. P., Nabella, S. D., & Sari, D. P. (2022). The influence of role perception, human resource development, and compensation on employee performance Universitas Ibnu Sina. *Enrichment: Journal of Management*, 12(3), 1606-1612. <https://doi.org/10.35335/enrichment.v12i3.626>
- Gamala, J. J., & Marpa, E. P. (2022). School Environment and School Heads' Managerial Skills: Looking into Their Relationships to School's Performance. *International Journal on Social and Education Sciences*, 4(2), 218-235. <https://doi.org/10.46328/ijonses.285>
- Hargreaves, D., Mates, E., Menon, P., Alderman, H., Devakumar, D., Fawzi, W., ... & Patton, G. C. (2022). Strategies and interventions for healthy adolescent growth, nutrition, and development. *The Lancet*, 399(10320), 198-210. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736\(21\)01593-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736(21)01593-2)

- Hasan, M. K., Siregar, E. B., & Al Habsyi, M. H. R. (2025). KINA: Application of ecocentrism based learning to strengthen early forest care spirit through the tri hita karana value approach. *Journal of Environment and Geography Education*, 2(1), 1-16. <https://doi.org/10.61511/jegeo.v2i1.2025.1642>
- Idris, F., Zulkipli, I. N., Abdul-Mumin, K. H., Ahmad, S. R., Mitha, S., Rahman, H. A., ... & Naing, L. (2021). Academic experiences, physical and mental health impact of COVID-19 pandemic on students and lecturers in health care education. *BMC medical education*, 21(1), 542. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-021-02968-2>
- Iksal, I., Hayani, R. A., & Aslan, A. (2024). Strengthening character education as a response to the challenges of the times. *Indonesian Journal of Education (INJOE)*, 4(3), 761-774.
- Imron, I., Purwanto, P., & Rohmadi, Y. (2021). Kompetensi manajerial kepala madrasah dalam mengembangkan kinerja tenaga pendidik dan tenaga kependidikan. *Jurnal Ilmiah Ekonomi Islam*, 7(1), 350–359.
- Jogiyanto Hartono, M. (2018). *Metoda pengumpulan dan teknik analisis data*. Yogyakarta: Penerbit Andi.
- Jourdan, D., Gray, N. J., Barry, M. M., Caffè, S., Cornu, C., Diagne, F., ... & Sawyer, S. M. (2021). Supporting every school to become a foundation for healthy lives. *The lancet child & adolescent health*, 5(4), 295-303. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s2352-4642\(20\)30316-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/s2352-4642(20)30316-3)
- Khoirudin, A., Khoiri, N., Fahreza, R. B., & Nisa, I. F. (2023). Manajemen sekolah di era society 5.0 dalam meningkatkan kualitas dan produktivitas sumber daya manusia. *Al-Fahim: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, 5(2), 222–240. <https://doi.org/10.54396/alfahim.v5i2.746>
- Kousar, S., Afzal, M., Ahmed, F., & Bojnec, Š. (2022). Environmental awareness and air quality: The mediating role of environmental protective behaviors. *Sustainability*, 14(6), 3138. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su14063138>
- Licata, F., Maruca, R., Citrino, E. A., & Bianco, A. (2023). Building a healthy lifestyle: the role of emotional intelligence among Italian university students. *Scientific Reports*, 13(1), 17682. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-023-44141-3>
- Marshall, J. C., Pritchard, R. J., & Gunderson, B. H. (2004). The relation among school district health, total quality principles for school organization, and student achievement. *School Leadership & Management*, 24(2), 175–190. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1363243041000695813>
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Mokoagow, E., Lantu, M., Siregar, I. K., & Putri, S. R. (2024). Enhancing Exam Readiness: Addressing Concentration, Self-Confidence, and Emotional Preparedness in Student Learning. *Superior Education Journal*, 2(1), 8-15.
- Mulyasa, H. E. (2022). *Manajemen dan kepemimpinan kepala sekolah*. Jakarta: Bumi Aksara.
- Munir, J., Faiza, M., Jamal, B., Daud, S., & Iqbal, K. (2023). The impact of socio-economic status on academic achievement. *Journal of Social Sciences Review*, 3(2), 695-705. <https://doi.org/10.54183/jssr.v3i2.308>

- Murcahyanto, H., & Mohzana, M. (2023). Evaluation of Character Education Program Based on School Culture. *IJE: Interdisciplinary Journal of Education*, 1(1), 38-52. <https://doi.org/10.61277/ije.v1i1.8>
- Oe, H., Yamaoka, Y., & Ochiai, H. (2022). A qualitative assessment of community learning initiatives for environmental awareness and behaviour change: applying UNESCO education for sustainable development (ESD) framework. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(6), 3528. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19063528>
- Olson, T., Hegbloom, C., & Egan, C. A. (2021). Whole school approach: Connecting schools to community resources to enhance school health. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance*, 92(3), 5-12. https://doi.org/10.1080/07303084.2020.1866721?urlappend=%3Futm_source%3Dresearchgate
- Palah, S., Wasliman, I., Sauri, S., & Gaffar, M. A. (2022). Principal strategic management in improving the quality of education. *International Journal of Educational Research & Social Sciences*, 3(5), 2041-2051. <https://doi.org/10.51601/ijersc.v3i5.497>
- Qamita, F., & Rahayu, N. (2024). Meningkatkan hasil belajar siswa kelas V materi KPK dan FPB melalui media papan musi di SDN 1 Birem Rayeuk. *Toga Jurnal Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan*, 1(1), 37-41.
- Rafid, R., & Tinus, A. (2019). Kinerja kepala sekolah dalam meningkatkan mutu tenaga pendidik di Sekolah Menengah Atas Negeri 1 Latambaga, Kolaka. *Jurnal Akuntabilitas Manajemen Pendidikan*, 7(2), 188-198. <https://doi.org/10.21831/amp.v7i2.28012>
- Ridwan, M., & Rukaiyah, S. (2025). Peran kepemimpinan dan budaya sekolah dalam mewujudkan keberhasilan program sekolah sehat dan ramah anak di SD Negeri 013 Kecamatan Penajam Kabupaten Penajam Paser Utara. *Jurnal Online Manajemen ELPEI*, 5(1), 1443-1455.
- Sari, L. M. (2018). Perilaku hidup bersih dan sehat siswa Sekolah Dasar Negeri 16 Palembang. *Jurnal Kesehatan: Jurnal Ilmiah Multi Sciences*, 8(1), 30-34. <https://doi.org/10.52395/jkjims.v8i01.175>
- Septriani, S., Us, K. A., & Shalahudin, S. (2025). Manajemen supervisi dalam pendidikan perspektif kontemporer. *Sulawesi Tenggara Educational Journal*, 5(1), 65-74. <https://doi.org/10.54297/seduj.v5i1.844>
- Suharmita, M., Haromain, H., & Hariawan, R. (2024). Manajemen layanan khusus dalam membentuk karakter hidup sehat siswa melalui pendekatan program usaha kesehatan sekolah. *Jurnal Visionary: Penelitian dan Pengembangan di Bidang Administrasi Pendidikan*, 12(1), 270-280.
- Suryani, L., & Payung, S. (2017). Faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi perilaku hidup bersih dan sehat (PHBS) siswa Sekolah Dasar Negeri 37 Kecamatan Tampan Kota Pekanbaru. *Jurnal Keperawatan Abdurrab*, 1(2), 17-28.
- Tonich, T. (2021). The role of principals' leadership abilities in improving school performance through the school culture. *Journal of Social Studies Education Research*, 12(1), 47-75.

- Waruwu, M., Sitinjak, N. P., Silalahi, F., Simarmata, A., Simamora, N., & Sani, E. Y. (2025). Kompetensi kepala sekolah dalam meningkatkan mutu pendidikan. *Jurnal Penelitian Ilmiah Multidisipliner*, 1(3), 242–251.
- World Health Organization. (2021). *Promoting physical activity through schools: a toolkit*. World Health Organization.
- Zubaidah, S., Ismanto, B., & Sulasmono, B. S. (2017). Evaluasi program sekolah sehat di Sekolah Dasar Negeri. *Kelola: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan*, 4(1), 72–82. <https://doi.org/10.24246/j.jk.2017.v4.i1.p72-82>