

Journal of Educational Sciences
Journal homepage: https://jes.ejournal.unri.ac.id/index.php/JES

P-ISSN 2581-1657
E-ISSN 2581-2203

Harmony in Leadership: A Correlational Study between the Democratic Leadership Style of School Principals and the Integrity and Work Discipline of Teachers at SMA Negeri 4 Malang

Ratna Sukma Ningrum*, Siti Awaliyah, Sri Untari
Faculty of Social Sciences, State University of Malang, Malang City, 65145, Indonesia

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received: 20 Aug 2025
Revised: 23 Feb 2026
Accepted: 05 March 2026
Published online: 15 March 2026

Keywords:

Democratic Leadership Style,
Teacher Integrity,
Teacher Work Discipline

** Corresponding author:*

E-mail: ratna.sukma.2007116@students

Article Doi:

https://doi.org/10.31258/jes.10.3.p.1125-1140

This is an open access article under the CC BY-SA license.



A B S T R A C T

This study investigated the relationship between the principal's democratic leadership style and teachers' integrity and work discipline at SMA Negeri 4 Malang. The study was motivated by the importance of effective school leadership in fostering teacher professionalism. A quantitative correlational design was applied, involving 62 teachers as respondents. Data were collected using Likert-scale questionnaires and analyzed through Pearson's correlation with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences. The results showed that the principal's democratic leadership style, teacher integrity, and work discipline were all categorized as high, with percentages of 85%, 85%, and 86%, respectively. Statistical analysis indicated significant positive correlations between democratic leadership style and teacher integrity ($r = 0.438$; $p < 0.01$), and between democratic leadership style and work discipline ($r = 0.329$; $p < 0.01$). These findings demonstrate that democratic leadership contributes to strengthening teacher integrity and work discipline. Therefore, collaborative and participatory leadership is important for improving the quality of school management.

1. Introduction

Education is a key pillar in building a nation's civilization, and its quality is largely determined by the synergy between school leadership and teachers as the main actors in the learning process. In educational institutions, principals function not only as administrative managers but also as strategic and inspirational leaders who play a decisive role in shaping the school climate, strengthening teacher professionalism, and ensuring the achievement of the school's vision and mission (Mulyasa, 2009; Sudadi, 2022). Effective leadership enables schools to operate as

dynamic organizations that promote collaboration, responsibility, and continuous improvement. Therefore, leadership style constitutes a central factor in understanding how educational institutions foster positive teacher professional conduct and sustainable institutional performance.

The success of an education system is strongly influenced by leadership that empowers all elements of the school organization. In leadership studies, various leadership styles have been identified, each with distinct characteristics and implications for organizational effectiveness (Himawan, 2023). Among these, democratic leadership is widely regarded as one of the most effective approaches in educational settings, as it emphasizes participation, collaboration, transparency, and shared decision-making. When enacted by school principals, a democratic leadership style encourages teachers to actively engage in school governance, express their ideas, and develop a sense of ownership toward institutional goals. Such leadership fosters an open and supportive work environment in which teachers feel respected and involved, thereby enhancing professionalism, motivation, and organizational commitment (Hermawan & Ismail, 2017; Musfah, 2022).

Despite the potential benefits of democratic leadership, issues related to teacher integrity and work discipline remain persistent challenges in the education sector. Teacher integrity—encompassing honesty, moral consistency, ethical responsibility, and commitment to professional values—constitutes a fundamental dimension of teacher professionalism. Work discipline, meanwhile, refers to teachers' adherence to institutional regulations, punctuality, and responsibility in carrying out professional duties. Empirical evidence indicates that problems of integrity and discipline continue to hinder the achievement of educational quality, even in institutions that adopt participatory leadership practices (Himawan & Nurgiyantoro, 2022). Studies by Agustina (2020) and Suparno (2015) further reveal manifestations of these issues, including low awareness of professional responsibilities, dishonest conduct, and ethical violations, all of which negatively affect the educational climate and public trust in schools.

The urgency of addressing integrity and work discipline is reinforced by empirical data from the Malang City Education Office. Based on official records from an Education Office meeting held in January 2025 in East Java Province, recapitulated data on civil servant disciplinary violations during the 2021–2023 period documented 98 cases involving various forms of misconduct. The most frequent violation was unexcused absenteeism, with 36 recorded cases, indicating a persistent issue in attendance discipline. In addition, more serious violations reflecting deeper integrity concerns were identified, including divorce without permission (29 cases), adultery or unregistered marriage (18 cases), abuse of authority (4 cases), forgery of signatures or official documents (3 cases), as well as corruption and sexual harassment (2 cases each). These data highlight the multidimensional challenges faced by the education sector in maintaining professional integrity and work discipline among teachers as part of the civil service.

Work discipline and integrity are interrelated components of teacher professionalism and play a crucial role in determining educational quality. Teachers who demonstrate strong work discipline tend to exhibit higher levels of motivation, dedication, and consistency in fulfilling their professional responsibilities, which in turn influence student learning outcomes and overall school effectiveness. Similarly, teachers with strong integrity are more likely to gain the trust and respect of students, parents, and colleagues, positioning themselves as ethical role models within the school community. However, maintaining integrity in educational settings is often complex, particularly in the face of organizational pressures and individual constraints (Pangaribuan et al., 2025). The persistence of integrity and discipline violations across educational institutions underscores the need for deeper analysis of the factors that can strengthen these essential professional attributes.

Although numerous studies have examined the relationship between democratic leadership and teacher motivation or performance, significant gaps remain in the literature. In particular, limited research has comprehensively explored the relationship between democratic leadership and teacher integrity and work discipline as distinct yet interconnected dimensions of professionalism. This gap indicates that the mechanisms through which democratic leadership influences ethical conduct and disciplinary compliance among teachers are not yet fully understood. Addressing this gap is essential for developing leadership models that not only enhance performance but also foster ethical and disciplined professional conduct in schools.

Grounded in Kurt Lewin's Behavioral Leadership Theory, which emphasizes leadership practices and interaction patterns (Lewin, Lippitt, & White, 1939), and Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, which explains human action through observation, modeling, and self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977), this study posits that the democratic leadership style of school principals serves as a key factor in shaping teacher integrity and work discipline. The selection of SMA Negeri 4 Malang as the research setting is particularly relevant, given the school's reputation as a leading institution that upholds values of deliberation, democracy, discipline, and responsibility. This context provides a strong foundation for examining how leadership practices aligned with institutional values influence teachers' professional conduct.

Based on the foregoing discussion, this study aims to examine, separately and in depth, the relationship between the democratic leadership style of school principals and teacher integrity, as well as the relationship between the democratic leadership style of school principals and teacher work discipline at SMA Negeri 4 Malang. The findings are expected to provide empirical evidence of the contribution of democratic leadership to each dimension of teacher professionalism, while also enriching theoretical and practical discourse in the field of educational management.

2. Methodology

This study uses a quantitative approach with a correlational design to measure the relationship between the democratic leadership style of school principals as *the independent variable* and teacher integrity and work discipline as *the dependent variable*. This study was conducted at SMA Negeri 4 Malang 2025. The entire population consisting of 62 teachers was sampled using the census technique. Data were collected using a Likert scale questionnaire with 30 statements for each variable. Before analysis, the instrument was tested for quality with a validity test on 30 respondents, showing 28 valid items for the democratic leadership style of the principal and 24 valid items for the variables of teacher integrity and work discipline.

The validity for each variable was 0.361, while the reliability test using *Cronbach's Alpha* showed very reliable values of 0.919 for the democratic leadership style of the principal, 0.873 for teacher integrity, and 0.858 for teacher discipline. Validity and reliability tests have been conducted, and the data has been tested for normality and linearity as prerequisites for data analysis. The normality test obtained a value of 0.200 for the leadership variable, 0.168 for integrity, and 0.200 for work discipline, which included a probability (*sig)* > 0.05, meaning that the data was normally distributed.

Meanwhile, the linearity test obtained a *sig* value. *Deviation from Linearity* was 0.485 > 0.05*,* which is significant in the democratic leadership style of the principal with teacher integrity and *a sig. Deviation from Linearity* value of 0.411 > 0.05, which is significant in the democratic leadership style of the principal with teacher work discipline, meaning that the direction of the relationship between variables is linear. Hypothesis analysis was conducted separately using the Pearson Product Moment correlation test in *IBM Statistics SPSS Version 25.0* to determine the relationship between the democratic leadership style of school principals and teacher integrity and to determine the relationship between the democratic leadership style of school principals and teacher work discipline. This test was based on the significance value (Sig. < 0.05), a comparison of the calculated r and the table r, and the presence of an asterisk in the analysis results to determine the significance and strength of the correlation.

The Pearson Product Moment Correlation is an analysis to measure the linear relationship between two variables that have a normal data distribution. Therefore, to measure the closeness of the relationship between two variables, namely the independent and dependent variables*,* the *Pearson Product Moment* correlation formula is used*,* with the interpretation of the closeness of the *Pearson Product Moment* correlation coefficient with a categorization scale (Sugiyono, 2013). This study uses descriptive statistics to describe variables and inferential statistics to draw conclusions, taking into account data processing analysis using *IBM Statistics SPSS Version 25.0.*

3. Results and Discussion

SMA Negeri 4 Malang is one of the most popular high schools in Malang City, with an excellent academic and non-academic reputation. The school is located in a strategic area that is easily accessible and has long implemented an educational vision that focuses not only on intellectual intelligence, but also on character building, with a strong emphasis on the principles of deliberation, democracy, discipline, and responsibility. This vision has created a unique organizational culture, where active participation from the entire school community, including teachers, principals, and staff, is the norm. In addition, as a consistent Adiwiyata School, Malang State High School 4 also upholds ethical and environmental values that indirectly demand high integrity and discipline from all *stakeholders.* Such a supportive and morally oriented work environment makes it an ideal case study to examine how leadership practices that are in line with school values can foster a strong work ethic among educators.

This background is particularly relevant because the democratic leadership of the principal, which is the focus of this study, is believed to be in harmony with the school culture, which is deeply rooted in the values of openness and collective responsibility. In this study, to find out more about this, interviews were conducted with teachers and the principal. The interview guidelines for obtaining data related to this can be seen in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Interview Guidelines for Principals and Teachers

Indicators	Description
Consistency of integrity	The steadiness or stability of principals and teachers in acting, thinking, and responding to certain situations repeatedly and continuously over time
Delegation of responsibility	The process of transferring some of the tasks, authority, and responsibilities of a superior to a subordinate to be carried out in accordance with the limits of the authority given
Collaboration	The process of working together between two or more parties to achieve a common goal by utilizing each other's abilities, knowledge, and resources
Empathy	A person's ability to understand and feel what another person is feeling, as if they were in that person's position.

The commitment of the principal and teachers at SMA Negeri 4 Malang to professionalism is evident in various structured self-development programs, including regular workshops and curriculum innovation initiatives. In terms of infrastructure, the school has adequate facilities that support teaching and learning activities, which directly contribute to teacher motivation. Furthermore, the principal at this institution is known for his humanistic and participatory management approach, which is manifested through open communication forums, where every teacher has the opportunity to voice their ideas and concerns. This approach consistently creates a safe and solution-oriented climate, far from an autocratic culture.

The relationship between the principal and teachers is likened to equal working partners, not just superiors and subordinates, a practice that is very much in line with indicators of democratic leadership styles, such as collaboration with open communication and delegation of responsibility, which received very high ratings in this study. Therefore, the very high levels of teacher integrity and discipline (85% and 86%) found in this study are a direct reflection of an integrated ecosystem between the school's vision, strong organizational culture, and supportive leadership practices.

Democratic Leadership Style of the Principal of State Senior High School 4 Malang

The leadership style of the principal plays a crucial role in creating a positive work environment and encouraging active participation from the entire school community. This study focuses on democratic leadership style, which emphasizes collaboration, open communication, and joint decision-making. The democratic leadership style of the principal at SMA Negeri 4 Malang was measured using four indicators, namely consistency of integrity. delegation of responsibility, collaboration with open communication, and empathy. To provide a more detailed picture, see Table 2 below.

Table 2. Tabulation of Measurement Indicators of Democratic Leadership Style of the Principal of SMA Negeri 4 Malang

Indicator	Percentage	Category
Consistency of integrity	84	ST
Delegation of responsibility	84	ST
Collaboration with open communication	85	ST
Empathy	85	ST
Average	85	ST

Source: Processed data, 2025

Based on Table 1, the democratic leadership style of the principal of SMA Negeri 4 Malang is overall in the Very High category with an average percentage of 85%. This achievement is demonstrated by consistent scores on each indicator. The indicators of collaboration with open communication and empathy have the highest percentage, namely 85%. Meanwhile, the indicators of consistency and delegation of responsibility are both at 84%. The principal of SMA Negeri 4 Malang implements a very democratic leadership style with a focus on collaboration and empathy, which is in line with the values of professionalism at the school. These findings are in line with Behavioral Leadership Theory (Lewin, Lippitt, & White, 1939), which focuses on the actual actions of a leader, not just innate traits. The principal's democratic leadership style is demonstrated by the consistency of the principal's integrity, delegation of responsibility, open communication in collaboration, and empathy. Collaboration with open communication and a high level of empathy prove that the principal strongly practices participation and sensitivity towards teachers.

The democratic leadership of this principal not only emphasizes personal relationships, but is also reinforced by consistent integrity and delegation of responsibility. Consistency in acting fairly builds a foundation of trust and security so that highly moral individuals can work together and control themselves (Mustiningsih, 2013), which is in line with the idea that good leaders set an example of integrity where they are able to be consistent and firmly committed. Teachers' positive assessment of the principal under their leadership indicates that the principal's consistent integrity effectively creates a supportive and predictable work environment. When teachers see consistency between the principal's words and actions, their level of trust increases, which in turn can encourage greater commitment and better performance. This is in line with democratic leadership theory, which emphasizes the importance of transparency and participation in building a healthy and productive work culture. Therefore, consistency not only serves as a benchmark but also as a key catalyst for teachers' professional development and improving the quality of education in schools.

The principal's success in creating a collaborative work environment and building a culture of mutual trust in the delegation of responsibilities. This highly rated delegation of responsibility shows that the principal empowers teachers by giving them autonomy and complete trust, a concrete manifestation of leadership that focuses on interpersonal relationships. Thus, the principal's democratic leadership style becomes the foundation for building relationships between leaders and teachers as colleagues, not just subordinates.

Overall, the success of the highly democratic leadership style of the principal of SMA Negeri 4 Malang reinforces the argument that democratic leadership creates a productive, collaborative, and enjoyable work culture (Rachmadhani & Manafe, 2023). This not only affects performance but also fosters teacher integrity, as feeling valued and involved in decision-making encourages teachers to trust and respect their leaders more (Pertiwi et al., 2019). Thus, democratic leadership is an essential foundation for building a strong and integrity-based educational environment.

Teacher Integrity Level at State Senior High School 4 Malang

Teacher integrity is a fundamental pillar in building trust and credibility in the teaching profession. As a noble profession, teachers are required to have high integrity. Integrity is a fundamental personal quality for every educator that not only shapes students' character, but also forms the basis for public trust in the teaching profession. The integrity of teachers at SMA Negeri 4 Malang is generally at a very high level, obtained from quantitative measurements through four indicators, namely honesty, consistency and responsibility, exemplary integrity and principled courage, followed by a commitment to moral values. To provide a more detailed picture, see Table 3 below.

Table 3. Tabulation of Measurement Indicators of Teacher Integrity at Malang 4 Public High School

Indicator	Percentage	Category
Honesty	84	ST
Consistency and responsibility	84	ST
Exemplary integrity and principled courage	87	ST
Commitment to moral values	86	ST
Average	85	ST

Source: Processed data, 2025

Based on Table 1.2, the overall integrity level of teachers at State Senior High School 4 Malang is in the Very High (ST) category with an average percentage of 85%. This achievement is supported by consistent scores across all indicators, with exemplary integrity and principled courage scoring the highest at 87%, followed by commitment to moral values at 86%, and honesty, consistency, and responsibility each at 84%. The high level of integrity among teachers at Malang 4 Public High School reflects strong and consistent professionalism among educators. Teacher integrity here is built on a foundation of honesty and consistency, both of which have a percentage of 84%. This is in line with the definition of integrity as the alignment between values and integrity (Hafizha, 2021). This indicator shows that teachers are not only verbally honest, but also consistently responsible for their duties and obligations, upholding the quality of educators supported by consistent virtuous actions (Suparno, 2015). Therefore, this high level of integrity is a key pillar in creating a positive and character-building school climate.

Teachers' integrity is also supported by a commitment to strong moral values. The highest value in this indicator is genuine empathy for students and non-discriminatory actions, which indicate that teachers have a deep dedication to broader ethical principles in social interactions. This commitment is essential for building trust and credibility, which are crucial components of effective cooperation. Therefore, integrity rooted in these moral values becomes the foundation for a healthy and productive work environment, where each individual feels safe and valued.

The most prominent aspect of integrity is exemplary integrity and principled courage, which achieved the highest percentage of 87%, indicating that teachers' integrity does not stop at the individual level, but is manifested in their role as role models for students and colleagues. The courage to reject unethical practices affirms the central role of teachers as agents of moral and ethical change in the school environment (Himawan, 2023). This deeply internalized integrity is clear evidence that teachers at this school have succeeded in becoming strong role models who do not hesitate to uphold the truth openly and consistently, even in the face of complex challenges. They become moral pillars that inspire the entire school community to uphold the values of truth and justice.

The integrity ecosystem at SMA Negeri 4 Malang can be described as a system that appears to be holistically integrated and highly principled. Teachers begin with a foundation of honesty and consistency, which is then reinforced by moral

commitment, and ultimately manifested through exemplary and principled courage. This high level of integrity is influenced by internal factors such as strong personal values, as well as external factors such as a supportive school culture and ethical leadership (Widyastuti & Supardi, 2018). This connection shows that integrity is not just a collection of traits, but an integrated and consistent system that enables teachers to maintain and develop their professionalism optimally.

Level of Work Discipline of Teachers at State Senior High School 4 Malang

Teachers' work discipline is not only related to rules, but also a moral responsibility to give their best. Teachers' work discipline at SMA Negeri 4 Malang is generally at a very high level, obtained from quantitative measurements through four indicators, namely time discipline based on self-awareness, creative and innovative attitudes, compliance with rules, and loyalty to the profession. For a more detailed description, see Table 4 below.

Table 4. Tabulation of Measurements for Each Indicator of Teacher Work Discipline at SMA Negeri 4 Malang

Indicator	Percentage	Category
Time discipline based on self-awareness	8	ST
Possesses a creative and innovative attitude	85	ST
Compliance with rules	86	ST
Commitment to moral values	85	ST
Average	86	ST

Source: Processed data, 2025

In Table 3, the overall work discipline level of teachers at SMA Negeri 4 Malang is in the Very High category with a cumulative average of 86%, supported by excellent achievements in each indicator, where time discipline based on self-awareness achieved the highest percentage of 87%, followed by compliance with rules at 86%, and having a creative and innovative attitude and commitment to moral values, each of which reached 85%. The high level of work discipline achieved by teachers confirms that teachers at SMA Negeri 4 Malang have a strong awareness and commitment to carrying out their professional duties. This result is in line with the concept of work discipline as a mental attitude manifested in compliance with rules and ethics in order to achieve goals (Sinungun, 2009). This means that teachers at SMA Negeri 4 Malang consciously and voluntarily demonstrate compliance and loyalty to the norms and rules that apply in their work environment. The high level of teacher work discipline is an important foundation for the stability and effectiveness of the school's overall operations.

Teachers' work discipline achieved a very high percentage on every indicator. Compliance with rules is a strong dimension that reflects teachers' commitment to regulations and professional ethics. This compliance is not based on fear of sanctions, but rather on understanding and a sense of ownership of the existing rules (Hasibuan, 2016). This strong compliance is evident in teachers' actions to maintain ethical communication and consistently follow applicable guidelines. High compliance is supported by a clear understanding of the reasons behind the rules,

making it not just blind obedience, but the result of a collective sense of ownership and mutual agreement.

In addition to compliance, loyalty to the profession is also an important pillar, and teachers at Malang 4 Public High School meet the very high category. This shows the teachers' deep dedication, so that in terms of loyalty, it goes beyond mere physical presence to include alignment with the school's vision and mission, demonstrating that teachers feel a personal responsibility to achieve common goals. Loyalty is also manifested through active participation in school development. This proves that loyalty is realized through active participation and integrity, in line with the Teacher Professional Code of Ethics, which emphasizes the obligation of teachers to uphold the honor of the profession.

Teachers' work discipline can also be seen through their self-aware time management. The high percentage of time discipline with full commitment to working hours confirms the strong dedication of teachers in allocating their time according to the demands of the profession and shows that teachers are present to carry out their duties not because of coercion, but because of an understanding of professional responsibility, which ultimately has a positive impact on organizational performance and goals. This self-aware discipline is an important foundation for creating an effective and high-quality learning environment. Ultimately, this shows that teachers' commitment is not limited to rules, but is also part of a strong work ethic.

In addition, the indicators of teachers' creative and innovative attitudes are also very high, showing that teachers at SMA Negeri 4 Malang are very proactive in student-centered learning. This reflects that teachers are not only compliant with the system, but also active and responsible for continuously improving the quality of education, in line with Article 6 of the Teacher Professional Code of Ethics, which requires teachers to continuously develop themselves. Teachers demonstrate the courage to provide original and adaptive solutions to the curriculum and technology, which shows flexibility and confidence in facing challenges, in accordance with the mandate of Permendikbudristek No. 67 of 2024 ( ) which requires teachers to continuously develop themselves.

The high level of work discipline at SMA Negeri 4 Malang reflects the success of school management and the commitment of individual teachers in internalizing professional values. This strong discipline is a tangible manifestation of the implementation of the Teacher Professional Code of Ethics, which serves as a reference for acting with integrity, competence, and full responsibility. Integrated work discipline in the form of compliance, loyalty, time discipline, and independence in creativity and innovation helps teachers meet the ethical standards mandated in the teacher profession standards. Ultimately, this contributes significantly to the creation of an ethical, dignified learning environment that focuses on shaping students' character, in line with the main objectives of the teaching profession.

The Relationship between the Democratic Leadership Style of School Principals and the Integrity of Teachers at State Senior High School 4 Malang

Comprehensive analysis of data, theory, and statistics shows a significant and positive relationship between the democratic leadership style of the principal and teacher integrity at SMA Negeri 4 Malang. To statistically reinforce these findings, a Pearson Product Moment correlation test was conducted using SPSS 25.0 on Table 5 as follows:

Table 5. Results of Correlation Calculations between X and Y_1 using SPSS

Correlations			
		Democratic Leadership Style of the Principal	**Teacher Integrity**
Democratic Leadership Style of School Principals	**Pearson Correlation**	1	.438**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	62	62
Teacher Integrity	Pearson Correlation	.438**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	62	62

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: SPSS version 25.0 output, 2025

The presentation in Table 1.4 confirms that the Pearson correlation test empirically shows a value of r = 0.438 with a significance of 0.000 ($p < 0.01$), which indicates a moderate but statistically strong positive correlation. The test results show a Pearson Correlation value of 0.438 and a significance value (*Sig. 2-tailed)* of 0.000. In accordance with statistical rules, a significance value of 0.000, which is smaller than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$) or even smaller than 0.01 ($p < 0.01$), confirms that the identified relationship between the democratic leadership style of school principals and teacher integrity is statistically significant.

A correlation coefficient value of r = 0.438 places this relationship in the moderately strong category. This indicates that the democratic leadership style of school principals contributes substantially to teacher integrity, although it is not the only influencing factor. In the context of social research, where variables are influenced by many other factors, this correlation value indicates a realistic and meaningful relationship. A teacher's integrity is the result of a complex interaction between personal values, experiences, and external factors, including leadership. These findings are consistent with the high percentages for both democratic leadership (85%) and teacher integrity (85%), confirming that a participatory leadership style is positively correlated with the level of teacher professionalism.

The relationship between school principal leadership and teacher integrity can be explained in depth through Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory. The democratic leadership style of school principals serves as a crucial environmental factor in shaping teacher integrity. When teachers observe school principals as role models who practice collaboration, open communication, and empathy, they will naturally imitate and internalize the same values of integrity. This observational

learning plays an important role in character building, as evidenced by the high percentage of indicators of teacher integrity, particularly exemplary and principled courage. Effective democratic leadership not only regulates performance but also serves as a vital instrument in fostering integrity and a strong work ethic among teachers.

The strong relationship between the democratic leadership style of school principals and teacher integrity is a key finding in this study. Furthermore, the positive correlation between democratic leadership style and teacher integrity in this study is in line with the findings of Hanum et al. (2019), which emphasize the importance of honesty and consistency (integrity) in increasing trust in the school environment. Democratic leadership style, with its characteristic transparency and collaboration, directly models integrity. This creates an ecosystem where integrity becomes a shared value, not just an individual trait. School principals who are open to criticism and suggestions, as described by Sodikun (2022), practice integrity, which in turn encourages teachers to do the same. Thus, democratic leadership serves as a catalyst in fostering a sustainable culture of integrity throughout the school environment.

Teacher involvement in decision-making and the delegation of responsibility directly increases their sense of self-efficacy. When teachers feel trusted and have autonomy, their confidence in their ability to act with integrity also increases. This concept explains the reciprocal interaction between the environment (leadership), cognition (teacher beliefs), and integrity. Democratic leadership styles create a mutually beneficial cycle in which a supportive environment reinforces teachers' beliefs about the importance of integrity, and teachers' integrity-based integrity in turn reinforces that leadership style.

Although teacher integrity is also influenced by internal factors such as personal values, these results show that democratic leadership serves as an essential catalyst and facilitator. Ethical leadership and a transparent school culture, shaped by the principal, have been shown to contribute significantly to teacher integrity (Widyastuti & Supardi, 2018). Therefore, the relationship identified in this study is a realistic reflection of the synergy between the individual qualities of teachers and a supportive environment.

The Relationship between the Democratic Leadership Style of Principals and the Work Discipline of Teachers at SMA Negeri 4 Malang

Comprehensive analysis of data, theory, and statistics shows a significant and positive relationship between the democratic leadership style of the principal and teacher work discipline at SMA Negeri 4 Malang. Based on Table 1.5, the Pearson Correlation (r) value is 0.329, indicating a positive relationship between the two variables. This suggests that the higher the level of the principal’s democratic leadership style, the higher the level of teacher work discipline. Although the correlation value of 0.329 is categorized as weak or low, it remains statistically meaningful. The significance value (Sig. 2-tailed) is 0.009; since this value is less than 0.01 ($p < 0.01$), the relationship can be considered statistically significant. This indicates that the relationship is not coincidental and can be scientifically justified.

To strengthen these findings statistically, a Pearson Product Moment correlation test was conducted using SPSS 25.0. Table 6 shows the results as follows:

Table 6. Results of Correlation Calculations between X and Y_2 using SPSS

Correlations			
		Democratic Leadership Style of the Principal	**Teachers' Work Discipline**
Democratic Leadership Style of School Principals	**Pearson Correlation**	1	.329**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.009
	N	62	62
Teacher Work Discipline	Pearson Correlation	.329**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.009	
	N	62	62

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed).

Source: SPSS version 25.0 output, 2025

The significance value (0.009) further confirms the robustness of these findings and supports the argument that a participatory and supportive leadership approach has a measurable positive impact on teacher professionalism. These results also demonstrate that a democratic leadership style—characterized by collaboration, open communication, and empathy (with a very high percentage of 85%)—contributes significantly to fostering a culture of discipline within schools. This relationship can be further explained through the concept of leadership role modeling. Role modeling is a key factor influencing work discipline. School principals who consistently apply a democratic leadership style that is fair, transparent, and responsible serve as models that are naturally emulated by teachers. Such professional conduct encourages teachers to internalize disciplinary values, ultimately enhancing their adherence to rules and procedures. Discipline developed through this process tends to be more sustainable, as it is driven by internal motivation rather than mere compliance.

Although the correlation is relatively weak, this finding is realistic within the context of social research, as it reflects a coherent pattern (Himawan, 2022; Himawan, 2023). Teacher work discipline is shaped by a complex interaction of multiple factors, not solely by leadership. Other contributing factors include internal motivation, personal work ethic, clarity of regulations, and social environmental influences (Fathurrohman & Sutikno, 2007; Priansa, 2014; Sutrisno, 2019). These results are consistent with previous studies that identified a significant influence of democratic leadership style on teacher discipline (Suprianto & Suprayitno, 2022; Yuni et al., 2024). The correlation value of 0.329 indicates that the principal's democratic leadership style functions as an important driver that reinforces teacher disciplinary practices.

Democratic leadership fosters a positive work environment in which teachers feel valued and actively involved in decision-making processes. This involvement promotes self-awareness and a sense of ownership. When teachers perceive themselves as stakeholders, they tend to demonstrate stronger work discipline—not due to external pressure, but because of a clear understanding of their professional

responsibilities. This is consistent with findings related to time-discipline indicators based on self-awareness, which show that teachers exhibit strong commitment to their duties. Furthermore, teacher involvement in policy formulation can strengthen and sustain a culture of discipline.

Based on the discussion above, it can be concluded that the democratic leadership style of the principal at SMA Negeri 4 Malang makes a significant contribution to strengthening teacher work discipline. Although it is not the sole determining factor, this human-oriented leadership approach serves as a key driver in reinforcing discipline through exemplary leadership practices, the establishment of a supportive organizational culture, and teacher empowerment. These findings affirm that effective leaders are those who are capable of cultivating a professional, productive, and trust-based work environment.

4. Conclusion

This study successfully proved that there is a positive and significant relationship between the democratic leadership style of the principal and teacher integrity and work discipline at SMA Negeri 4 Malang. Descriptive results show that the three variables of democratic leadership style, teacher integrity, and teacher work discipline are at a very high level. The success of this study lies in the finding that leadership that focuses on consistency, collaboration with open communication, and empathy creates a strong foundation for teacher professionalism, in line with Kurt Lewin's Behavioral Leadership Theory. Inferentially, correlational statistical analysis confirms that democratic leadership style acts as the main driver that encourages and strengthens teacher professionalism, although it is not the only factor that influences it. This relationship, although moderate to weak, has strong statistical validity. This reinforces the argument that participatory and supportive leadership creates a conducive environment that triggers teachers' internal motivation, so that they act with integrity and discipline not because of coercion, but because of a deep professional awareness.

References

Agustina, A. (2020). *Pengaruh kecerdasan emosional, disipin kerja dan motivasi kerja terhadap kinerja guru di MAN se-Kabupaten Malang* (Doctoral dissertation, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim).

Bandura, A. (1977). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. W. H. Freeman and Company.

Fathurrohman, P., & Sutikno, M. S. (2007). *Strategi Belajar Mengajar*. Refika Aditama. Hal 117-119

Hanum, G. K., Arribathi, H. A. H., & Scooryna, R. A. (2019). Hubungan antara integritas (kejujuran dan konsistensi) dengan kepercayaan: Studi korelasional pada guru SMP Negeri Kecamatan Cipayung Jakarta Timur. *Journal Educational of Nursing (JEN), 2*(1), 147–152.

Hafizha, R. (2021). Pentingnya Integritas Akademik. *Journal of Education and Counseling, 1*(2), 115–124.

Hasibuan, M.P. (2016). Manajemen Sumber Daya Manusia. Bumi Aksara.

Hermawan, E. & Ismail, D. H. (2022). *Buku Ajar Kepemimpinan Mengenal Konsep dan Gaya Kepemimpinan untuk Generasi Z di Era Revolusi Industri 4.0 dan Society 5.0*. Eureka Media Aksara.

Himawan, R. (2023). Analisis Level Kritis Taksonomi Barret Pada Soal Pemantapan Asesmen Daerah Literasi Membaca Siswa SMP Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta. *Reduplikasi: Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Bahasa Indonesia*, *3*(1), 47-61.

Himawan, R., & Nurgiyantoro, B. (2022). Analisis butir soal latihan penilaian akhir semester ganjil mata pelajaran bahasa Indonesia kelas VIII SMPN 1 Bambanglipuro Bantul menggunakan program ITEMAN. *KEMBARA: Jurnal Keilmuan Bahasa, Sastra, dan Pengajarannya*, *8*(1), 160-180.

Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi. (2024). *Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi Nomor 67 Tahun 2024 tentang fasilitasi terhadap organisasi profesi guru.*

Lewin, K., Lippitt, R., & White, R. K. (1939). Patterns of aggressive behavior in experimentally created "social climates". *The Journal of social psychology*, *10*(2), 269-299.

Mulyasa, E. (2009). *Menjadi Guru Profesional Menciptakan Pembelajaran Kreatif dan Menyenangkan*. Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya. (Relevan untuk konteks peran kepala sekolah dan guru).

Musfah, J. (2022). *Kepemimpinan pendidikan: Teori dan kebijakan*. Prenada Media.

Mustiningsih. 2013. *Pengantar Kepemimpinan Pendidikan*. Malang: Fakultas Ilmu Pendidikan Universitas Negeri Malang.

Pangaribuan, S. M., Wu, T. Y., Herlianita, R., Jao, Y. L., Lee, H. C., Hasan, F., ... & Chiu, H. Y. (2025). Global occurrence rates of sleep disturbances among institutionalized older adults: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Sleep Medicine Reviews*, 102091.

Persatuan Guru Republik Indonesia. (2013). *Keputusan Kongres XXI Persatuan Guru Republik Indonesia Nomor VI/KONGRES/XXI/PGRI/2013 tentang kode etik guru Indonesia.*

Pertiwi, I. P., Fedinandus, F., & Limantara, A. D. (2019). Sistem Pendukung Keputusan Penerima Program Keluarga Harapan (PKH) Menggunakan Metode Simple Additive Weighting. *CAHAYAtech*, *8*(2), 182-195.

Priansa, D. J. (2014). *Manajemen Kelas (Classroom Management)*. Alfabeta.

Rachmadhani, S., & Manafe, L. A. (2023). Analisis Gaya Kepemimpinan Demokratis. *Digital Economic, Management and Accounting Knowledge Development (DEMAnD)*, *5*(1), 82-98.

Rahmawati, R. (2015). *Pengembangan Kurikulum Pendidikan Islam Berbasis Multikultural di Madrasah Aliyah Negeri Model Palangka Raya* (Doctoral dissertation, IAIN Palangka Raya).

Sugiyono, D. (2013). *Metode penelitian pendidikan pendekatan kuantitatif, kualitatif dan R&D*. Alfabeta.

Sinungun, M. 2009. *Produktivitas Apa dan Bagaimana*, Jakarta : Bumi Aksara. Hal 145

Sodikun. (2022). Gaya Kepemimpinan Demokratis untuk Peningkatan Kinerja Guru. *INOPENDAS: Jurnal Ilmiah Kependidikan*, 5(1), 20–28.

Sudadi, S. (2022). *Gaya Kepemimpinan Kepala Sekolah (Teori Teoritik dan Implementasi)*. Mitrailmu.

Suparno, P. (2015). *Pembelajaran di perguruan tinggi bergaya Paradigma Pedagogi Refleksi (PPR)*. Sanata Dharma University Press.

Suprianto, G., & Suprayitno, K. (2022). Pengaruh Gaya Kepemimpinan Demokratis Kepala Sekolah Terhadap Kedisiplinan Guru di SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Sidoarjo. *Kreatif: Jurnal Pemikiran Pendidikan Agama Islam*, *20*(1), 24-39.

Sutrisno, H. E. (2019). *Budaya organisasi*. Prenada Media.

Widyastuti, P., & Supardi, D. (2018). Pengaruh Kepemimpinan Kepala Sekolah dan Budaya Organisasi terhadap Kinerja Guru. *Jurnal Administrasi Pendidikan*, 25(2), 177-188.

Yuni, M., Hidayat, A., & Rianti, W. (2024). Pengaruh Gaya Kepemimpinan Demokratis Kepala Sekolah Terhadap Disiplin dan Kinerja Guru Di SDN 007 Mayangsari. *Jurnal Intelek dan Cendikiawan Nusantara*, 1(5).

How to cite this article:

Ningrum, R. S., Awaliyah, S., & Untari, S. (2026). Harmony in Leadership: A Correlational Study between the Democratic Leadership Style of School Principals and the Integrity and Work Discipline of Teachers at SMA Negeri 4 Malang. *Journal of Educational Sciences*, *10(3)*, 1125-1140.