



How Visionary Leadership Supports Learning Quality Innovation in Vocational Education: Evidence from a Qualitative Case Study

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Abstract: This study explores how a principal's visionary leadership supports learning quality innovation at SMK Maitreyawira Batam, a vocational school in Indonesia's Batam Special Economic Zone. It examines Nanus's four leadership roles: direction setter, change agent, spokesperson, and coach. The school was purposively selected because of its documented digital learning initiatives and exposure to cross-border industrial competition. Using a qualitative case study design, data were collected over three months through in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis. Data were analyzed using the interactive model of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Credibility was supported through triangulation and member checking. Findings suggest that the four roles collectively support learning quality initiatives. The principal establishes shared direction, facilitates digital learning and industry-aligned curriculum innovation, builds external partnerships, and supports teacher development through humanistic supervision. The study provides a contextually grounded account of visionary leadership in vocational education and identifies implications for school leadership and learning quality improvement.

Abstrak: Penelitian ini mengkaji bagaimana kepemimpinan visioner kepala sekolah mendukung inovasi mutu pembelajaran di SMK Maitreyawira Batam, sekolah vokasi di Kawasan Ekonomi Khusus Batam. Fokus penelitian adalah empat peran kepemimpinan Nanus, yaitu penentu arah, agen perubahan, juru bicara, dan pelatih, serta penerapannya dalam pendidikan vokasi. Sekolah dipilih secara purposif karena memiliki inovasi pembelajaran digital yang terdokumentasi dan menghadapi persaingan industri lintas negara. Dengan desain studi kasus kualitatif, data dikumpulkan selama tiga bulan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi kelas, dan analisis dokumen. Data dianalisis menggunakan model interaktif yang mencakup kondensasi data, penyajian data, serta penarikan dan verifikasi kesimpulan. Kredibilitas diperkuat melalui triangulasi dan konfirmasi kepada informan. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa keempat peran tersebut bersama mendukung inisiatif peningkatan mutu pembelajaran. Kepala sekolah menetapkan arah bersama, memfasilitasi pembelajaran digital dan inovasi kurikulum yang selaras dengan industri, membangun kemitraan eksternal, serta mendukung pengembangan guru melalui supervisi humanistik. Penelitian ini memberikan gambaran kontekstual tentang kepemimpinan visioner dalam pendidikan vokasi dan implikasinya bagi kepemimpinan sekolah serta peningkatan kualitas pembelajaran.

A. Introduction

Technical and vocational education and training (TVET) is expected to prepare learners for changing employment demands shaped by digitalization, automation, and new industrial skills. These changes require vocational schools to update curricula, learning methods, and teacher capacity rather than rely on established routines (Asrulla et al., 2024). The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2023) emphasizes the need for vocational education systems to respond flexibly to changing skill needs, while the World Economic Forum (2025) highlights the continuing need for workforce reskilling and upskilling. UNESCO-UNEVOC (2023) also stresses that digital transformation in TVET depends not only on technology but on leadership, people, and institutional culture.

In vocational high schools, learning quality is important because graduates are expected to develop relevant vocational competencies and readiness for work (Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, 2022; Ayaturrahman & Rahayu, 2023). However, the availability of digital tools or new programs does not automatically demonstrate that learning quality has improved. For this study, learning quality is examined qualitatively through documented school practices and conditions: the alignment of learning goals and programs, the use of digital or other innovative learning approaches, the relevance of curricula and learning resources to industry needs, and support for teachers' instructional capacity. These indicators provide a focused basis for interpreting interview, observation, and document evidence. Prior studies have examined classroom-level innovations and their relationship with learning outcomes. Rahman et al (2024) investigated a problem-based learning approach integrating realistic and cultural contexts, focusing on mathematical problem-solving and self-efficacy. Although this study focuses on an instructional approach rather than school leadership, it illustrates the importance of examining concrete learning practices and learner-related evidence. The present study does not treat learning quality as a statistically measured outcome or claim that leadership alone causes changes in student achievement.

School principals have an important role in setting direction and coordinating the conditions under which learning innovation can be developed (Hitt & Tucker, 2016). Visionary leadership involves more than formulating a long-term vision; it also requires translating that vision into strategies and practices that members of the school community can understand and enact (Anas et al., 2025; Mustiningsih et al., 2020). In vocational education, this work may involve coordinating curriculum priorities, responding to teachers' development needs, and maintaining relationships with the business and industrial world (DUDI). Nevertheless, research has identified concerns that school leadership can remain focused on administrative routines, while teacher innovation and professional development may receive insufficient direction or support (Firmansyah et al., 2025). These concerns make it important to examine how visionary leadership is enacted in everyday school practices rather than infer its effects from leadership intentions alone.

This study uses Nanus (1995) framework, which conceptualizes visionary leadership through four roles: direction setter, change agent, spokesperson, and coach. The direction

setter establishes and communicates a shared direction; the change agent facilitates organizational and instructional change; the spokesperson communicates with stakeholders and builds external support; and the coach supports the development of staff capacity. These roles provide a framework for examining distinct leadership practices while also investigating how they may relate to one another. Although other leadership perspectives address instructional improvement and organizational change, Nanus's framework is useful for this study because it brings strategic direction, change, external communication, and staff development into a single analytical lens. The framework is used to organize interpretation of the case, not to presume in advance that all four roles are equally present or that they necessarily produce improved learning outcomes.

Previous studies have examined visionary or transformational leadership in relation to teacher performance, school-based management, and organizational culture (Anas et al., 2025; Khalifah et al., 2025; Mustiningsih et al., 2020; Setiawati, 2023). This literature provides relevant insights into school leadership, but the studies cited here do not directly explain how the four roles in Nanus's framework are enacted together in a vocational school or how the relationships among them are reflected in practice. Meanwhile, research on instructional innovation has examined particular teaching approaches and their associated learning outcomes (Rahman et al., 2024). This classroom-level study does not explain how school leadership coordinates learning initiatives, teacher development, and external partnerships. This distinction highlights the need to examine the relationship between leadership practices and learning quality initiatives at the school level.

SMK Maitreyawira Batam provides a context for exploring these questions. The school was selected purposively because its documented initiatives include digital learning and because it operates in a region characterized by industrial activity and cross-border economic connections. This setting makes the relationship between school learning and industry relevance an important issue to examine. However, the regional context should not be assumed to shape leadership in a particular way without evidence. Accordingly, this study considers contextual influences only insofar as they are reflected in interview accounts, classroom observations, and school documents.

The school's documented initiatives include hybrid learning, digital assessment, and curriculum alignment with DUDI. These initiatives provide concrete entry points for examining how strategic direction, change efforts, external engagement, and teacher support are enacted. The analysis therefore considers not only whether initiatives are reported, but also what evidence from interviews, classroom observations, and documents substantiates their implementation.

The study examines the principal's visionary leadership in relation to learning quality initiatives at SMK Maitreyawira Batam. Its contribution is a contextually grounded account of how the four roles are enacted, how their relationships are represented in the case evidence, and how the school's setting is reflected in leadership practices. By linking the analysis to documented evidence rather than assuming causal effects, the study aims to

clarify how visionary leadership is practiced in a vocational education context and to identify insights that may be considered in comparable settings.

Accordingly, this study examines how the principal of SMK Maitreyawira Batam enacts the four visionary leadership roles of direction setter, change agent, spokesperson, and coach to support learning quality initiatives. It also explores how these four roles relate to one another within the principal's leadership practices and how contextual conditions associated with Batam's industrial and cross-border setting, including engagement with the business and industrial world (DUDI), are reflected in the enactment of visionary leadership.

B. Method

This study employed a qualitative case study design to examine how the principal's visionary leadership supports learning quality initiatives at SMK Maitreyawira Batam. A case study was appropriate because the research focused on leadership practices within their organizational context and drew on multiple sources of evidence (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Yin, 2018). The school was purposively selected because of its documented digital learning initiatives, including hybrid learning and digital assessment using Exambro, as well as its location within Batam's industrial and cross-border economic environment. The analysis was guided by Nanus (1995) four visionary leadership roles: direction setter, change agent, spokesperson, and coach.

Five informants were purposively selected based on their involvement in school leadership, curriculum implementation, teacher development, and school activities. They comprised the principal (P1), vice principal for curriculum (WK1), senior teacher (GT1), guidance and counseling teacher (BK1), and student council advisor (OSIS1). Their professional experience ranged from six to eighteen years. The principal provided information about vision formulation, organizational change, external representation, and teacher development. The vice principal for curriculum described curriculum coordination and alignment with the business and industrial world (DUDI), while the teachers and student council advisor provided perspectives on instructional practices, teacher support, and student-facing initiatives.

Three instruments were used for data collection: a semi-structured interview protocol, a classroom observation protocol, and a document review checklist. The interview protocol explored the four leadership roles and invited informants to provide concrete examples of their implementation. The observation protocol focused on classroom learning activities, instructional strategies, the use of digital learning resources, teacher-student interactions, and the implementation of school learning initiatives. Observations covered four classes. The document checklist guided the review of curriculum documents, learning programs, school activity reports, and other relevant records. Learning quality was examined through evidence of curriculum and learning-goal alignment, instructional innovation, the use of relevant learning resources, teacher support, and connections between learning activities and vocational or industry needs.

Data were collected over three months through individual interviews, classroom observations, and document review. Each interview lasted approximately 35–55 minutes, was audio-recorded with informed consent, and was transcribed verbatim. Data collection and analysis proceeded iteratively, allowing interview accounts to be compared with observation notes and documentary evidence. The actual dates of data collection and the frequency of classroom observations were recorded to provide a transparent account of the research process.

Data analysis followed the interactive model of Miles et al (2014), comprising data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Interview transcripts, observation notes, and documents were reviewed and coded to identify evidence related to the four leadership roles, learning quality initiatives, and contextual factors. The coded data were compared across informants and sources to identify recurring patterns, supporting evidence, and differing perspectives. Relationships among the four leadership roles were examined by comparing how the roles appeared in particular leadership practices and initiatives. Any diagram showing these relationships was treated as a thematic relational display rather than a formal network analysis.

Trustworthiness was supported through source and method triangulation, member checking, documentation of analytical decisions, and reflexive memoing. Interview findings were compared with classroom observations and available documents. Preliminary interpretations were shared to verify the accuracy of the accounts and clarify any discrepancies. Ethical principles were observed throughout the study. Informants were informed about the research purpose, their participation rights, and the use of their data before providing informed consent. Role-based codes were used to protect identities, and research records were stored securely with access restricted to the research team. The study was supported by a research permit issued by Universitas Ahmad Dahlan (No. F1.1/1084/D.66/IV/2026). The overall research procedure from participant selection and data collection to coding, interpretation, and verification is summarized in Figure 1.

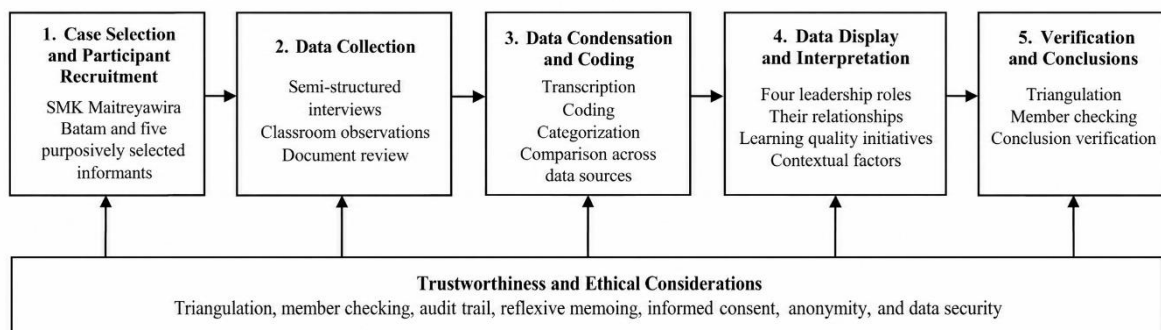


Figure 1. Research Procedure and Data Analysis Flow
 Source: Authors' research procedure, adapted from Miles et al (2014)

C. Result

The findings are organized around the four visionary leadership roles proposed by Nanus (1995), followed by an examination of the interactions among these roles and the contextual conditions reflected in the principal's leadership practices. Interview accounts were used to identify the practices associated with learning quality initiatives. The findings describe reported leadership practices and their relevance to learning quality rather than establish a direct causal effect on student learning outcomes.

The Principal as a Direction Setter

The principal's direction-setting role was reflected in the formulation and communication of the school vision, the involvement of the quality assurance team, and the annual evaluation of school programs. According to the principal (P1), the school conducts an annual evaluation involving teachers and student representatives to review whether its direction remains appropriate:

"Every year there is a meeting to evaluate whether it is still appropriate or not... involving all teachers and student representatives from each class."

The vice principal for curriculum (WK1) explained that the school's emphasis on digitalization informs expectations for classroom practice, stating, *"This school's vision prioritizes digitalization, so teachers must adapt to technology in their learning."*

These accounts indicate that the school vision provides a reference for communicating institutional priorities and reviewing learning-related initiatives. The involvement of teachers and student representatives also allows perspectives from different members of the school community to be considered during evaluation. The findings therefore associate the direction-setting role with participatory evaluation, communication of institutional priorities, and alignment between the school vision and learning programs.

The Principal as a Change Agent

The change-agent role was reflected in the introduction of digital learning initiatives, hybrid learning for students undertaking Field Work Practice (PKL), digital assessment, and curriculum alignment with vocational learning needs. The school reportedly used Google Classroom, Google Drive, digital quiz applications, and Exambro to support learning and assessment activities.

The student council advisor (OSIS1) reported that the principal encouraged students to develop interactive learning activities:

"The principal encouraged us to create interactive games in our lessons, especially for lessons that involve a lot of theory."

This account illustrates how the principal's encouragement was associated with student-facing instructional initiatives. The vice principal for curriculum (WK1) also emphasized discipline, humanism, and contextual relevance in preparing learning media and teaching modules.

Curriculum-related initiatives were associated with the needs of the Business and Industrial World (DUDI) across three vocational programs: Digital Business (BD), Visual Communication Design (DKV), and Institutional Financial Accounting (AKL). These practices indicate an effort to connect learning activities with vocational competencies and professional expectations.

The findings also indicate that the introduction of digital technology required support for teachers who experienced difficulties adapting to new tools. The student council advisor (OSIS1) explained:

"Usually there is a summons process, the principal conducts a survey first, then those who find it difficult to use technology are given special assistance."

This account suggests that the change-agent role involved not only introducing new practices but also responding to difficulties encountered during implementation. The available evidence documents digital initiatives and support practices, although it does not independently establish their effects on student achievement.

The Principal as a Spokesperson

The spokesperson role was reflected in communication and collaboration with external stakeholders, particularly DUDI, as well as the involvement of industry professionals in school learning activities. The vice principal for curriculum (WK1) reported that guest teachers from DUDI were scheduled to share industry knowledge and skills with students.

A senior teacher (GT1) also described inviting industry professionals whose expertise corresponded to the school's vocational programs:

"We also present seminars from industry professionals, for example, for the BD department we invite digital business experts, for DKV we invite design experts."

These examples show how external relationships were used to introduce professional knowledge into school activities. The reported involvement of industry professionals provides an example of how the spokesperson role was connected to vocational learning and access to external expertise.

The findings also indicate that the school's external communication and collaboration were not limited to maintaining institutional relationships. Such activities were associated with efforts to make learning resources more relevant to the expertise required in vocational programs. However, claims that these partnerships improve

graduate employability or produce measurable learning gains require more direct evidence of those outcomes.

The Principal as a Coach

The coaching role was reflected in teacher professional development, academic supervision, and interpersonal support. Reported initiatives included encouraging participation in the Teacher Professional Education Program (PPG), Subject Teacher Working Groups (MGMP), seminars, and further study.

A guidance and counseling teacher (BK1) explained that the principal supported teachers' professional development and recommended them when opportunities to contribute as seminar speakers became available:

"The principal doesn't restrict teachers' development; instead, they encourage it. Even when there's an opportunity to be a seminar speaker, the principal makes the recommendation."

Academic supervision was also reported to take place twice a year. A senior teacher (GT1) explained that the principal provided feedback on classroom teaching and lesson planning:

"The principal provided input on how we teach in class, including things that need to be added to the lesson plan and in the learning process."

These accounts indicate that coaching combined opportunities for professional learning with supervision and feedback on instructional practice. The principal's reported humanistic approach also formed part of the support provided to teachers and other school personnel.

Overall, the coaching role was associated with teacher development, reflective supervision, and individual support. These practices were intended to strengthen teachers' capacity to plan and implement learning activities. Further evidence from classroom observations or teaching documents would be needed to establish the extent to which professional development resulted in changes in classroom practice.

Table 1 summarizes the four visionary leadership roles, the practices reported by the informants, and their relevance to learning quality initiatives.

Table 1. Empirical Evidence of the Four Visionary Leadership Roles and Learning Quality Initiatives

Leadership Role	Main Practices Reported	Illustrative Data Sources	Relevance To Learning Quality Initiatives
Direction Setter	Participatory annual evaluation, communication of the school vision, and program alignment	Principal (P1) and Vice Principal for Curriculum (WK1)	Establishing shared direction and aligning school programs with institutional priorities

Leadership Role	Main Practices Reported	Illustrative Data Sources	Relevance To Learning Quality Initiatives
Change Agent	Digital learning, hybrid learning, vocational curriculum alignment, and individual assistance with technology use	Student Council Advisor (OSIS1) and Vice Principal for Curriculum (WK1)	Supporting instructional innovation and the relevance of vocational learning
Spokesperson	DUDI collaboration, industry guest teachers, and professional seminars	Vice Principal for Curriculum (WK1) and Senior Teacher (GT1)	Connecting school learning activities with external expertise and professional knowledge
Coach	PPG and MGMP participation, academic supervision, professional development, and individual support	Guidance and Counseling Teacher (BK1), Senior Teacher (GT1), and Principal (P1)	Supporting teacher development, instructional reflection, and the implementation of learning initiatives

Source: Interview data and research analysis.

Table 1 shows that each leadership role was associated with a different set of practices. Direction setting provided institutional priorities, change management involved the introduction of learning initiatives, spokesperson activities connected the school with external expertise, and coaching supported teacher development. These roles were distinct in emphasis but appeared in complementary aspects of the school's learning-related activities.

Interactions Among the Four Visionary Leadership Roles

The findings suggest that the four visionary leadership roles were enacted through connected practices rather than as entirely separate responsibilities. One example concerned the relationship between direction setting and change management. The school's vision emphasized digitalization, while the principal's reported expectations encouraged teachers to adapt technology in their learning activities. The use of digital platforms and Exambro illustrates the learning initiatives associated with this institutional priority.

A second connection appeared between change management and coaching. The school introduced digital learning practices while also providing individual assistance to teachers who experienced difficulties using technology. The account provided by the student council advisor (OSIS1) suggests that technology-related change was accompanied by efforts to identify and address teachers' difficulties. This finding illustrates the relationship between introducing an initiative and providing support for its implementation.

A further connection was reflected in the relationship between external collaboration and vocational learning. The scheduling of guest teachers from DUDI and the reported seminars delivered by industry professionals provided examples of how external expertise was brought into school activities. These activities were relevant to vocational programs and were associated with efforts to connect learning resources with professional knowledge.

The coaching role also complemented the school's learning initiatives through professional development opportunities and academic supervision. The accounts of BK1 and GT1 describe support for professional development and feedback on instructional practice. Taken together, the findings suggest that the principal's leadership involved both the introduction of learning initiatives and the provision of support and external resources associated with their implementation.

These patterns provide preliminary empirical evidence of relationships among the leadership roles. They do not establish that each role directly causes the effectiveness of another. Table 2 summarizes the documented interactions and the contextual conditions evident in the current findings.

Table 2. Documented Interactions Among Leadership Roles and Contextual Conditions

Analytical Pattern	Evidence from the Findings	Interpretation Supported by the Evidence
Direction setter and change agent	The school vision emphasizes digitalization, and teachers are expected to adapt technology in their learning activities	Institutional priorities are reflected in reported digital-learning initiatives
Change agent and coach	Teachers who experience difficulty using technology reportedly receive individual assistance	The introduction of technology is accompanied by support for teacher readiness
Spokesperson and vocational learning initiatives	Guest teachers from DUDI and industry professionals contribute knowledge relevant to vocational programs	External collaboration provides access to professional expertise related to vocational learning
Coach and instructional development	Teachers report professional development opportunities and feedback on classroom teaching and lesson planning	Professional support is associated with teacher development and instructional reflection
Vocational and industrial context	The school offers Digital Business, Visual Communication Design, and Institutional Financial Accounting programs and reports collaboration with DUDI	Leadership practices address vocational learning needs and links between school programs and industry

Source: Interview data and research analysis

Table 2 shows that the reported interactions mainly concern the relationship between institutional direction, instructional initiatives, teacher support, and external collaboration. The clearest links are the connection between the school's digitalization priority and digital-learning practices, and the provision of teacher assistance alongside technology-related changes. The collaboration with DUDI provides a further link between external engagement and the vocational focus of learning activities.

Contextual Conditions in Batam's Vocational and Industrial Environment

The clearest contextual pattern in the available findings concerns the school's vocational orientation and its engagement with DUDI. The three expertise programs, Digital Business, Visual Communication Design, and Institutional Financial Accounting, provide a

setting in which curriculum relevance and access to professional knowledge are important considerations. The reported use of industry guest teachers and professional seminars illustrates how external expertise was incorporated into school activities.

These findings suggest that the principal's leadership practices were associated with the school's vocational and industrial environment, particularly through curriculum-related initiatives and collaboration with external professionals. They also illustrate how the spokesperson and change-agent roles were relevant to connecting learning activities with professional knowledge.

However, the evidence presented in this section does not yet establish that cross-border competition in Batam directly shaped the principal's leadership decisions. A specific claim about cross-border competition would require interview quotations, observations, or documentary evidence explicitly referring to cross-border labor-market competition, regional economic pressures, or related considerations. Without such evidence, the findings support a more limited interpretation concerning vocational education and engagement with the industrial environment.

Figure 2 presents an emerging relational model that synthesizes the four leadership roles, the documented connections among their practices, and their relationship to learning quality initiatives. The model represents an interpretation of the reported evidence rather than a causal model or a quantitative network analysis.

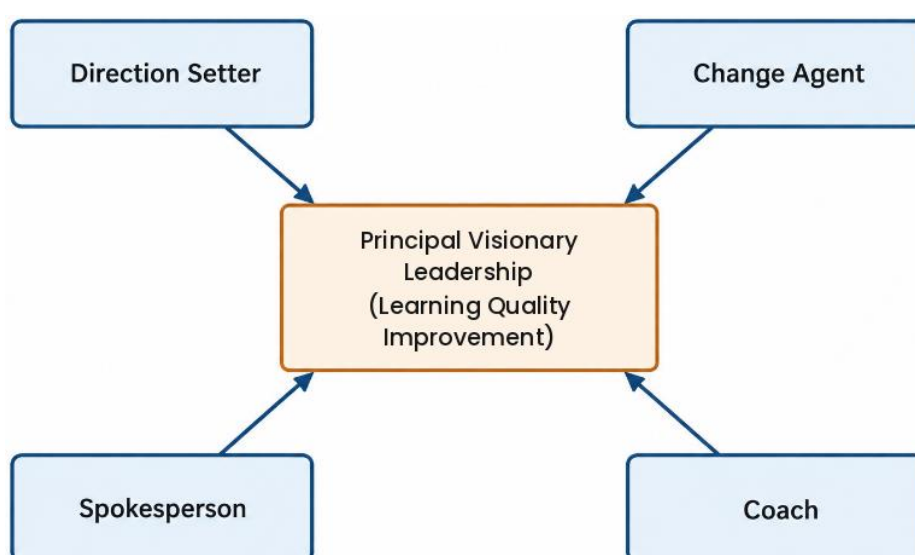


Figure 2. Emerging Model of Visionary Leadership and Learning Quality

Source: Authors' analysis of interview and supporting data

Overall, the findings portray visionary leadership as a set of connected practices involving shared direction, instructional innovation, external collaboration, and teacher development. The emerging model provides a context-specific summary of how the four leadership roles were reflected in the learning quality initiatives reported at SMK Maitreyawira Batam. Its interpretation is limited to the evidence available in this case and should not be treated as proof of causal effects on student learning outcomes.

D. Discussion

The findings suggest that visionary leadership at SMK Maitreyawira Batam is best understood as a combination of complementary practices rather than the isolated implementation of four leadership roles. Consistent with Nanus (1995), the principal's leadership involves establishing direction, facilitating change, representing the school to external stakeholders, and developing the capacity of organizational members. However, the contribution of this study lies not simply in identifying these four roles, but in examining how they are connected in the context of vocational learning initiatives. The findings indicate that shared direction provides a reference for change, teacher support facilitates the implementation of new practices, and external collaboration contributes professional resources relevant to vocational education. These relationships should be interpreted as patterns within the case rather than as evidence of direct causal effects on student learning outcomes.

The direction-setting findings support the view that an organizational vision becomes meaningful when it is translated into procedures and shared practices. Nanus (1995) emphasizes the importance of establishing a clear organizational direction, while Anas et al (2025) examine visionary leadership of school principals as a means of improving education quality. In the present study, the school vision and culture guidelines, annual evaluation, and involvement of the quality assurance team provided mechanisms for connecting institutional priorities with learning-related programs. The principal's account that annual evaluation involves teachers and student representatives also indicates that the review process is not limited to managerial deliberation. This participatory approach is consistent with Leithwood et al (2020), who emphasize the role of collaborative leadership in supporting organizational improvement. It allows school members to contribute perspectives on the suitability of existing priorities and the practical challenges encountered during implementation.

The quality assurance team is particularly important because it offers an organizational mechanism through which the school vision can be connected with program implementation. This finding can be discussed in relation to Mustiningsih et al (2020), whose work provides a basis for considering how school leadership and organizational structures support educational management, and Hallinger (2011) synthesis of instructional leadership research. Rather than attributing the translation of vision into practice solely to the principal's personal communication, the case indicates that a formal school structure can help coordinate program alignment and evaluation. Nevertheless, because the present study concerns one school, the quality assurance team should be understood as a contextually grounded mechanism, not as a universally applicable model or a definitive solution to shortcomings in other schools.

The change-agent role was reflected in digital learning initiatives, hybrid learning for students undertaking Field Work Practice (PKL), digital assessment using Exambro, and curriculum alignment with vocational competencies. These practices are consistent with Bush (2015) discussion of the relationship between educational leadership and instructional

improvement. The use of technology for students undertaking PKL is also relevant to the challenge of maintaining learning activities when students undertake practical training outside school, a concern addressed by [Septianingrum et al \(2023\)](#). International perspectives from the [OECD \(2023\)](#) and [UNESCO-UNEVOC \(2023\)](#) also emphasize that digital transformation in vocational education involves institutional capacity, implementation, and the people expected to use technology, not merely the acquisition of digital tools.

The present findings are consistent with these perspectives in showing that digital initiatives were accompanied by efforts to address teacher readiness. The student council advisor (OSIS1), for example, reported that teachers who experienced difficulties with technology could receive individual assistance. This evidence suggests that the change-agent role involved both introducing innovations and responding to implementation difficulties. The principal's humanistic approach can be interpreted through the perspective of transformational leadership discussed by [Leithwood et al \(2020\)](#), as well as [Fullan's \(2002\)](#) argument that successful educational change depends on developing the capacity and commitment of the people involved. In this case, individualized assistance appears to be one mechanism through which the principal supported teachers during technology-related change. However, the available evidence documents reported practices and intentions more directly than measurable changes in student achievement.

The spokesperson role further illustrates how leadership extends beyond internal school management. In accordance with [Nanus \(1995\)](#), the role involves mobilizing external relationships in support of organizational priorities. At SMK Maitreyawira Batam, reported collaboration with the Business and Industrial World (DUDI), the scheduling of industry guest teachers, and seminars delivered by professionals provided opportunities to connect school activities with external expertise. These findings suggest that external collaboration can be considered meaningful when it provides resources or experiences relevant to learning, rather than being assessed only through the number of partnerships or the school's public image. This interpretation offers a useful perspective for comparison with studies of school leadership and school quality, including [Setiawati \(2023\)](#) and [Anas et al \(2025\)](#). Nevertheless, the present study does not establish that these activities independently improve graduate employability or produce measurable learning gains.

The coaching role complements these initiatives by supporting the teachers responsible for planning and implementing learning activities. The reported encouragement to participate in PPG, MGMP, seminars, and further study illustrates the principal's efforts to support professional development. This finding is comparable with [Firmansyah et al \(2025\)](#), who discuss the roles of change leadership, principals' academic supervision, and teacher self-efficacy in improving teachers' pedagogical competence. Academic supervision also provides a mechanism for connecting professional development with classroom practice, in line with meta-analytic evidence that teacher coaching can improve instructional practice ([Kraft et al., 2018](#)). The developmental supervision model associated with Glickman, as discussed by [Syafarina et al \(2021\)](#), emphasizes the importance of feedback

that responds to teachers' needs and supports instructional development. [Anas et al \(2025\)](#) further highlight the relevance of combining professional support with competency development. In the present case, supervision, professional learning opportunities, and humanistic interactions appear to operate as complementary forms of support. The evidence does not, however, establish the extent to which these activities resulted in sustained changes in teaching quality.

The relationships among the four roles provide a more integrated explanation of the findings. First, the direction-setting role establishes priorities that guide change initiatives. The school's stated emphasis on digitalization is reflected in the reported use of learning platforms and digital assessment. Second, the change-agent role is linked to coaching because the introduction of digital practices requires support for teachers who experience difficulties during implementation. Third, the spokesperson role connects school initiatives with external expertise through DUDI collaboration and industry guest teachers. Finally, evaluation and feedback provide opportunities to reconsider whether the school's priorities and programs remain appropriate. This pattern is consistent with [Fullan \(2002\)](#) emphasis on the human and organizational dimensions of educational change and [Leithwood et al \(2020\)](#) perspective on leadership for school improvement. The sequence described here is an analytical interpretation of the reported practices, not evidence that the roles always occur in a fixed order. It also does not demonstrate that the absence of any single role would necessarily lead to failure.

The findings concerning Batam require a distinction between directly documented contextual evidence and broader interpretation. The direct evidence indicates that the school operates within a vocational setting involving Digital Business, Visual Communication Design, and Institutional Financial Accounting programs, and that its learning-related activities include collaboration with DUDI and industry professionals. These practices demonstrate the relevance of vocational curriculum alignment and external professional knowledge to the principal's leadership practices. The emphasis on curriculum relevance is consistent with the policy direction of the [Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology \(2022\)](#), as well as international discussions of the responsiveness of vocational education to changing skills needs ([OECD, 2023](#); [UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2023](#)).

Batam's industrial and cross-border setting provides a relevant context for interpreting these practices, consistent with the view that school leadership should be examined in its context ([Hallinger, 2018](#)), but it should not be treated as a demonstrated cause of the principal's decisions without direct supporting evidence. In particular, the interview accounts and examples presented in the findings establish engagement with DUDI and vocational learning needs, but do not by themselves demonstrate that the principal explicitly changed leadership practices in response to competition with Singapore or Malaysia. Such a conclusion would require interview accounts or documentary evidence referring directly to cross-border competition, regional labor-market pressures, or related considerations. Until such evidence is available, the cross-border dimension is better

presented as contextual background and a possible area for further investigation rather than as an established empirical finding.

Taken together, this study contributes a contextually grounded account of how visionary leadership roles can be connected through learning quality initiatives in a vocational school. Its contribution is not to establish a universally applicable leadership model, but to show how direction setting, change management, external representation, and coaching were reflected in a particular organizational setting. The findings also suggest that the relevance of visionary leadership should be examined through the practices linking school priorities with instructional initiatives, teacher support, and external learning resources. Since the study is based on a single case and primarily qualitative evidence, the emerging relationships should be examined in other vocational schools before broader conclusions about their transferability or effects on learning outcomes can be drawn.

E. Implication

The findings have practical implications for school leaders in vocational education. At the school level, leaders may consider connecting the school vision with periodic program evaluation, providing targeted support when teachers implement new technologies, strengthening collaboration with DUDI, and linking academic supervision with teachers' professional development needs. These practices should be adapted to the school's resources, teacher readiness, vocational programs, and local stakeholder relationships rather than adopted as a uniform package.

For education managers and policymakers, the case illustrates the potential value of supporting school-level collaboration, teacher development, and partnerships between vocational schools and industry. However, evidence from one school is insufficient to justify a new national accreditation standard or a universal policy requirement based on this particular model. Broader policy recommendations would require comparative evidence from schools operating in different geographical, organizational, and industrial contexts. Future research could examine whether similar relationships among the four visionary leadership roles appear in other vocational schools and how those relationships are associated with observed teaching practices, student competencies, and other indicators of learning quality.

F. Limitation and Suggestion for Further Research

This study has several limitations. First, it focused on a single vocational school, SMK Maitreyawira Batam, with five purposively selected informants. Therefore, the findings provide a contextually grounded understanding of visionary leadership and should not be generalized to all vocational schools. Second, the findings rely primarily on qualitative evidence collected through interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis over three months. Although these sources provide insights into the relationships among the four leadership roles and learning quality initiatives, they do not establish causal effects on

student learning outcomes. Furthermore, the influence of Batam's cross-border industrial environment could not be fully established without more direct empirical evidence concerning regional labor-market pressures and international competition.

Future research could extend this study by examining visionary leadership in multiple vocational schools with different organizational characteristics and industrial contexts. Comparative and longitudinal studies could explore how the four leadership roles interact over time and how their implementation relates to changes in teaching practices, teacher competencies, and student learning outcomes. Researchers could also incorporate quantitative indicators, such as student competency assessments and classroom learning measures, to complement qualitative findings. In addition, further investigation into the specific influence of industry partnerships, digital transformation, and cross-border economic conditions could provide a deeper understanding of how contextual factors shape visionary leadership in vocational education. Such research would help assess the transferability of the emerging model and refine its theoretical and practical implications.

G. Conclusion

This study examined how the principal's visionary leadership supports learning quality initiatives at SMK Maitreyawira Batam through four roles: direction setter, change agent, spokesperson, and coach. The findings indicate that the direction-setting role establishes shared priorities through the school vision and annual evaluation, while the change-agent role is reflected in digital learning initiatives, hybrid learning, digital assessment, and curriculum alignment with vocational competencies. The spokesperson role connects the school with DUDI and external professionals to enrich learning resources, whereas the coaching role supports teacher development through professional learning opportunities, academic supervision, and a humanistic approach. These roles are interconnected in practice, particularly when institutional priorities guide learning initiatives, teacher support facilitates the implementation of change, and external collaboration provides access to relevant professional knowledge. The findings describe how these practices support learning quality initiatives but do not establish direct causal effects on student learning outcomes.

This study contributes a contextually grounded understanding of visionary leadership in vocational education by illustrating how the four roles are enacted within one school's organizational and industrial context. The findings highlight the relevance of aligning school priorities, instructional initiatives, teacher development, and external collaboration. However, the evidence concerning Batam's cross-border industrial competition remains limited and requires further investigation. Because the study focused on a single school and five informants, the emerging model should not be considered universally applicable. Future comparative research involving multiple vocational schools and additional evidence on teaching practices and student competencies could clarify the transferability of the findings and further examine the relationship between visionary leadership and learning quality.

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