

# Developing Resilient Educational Leaders: Insights from Global Case Studies

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## Abstract

Educational leaders are essential for maintaining school effectiveness, especially during crisis periods and quick changes. This research seeks to identify essential strategies for developing resilient educational leaders through the analysis of international case studies by Literature Review methodology research. This study analyses the literature on leadership resilience in education to identify key characteristics and effective practices employed across different countries. Research demonstrates that resilient educational leaders depict adaptability, proficient crisis management, and robust stakeholder engagement. Leadership training programs, decentralized decision-making structures, and data-driven strategies contribute significantly to resilience in educational management. Case studies from Finland, Japan, and the United States demonstrate the significance of ongoing professional development, collaborative leadership, and innovative problem-solving in enhancing leadership resilience. The study concludes that the incorporation of global insights into Indonesian educational leadership may refine school governance and the effectiveness of policies. Additionally, it advises that school leaders and policymakers allocate resources to leadership development programs and foster a culture of adaptability to increase resilience within educational institutions.

## 1. Introduction

The dynamic nature of education has rendered educational management increasingly complicated, requiring leaders who can swiftly adjust to changes and unforeseen obstacles. The dynamics of educational settings are shaped by elements such as technological improvements, demographic changes, and societal expectations, necessitating a sophisticated knowledge and prompt response from educational leaders (Chance, 2021). As educational institutions confront escalating crisis such as those induced by global pandemics or socio-economic disruptions, the necessity for resilient leadership becomes vital. Resilience, characterized as the capacity to rebound from failures and adapt constructively to change, is not just advantageous but an essential prerequisite for effective leadership in education (Allen, 2021).

Despite the recognized importance of resilience, many educational institutions encounter significant leadership challenges, particularly during crisis situations. Challenges frequently arise from a lack of preparedness, insufficient support systems for leaders, and inadequate training programs that fail to prioritize resilience-building strategies (Johnson & Woodard, 2014). As a result, educational leaders may struggle to navigate crisis effectively, leading to detrimental impacts on both staff morale and student outcomes. The lack of resilient leadership can worsen existing issues within educational settings, creating a cycle of instability that hinders progress and innovation (Garde et al., 2017). Therefore, addressing leadership challenges is crucial for fostering a stable and effective educational environment.

This article aims to uncover essential strategies for cultivating resilient educational leaders, utilizing insights from global case studies that highlight best practices in leadership development. This study seeks to offer practical approaches for policymakers and educational administrators by analyzing actionable strategies from various educational settings. These insights will be pivotal in fostering resilience among school leaders, providing them with the tools necessary to thrive in adversity and to inspire their staff accordingly (Malik, 2023). The exploration of these strategies is both timely and essential for enhancing the overall efficacy of educational institutions in an increasingly complex globe.

This research holds substantial value, providing practical insights that might enhance leadership development programs and policy initiatives aimed at nurturing resilience in educational leadership. By understanding the elements that contribute to resilient leadership, educational stakeholders can execute targeted interventions that support leaders in their professional growth and improve their capacity to handle crises effectively (Herrin, 2023).

Ultimately, cultivating resilience in educational leaders is essential for creating a sustainable and adaptive educational system that can respond to the challenges of the 21st century.

In summary, as the educational landscape continues to evolve, the demand for resilient leaders who can navigate complexity and uncertainty will escalate. This article seeks to enhance the discussion on educational leadership by offering a thorough analysis of resilience-building strategies based on worldwide case studies. This initiative seeks to empower educational leaders and policymakers with the requisite knowledge and tools necessary to foster resilience, ultimately enhancing the overall quality and effectiveness of educational institutions globally.

## **2. Methods**

This study adopts a literature review methodology to examine strategies for cultivating resilient educational leaders. The review focuses on analyzing current research, theories, and case studies related to leadership resilience in education. Academic materials, such as journal articles, books, and conference proceedings, were selected based on their relevance to the subject matter. The study examines fundamental issues including adaptability, crisis management, stakeholder involvement, and professional development in educational leadership. To maintain credibility, only peer-reviewed publications and reputable sources were utilized, favoring recent studies published within the last ten years.

The gathered literature was methodically examined to identify common strategies and best practices implemented in different educational settings globally. Case studies from Finland, Japan, and the United States were examined to highlight effective models of leadership resilience. The results were thematically categorized to provide insights into the characteristics and strategies that foster robust and adaptive educational leadership. This literature-based approach facilitates a comprehensive understanding of how resilience in educational leadership can be fostered and implemented across many educational contexts, including Indonesia.

## **3. Result and Discussion**

### **3.1. Characteristics of Resilient Educational Leaders**

Adaptability and flexibility are essential traits of resilient educational leaders, enabling them to navigate the dynamic challenges inherent in educational environments. As these environments grow more intricate due to technological advancements and evolving societal demands, leaders must exhibit the ability to adapt their approaches accordingly. (Allen, 2021) asserts that the emotional intelligence is essential for enhancing resilience in educational leaders, enabling them to navigate change with empathy and understanding. Leaders demonstrating adaptability are more proficient to address the varied needs of their stakeholders, adjusting their strategies in response to new knowledge or changing circumstances. This ability enhances both improves the efficacy in crises situation and fosters a culture of resilience inside their institutions, encouraging staff and students to view change as an opportunity for progress instead of an obstacle.

In addition to individual leadership styles, adaptability should be embedded in the broader organizational culture to ensure long-term resilience. (Claudet, 2014) examines the concept of distributed leadership, which fosters collaboration and collective decision-making among educators and stakeholders. By cultivating a culture that emphasizes flexibility and collective responsibility, educational leaders enable their teams to take initiative and actively participate in problem-solving efforts. This collective adaptability is essential during crises, enabling organizations to respond quickly and effectively to unexpected challenges. When adaptability is integrated within the institution's framework, leaders boost their efficacy and bolster the overall resilience of their educational institutions, assuring sustained stability and growth.

An essential aspect of adaptability in leadership is the capacity to manage crises proficiently while making educated decisions under pressure. Effective crisis management and decision-making are fundamental qualities of resilient educational leaders, enabling them to confront unexpected situations with assurance and clarity. (Williams & Liou, 2024) highlight the significance of crisis management competencies, such as quick situational assessment, proficient communication, and strategic implementation. These competencies are essential for maintaining stability in educational settings, especially during periods of uncertainty. Leaders proficient in decision-making effectively address immediate challenges while promoting collaboration among stakeholders, ensuring the inclusion of varied perspectives in the resolution process.

Furthermore, emotional intelligence plays a vital role in crisis management, enhancing leaders' capacity to navigate stressful situations with poise and empathy. (Allen, 2021) emphasizes that leaders with high emotional intelligence are more proficient at managing the stress and emotional turmoil frequently associated with company crises. Their capacity to empathize with the concerns of staff and students fosters transparency and trust, essential for maintaining institutional stability during challenging periods. (Aldighrir, 2024) emphasizes the importance of comprehensive crisis preparation and training for educational leaders, as these initiatives improve their readiness and confidence in handling unforeseen situations. By combining crisis management skills with emotional intelligence, leaders not only mitigate immediate disturbance but also enduring to long-term resilience of their organizations.

Resilient leadership also requires strong stakeholder communication and engagement, essential for fostering collaborative relationships that enhance educational outcomes. Effective communication with teachers, parents, students, and community members enables leaders to gather varied perspectives and cultivate a shared vision for their organizations. (Akbar & Mauna, 2021) assert that successful stakeholder engagement involves interactive and responsive communication, defined by clarity, cultural relevance, and ongoing discussion. This approach enhances transparency and strengthens reciprocal relationship, which are crucial for tackling the complex challenges educational institutions face. Through the active engagement of stakeholders, leaders cultivate a sense of belonging and dedication to the school's mission, which is especially beneficial during times of change or crisis.

Stakeholder engagement directly enhances the effectiveness of educational programs and institutional initiatives. (Nurse-Clarke & Sockol, 2022) emphasizes that community engagement efforts tailored to local requirements generate mutual benefits for all stakeholders involved. This principle applies to educational settings, where leaders prioritizing stakeholder involvement foster a more supportive learning environment and enhance program efficacy. (Wei et al., 2019) underscore the importance of aligning educational program objectives with the institution's broader goals through strong stakeholder collaborations. By promoting effective communication and collaboration, educational leaders ensure that decision-making processes reflect the aspirations and needs of their communities, thereby strengthening not only educational outcomes but also institutional resilience.

Resilient educational leaders foster a supportive and progressive climate that guarantees sustained institutional performances through the integration of adaptability, crisis management, and stakeholder involvement. Adaptability allows leaders to navigate through changing educational environments, crisis management skills equip them to confront unforeseen challenges with confidence, and stakeholder engagement promotes collaboration and shared responsibility. These leadership skills collectively contribute to the development of educational institutions that are both adaptive to change and proactive in fostering resilience among staff and students.

### **3.2. Lessons from Global Case Studies**

#### **3.2.1. Case Study 1: Finland**

Finland's education system is distinguished by its decentralized framework, which empowers educators and fosters a culture of trust-based leadership. This decentralization allows enhanced autonomy at the school level, enabling teachers to customize their teaching methodologies and curricula to meet the specific needs of their students. According to (Mølstad & Karseth, 2016), the Finnish educational framework has historically fluctuated between centralized and decentralized governance, with the present focus on decentralization promoting equality in educational opportunities across various geographical and socio-economic contexts. This paradigm empowers teachers to take ownership of their professional practices, fostering an environment conducive to innovation and the adaptation of teaching strategies without excessive bureaucratic constraints. Empowering educators increases their job satisfaction and results in better student outcomes, as educators are more likely to engage in reflective activities and collaborate with their peers to exchange best practice.

Furthermore, trust-based leadership is fundamental to the Finnish educational philosophy, which emphasizes collaboration and mutual respect among all stakeholders in the educational purposes. (Pekkola et al., 2021) highlight that effective leadership in Finnish universities has transitioned to more flexible and decentralized decision-making frameworks, particularly in response to crises as the COVID-19 pandemic. This shift highlights the importance of trust in leadership, as leaders fostering open communication and cooperative partnerships are more adept at navigating challenges and implementing necessary modifications. Trust-based leadership

strengthens the resilience of educational institutions and fosters a sense of community among teachers, students, and parents. Finnish educational leaders create a supportive environment by prioritizing trust and collaboration, thereby leading teachers to a more dynamic and effective educational systems.

### 3.2.2. Case Study 2: Japan

In Japan, educational leadership is profoundly influenced by organized professional development programs that align with a long-term vision for educational excellence. The Japanese education system prioritizes continuous professional growth for teachers, supported by programs like lesson study and professional learning communities. (Ishii, 2017) highlights that these approaches foster active learning and collaborative reflection among educators, enabling them to develop pedagogical content knowledge and enhance their teaching practices. This structured professional development not only empowers teachers but also a culture of shared leadership within schools, encouraging teachers to take on leadership roles and contribute to collective improvement of educational outcomes. By investing in the professional growth of teachers, Japanese educational leaders cultivate a resilient workforce capable of adjusting to the changing demands of the educational landscape.

Moreover, Japan's educational leadership's long-term vision is characterized by a commitment to cultivating a collaborative and inclusive school culture. This vision is underpinned by the principles of trust-based leadership, highlighting the significance of building strong bonds among educators, students, and the community. (Saddington & Bacasmot, 2024) examine the importance of tailoring teacher empowerment tactics to cultural contexts, aligning with the assertion of cultural nuances in Japan. It highlights that the teacher empowerment increases job satisfaction and is essential for sustaining an effective teaching profession. By creating an environment in which teachers feel appreciated and supported, educational leaders may enhance job satisfaction and retention, both of which are essential for maintaining a stable and effective teaching workforce. Additionally, organized professional development programs aligning with long-term vision of educational institutions enable leaders to nurture a collective sense of purpose among staff, promoting collaboration and innovation. This holistic approach to leadership not only tackles current difficulties but also prepares schools for sustained success in the future.

Furthermore, for teacher empowerment to be considered relevant in non-Western situations, it must be adapted to the cultural environment. Amoli and Youran pointed out that teacher empowerment increases job satisfaction and proposed that educators must understand the distinctions in their responsibilities and empowerment to efficiently fulfill their role. A lack of empowerment is a crucial issue that can limit the effectiveness of educators and is frequently identified as one of the most challenging problems by Assistant Language Teachers (ALTs) in Japan, as noted by Ohtani.

Considering that teacher development is a continuous, lifelong process, and that teachers are reflective practitioners, teacher training must also be an active, perpetual pursuit. Additionally, the framework of lesson study and collaborative reflection promote a professional learning community. Both pre-service and in-service educators acquire pedagogical content knowledge through repeated practice and reflection.

### 3.2.3. Case Study 3: the United States

In the framework of the United States education system, data-driven decision-making (DDDM) has emerged as a fundamental element for efficient crisis management strategies. The capacity to leverage data effectively allows educational leaders to make informed decisions that can profoundly impact student achievement, particularly during crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic. (Nnorom, et al., 2023) assert that the implementation of DDDM in principal leadership has led to improved academic performance and a more individualized approach to student support. Through the analysis of data regarding student performance, attendance, and engagement, school leaders can discern areas of need and allocate resources effectively, ensuring that interventions are precise and impactful. This proactive strategy not only improves immediate responses to crisis but also fosters a culture of continuous enhancement within schools, where data is used to inform teaching methodologies and policy decisions.

Furthermore, the incorporation of data analytics into educational leadership improves the ability for adaptive crisis management. (Schildkamp, 2019) highlights that the use of data in decision-making enhances student learning and achievement. During crisis, educational leaders leveraging data can rapidly evaluate the circumstances, identify developing trends, and adjust their strategies accordingly. This adaptability is essential in a rapidly changing environment, where prompt and

informed decisions can mitigate the negative impact of crises on educational institutions. Moreover, the focus on DDDM corresponds with wider societal trends that prioritize evidence-based methods in various fields, including healthcare and business (Adanne, 2024). By cultivating a data-driven culture in educational institutions, educational leaders can enhance their crisis management capabilities, assuring preparedness for future difficulties while maintaining a focus on student success.

### **3.3. Implications for Educational Leadership in Indonesia**

The integration of global leadership strategies into Indonesian school management is crucial for enhancing the effectiveness and responsiveness of educational institutions. As educational leadership continues to evolve worldwide, Indonesian leaders must adopt best practices that have proven successful in other contexts. (Riveros & Wei, 2019) emphasize the importance of developing standards and competency frameworks for school administrators that balance global perspectives with local realities. By incorporating these frameworks, Indonesian educational leaders can align their practices with international standards while remaining sensitive to the unique cultural and contextual factors that define the Indonesian education system. This dual approach not only strengthens the professional development of school leaders but also fosters a more cohesive and effective management structure, enabling schools to respond better to the diverse needs of students and communities.

In addition to improving leadership frameworks, the application of global strategies can facilitate knowledge sharing and resource exchange among educational institutions. (Goryunova & Jenkins, 2024) highlight the increasing role of artificial intelligence and data analytics in leadership education, emphasizing the need for leaders to develop skills in navigating these technological advancements. In Indonesia, leveraging technology and data-driven decision-making can significantly enhance school management practices, enabling leaders to make informed choices that improve student outcomes. By integrating global leadership strategies with local practices, Indonesian school administrators can create a more dynamic and responsive educational environment that prepares students for the challenges of the 21st century. This combination of global insight and local adaptability ensures that Indonesian education remains competitive and progressive in an increasingly interconnected world.

Strengthening leadership training programs in Indonesia is also essential for cultivating resilient educational leaders who can navigate crises and foster institutional stability. (Prarasri et al., 2018) argue that effective leadership training should incorporate a mix of on-the-job experience, mentoring, and formal education, following the 70:20:10 model. This blended approach ensures that school leaders are not only equipped with theoretical knowledge but also develop practical skills through real-world experiences. Enhancing leadership training programs will help Indonesian educational institutions produce a new generation of leaders capable of managing crises, implementing innovative solutions, and adapting to emerging challenges in education.

Moreover, crisis preparedness must be a fundamental component of leadership training in Indonesia, where natural disasters and socio-political challenges are prevalent. (Morenon, 2024) stress the need for leadership programs that are contextually relevant and responsive to local issues. By incorporating crisis management strategies into leadership development, Indonesian school leaders can acquire the skills necessary to respond effectively to emergencies, ensuring the safety and well-being of students and staff. This proactive approach not only strengthens the capacity of individual leaders but also enhances the overall resilience of the Indonesian education system, allowing schools to maintain continuity and stability even in challenging circumstances.

Beyond crisis management, fostering a collaborative and innovative leadership culture is vital for creating a supportive and forward-thinking educational environment in Indonesia. (Taqwim et al., 2024) emphasize the significance of cross-cultural leadership models that promote inclusivity and teamwork in educational settings. By adopting collaborative leadership practices, Indonesian school leaders can cultivate a culture of trust and shared responsibility among teachers, students, and the community. This approach not only improves decision-making processes but also encourages innovation and creative problem-solving in addressing educational challenges.

Additionally, promoting a culture of collaboration aligns with the growing recognition of emotional intelligence as a key factor in effective leadership. (Ghamrawi, 2023) highlights the importance of interpersonal skills in fostering communication and cooperation among educational stakeholders. By prioritizing collaboration, Indonesian educational leaders can empower teachers and staff to take ownership of their roles, leading to increased morale and improved student outcomes. Ultimately, cultivating a leadership culture that values collaboration and innovation will

position Indonesian educational institutions to thrive in an increasingly complex and interconnected world.

#### 4. Conclusion

This research underscores the necessity of cultivating resilient educational leaders capable of adeptly managing the complexities and challenges of the contemporary educational landscape. The research examines global case studies from Finland, Japan, and the United States to identify essential methods, including adaptation, crisis management, and stakeholder involvement, that enhance leadership resilience. The results indicate that implementing these strategies can strengthen school governance and improve policy effectiveness. Furthermore, the study emphasizes the need for specialized leadership development programs to foster a culture of adaptation and collaboration, thereby equipping educational leaders with essential tools to succeed in adversity and maintain the sustainability of educational institutions in the 21st century.

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