

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND POSITIVE CULTURE: STRATEGIES, PERCEPTIONS, AND CHALLENGES IN FOSTERING TEACHER SATISFACTION AND STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the lived experiences, strategies, and challenges of school administrators under MBHTE-BARMM in fostering a positive school culture, using a phenomenological approach through semi-structured interviews with 25 purposively selected administrators. The qualitative phase aimed to complement quantitative findings by providing contextualized insights into leadership practices in geographically and socio-politically complex environments. Thematic analysis revealed that administrators actively shape school culture through adaptive strategies tailored to their unique contexts. In areas affected by conflict and disaster, they implement disaster preparedness and community recovery initiatives to promote resilience. Strong community partnerships and resource mobilization were also identified as key practices for enhancing support systems.

Administrators described their roles as mentors and motivators, emphasizing the importance of professional development, emotional support, and recognition in promoting teacher satisfaction and performance. These efforts contribute to a collaborative and committed professional environment, ultimately improving instructional quality and student outcomes. Despite their efforts, administrators face significant challenges, including geographic isolation, security threats, limited resources, teacher burnout, and cultural and political complexities. In response, they adopt innovative, community-based solutions such as peace education, cultural sensitivity initiatives, and inclusive student programs.

The findings underscore the need for systemic support to sustain and amplify the positive impacts of school leadership. Enhanced resource access, targeted training, mental health support, and collaborative governance are essential to empower administrators in their pivotal role in shaping resilient, inclusive, and high-performing school environments.

Keyword: - School Leadership and Positive Culture: Strategies, Perceptions, Challenges. Fostering Teacher Satisfaction and Student Engagement.

1. INTRODUCTION

In today's educational landscape, school leadership plays a pivotal role in shaping a positive school culture that supports both teacher satisfaction and student engagement. A positive school culture is characterized by trust, collaboration, shared values, and a supportive environment where all stakeholders feel respected and motivated. School administrators are central to cultivating this environment, influencing everything from instructional quality to staff morale (Leithwood et al., 2020). Their leadership decisions and interpersonal relationships with teachers significantly impact the overall climate of the school and contribute to job satisfaction and performance outcomes (Nguyen et al., 2021).

Effective school culture-building strategies often include open communication, shared decision-making, and the recognition of teachers' contributions. These practices foster professional trust and a sense of belonging among staff (Cerit, 2019). Moreover, leaders who prioritize professional development, model ethical behavior, and maintain high expectations can inspire a culture of continuous improvement and collective efficacy (Klar et al., 2020). Research suggests that when teachers operate in a positive school environment, they exhibit greater engagement, commitment, and instructional effectiveness, which in turn positively affects student outcomes (Turan & Bektas, 2019).

However, school administrators face various challenges in fostering and sustaining such a culture. Issues such as limited resources, staff resistance to change, socio-political pressures, and teacher shortages can hinder leadership efforts (Kutsyuruba et al., 2021). Particularly in conflict-affected, marginalized, or under-resourced areas, administrators must navigate complex dynamics while trying to maintain a stable and nurturing school environment (Arar & Öricü, 2021).

Given these complexities, this study seeks to explore the specific strategies school administrators employ to cultivate a positive school culture, their perceptions of how their roles influence teacher satisfaction and performance, and the challenges they encounter in the process. By understanding these interconnected factors, educational leaders and policymakers can better support school leadership development and foster environments where both teachers and students can thrive.

2. METHODOLOGY

The qualitative phase of the study utilized a phenomenological approach through semi-structured interviews to gain deeper insights into school administrators' experiences, strategies, and challenges in fostering a positive school culture. A total of 25 administrators from MBHTE-BARMM were purposively selected based on their experience, school size, and involvement in school improvement initiatives. An interview guide was developed to explore their perceptions of leadership effectiveness, teacher satisfaction, and student engagement. Interviews were recorded, transcribed, and thematically analyzed to identify recurring patterns and unique insights that complemented the quantitative data. This phase enriched the study by providing contextualized, narrative-based evidence of leadership practices and cultural influences within schools operating in diverse and often challenging environments.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Strategies Used by Administrators to Promote a Positive School Culture Among Teachers and Learners

The strategies presented in Table 1 outline key approaches that school administrators employ to foster a positive school culture, especially in areas prone to natural disasters and socio-political challenges. These strategies are integral to building a resilient, supportive, and thriving educational environment for both teachers and students.

In flood-prone areas, administrators emphasize the importance of disaster preparedness and resilience. Informants, such as Respondent 1, noted that schools implement comprehensive disaster preparedness programs to ensure the safety and support of both students and teachers. These programs include evacuation procedures, regular drills, and readily available emergency kits. As Respondent 1 shared, *"Our disaster preparedness programs are not just protocols—they're ingrained into our culture. When the floods come, it's second nature for everyone to act quickly and calmly. This sense of readiness contributes greatly to the resilience of our community."* Such programs help schools recover swiftly after crises, ensuring that the educational process continues with minimal disruption.

Another significant strategy is community engagement and collaboration. Administrators work closely with local leaders, parents, and government partners to strengthen the school's support system and enhance resource availability. Respondent 2 emphasized, *"In our community, we understand that schools cannot thrive alone. We work closely with local governments and community members to ensure the schools have what they need, whether it's infrastructure or emotional support during hard times."* This collaborative approach not only secures necessary resources but also fosters a sense of unity and shared responsibility among all stakeholders, creating a strong, interconnected school community.

Teacher empowerment and development is also a central theme in fostering a positive school culture. Schools provide continuous professional development opportunities, mentoring programs, and emotional support to help teachers thrive in challenging environments. Respondent 3 reflected, *"Empowering our teachers through continuous professional development programs and emotional support is key. It's not just about developing their academic skills but ensuring their well-being so they can give their best to students."* This approach not only boosts teacher morale but also enhances instructional quality, which directly impacts student learning outcomes.

Student leadership and responsibility are promoted through active participation in community-building activities. In flood-affected areas, students take part in post-flood clean-up efforts and reconstruction projects, which instill a sense of responsibility, leadership, and community belonging. Respondent 4 remarked, *“Our students are actively involved in post-flood recovery projects. They don’t just wait for help; they lead it. This builds leadership skills and gives them a sense of purpose, especially in times of crisis.”* These activities serve as both educational tools and opportunities for students to engage meaningfully with their community.

In diverse and conflict-affected regions, peace education and conflict resolution programs are crucial in fostering a positive school culture. These programs help both students and teachers navigate cultural differences and promote mutual respect. Respondent 5 shared, *“Peace education has become a critical part of our curriculum. It’s important that both students and staff learn how to navigate cultural differences and resolve conflicts peacefully, especially in a multi-ethnic area like ours.”* This theme is especially pertinent in areas with a complex socio-political landscape, where fostering harmony and understanding is essential.

Lastly, inclusive and flexible learning environments are implemented to ensure educational continuity during disruptions such as floods or other crises. Schools use alternative learning systems, modular instruction, and flexible scheduling to adapt to these challenges. Respondent 6 explained, *“During a major flood, we turned to modular learning materials. Our teachers adapted their methods quickly, allowing students to continue their education even when they couldn’t be physically present. This flexibility is essential in maintaining educational continuity during crises.”* By offering alternative learning options, schools can maintain educational engagement even during natural disasters, ensuring that no student is left behind.

The findings from this study align with recent research on the strategies employed by school administrators to foster a positive school culture, especially in regions affected by natural disasters and socio-political challenges. Reyes et al. (2024) highlight the importance of disaster preparedness programs, noting that these programs are crucial for safeguarding students and teachers and ensuring quick recovery after crises. Their study emphasizes that *“the effectiveness of disaster preparedness plans hinges on the active participation of the entire school community, including teachers, students, and local stakeholders, who collaborate to mitigate the impacts of disasters on educational continuity”* (Reyes et al., 2024, p. 12). This resonates with the responses of informants in the current study, where disaster preparedness was highlighted as a key strategy for ensuring resilience in the face of natural disasters.

In terms of community engagement, Alonzo (2023) underscores the role of strong community partnerships in supporting schools during crises. *“Building strong community networks, including local government, parents, and civic leaders, is pivotal in ensuring schools have the resources they need to function, especially in post-disaster recovery phases”* (Alonzo, 2023, p. 34). This supports the findings from the current study, where administrators cited community collaboration as a critical strategy for fostering a positive school culture.

Furthermore, the importance of teacher empowerment and professional development is reinforced by Tan (2022), who asserts that *“empowering teachers through continuous professional learning and emotional support significantly contributes to their job satisfaction and overall performance, even in challenging environments”* (Tan, 2022, p. 56). This aligns with the core idea presented in the current study, where administrators discussed how teacher development programs contribute to both teacher effectiveness and overall school culture.

These studies reinforce the strategies identified in Table 23, confirming that effective school leadership involves a multifaceted approach that includes disaster preparedness, community collaboration, teacher empowerment, and fostering positive, inclusive environments for students and staff alike.

Table 1. Administrators’ strategies to promote a positive school culture among teachers and learners.

Emerging Themes	Frequency	Core Ideas
Disaster Preparedness & Resilience	High	Schools in flood-prone areas implement comprehensive disaster preparedness programs to ensure the safety of teachers and students and to facilitate quick recovery after crises.
Community Engagement & Collaboration	General	Active partnerships with community leaders, parents, and local government enhance resource availability, create support systems, and foster a sense of unity.
Teacher Empowerment & Development	General	Schools provide ongoing professional development, mentoring programs, and emotional support to empower teachers and enhance their effectiveness in the classroom.

Emerging Themes	Frequency	Core Ideas
Student Leadership & Responsibility	General	Engaging students in community-building activities, such as post-flood clean-up and reconstruction, to instill responsibility, leadership, and a strong sense of belonging.
Peace Education & Conflict Resolution	Typical	Schools offer peace education programs to teach conflict resolution, promote cultural sensitivity, and ensure respect for diversity among students and teachers.
Inclusive & Flexible Learning Environments	Typical	Schools utilize alternative learning systems, modular instruction, and flexible scheduling to ensure continued education during disruptions such as floods or other crises.

General	50% and above of the responses
Typical	25% of the responses
Variant	24% of the responses

School Administrators' Perception of Their Role in Influencing Teachers' Job Satisfaction and Performance

Table 2 provides an overview of the key strategies employed by school administrators to influence teachers' job satisfaction and performance. These strategies are designed to create a supportive environment that enhances teachers' motivation, well-being, and effectiveness in the classroom.

One of the prominent themes in the findings is teacher support and well-being. School administrators prioritize emotional, professional, and logistical support to ensure teachers' overall well-being, which directly impacts their motivation and performance. As Respondent 1 noted, *"We recognize that teachers are the backbone of our schools, and without prioritizing their emotional and professional needs, we cannot expect them to perform at their best. We offer counseling services, peer support programs, and regular check-ins to ensure their well-being."* This emphasis on teacher support is essential for fostering a positive and productive working environment, ensuring that teachers feel valued and equipped to meet the demands of their roles.

Mentorship and professional development also emerged as crucial strategies for enhancing job satisfaction and performance. Administrators see themselves as mentors, guiding teachers through continuous professional development opportunities, training programs, and mentorship initiatives. Respondent 2 shared, *"Our role is not just to manage but to mentor. We offer ongoing workshops, coaching, and peer mentoring to help teachers grow. This not only enhances their skills but also contributes to their job satisfaction."* These programs ensure that teachers feel empowered, supported, and professionally fulfilled, which positively influences their overall performance.

Another important strategy is recognition and appreciation. Administrators recognize that acknowledging and celebrating teachers' contributions is essential for fostering a sense of value and job satisfaction. Respondent 3 emphasized, *"We make it a point to celebrate our teachers' efforts, whether through formal awards or simple thank-you notes. Acknowledging their hard work goes a long way in boosting morale and motivation."* Recognition programs serve as a powerful tool in reinforcing positive behavior, enhancing teachers' sense of accomplishment, and ultimately improving their job satisfaction and performance.

Resource provision and advocacy are also vital in supporting teachers' job satisfaction. Administrators actively advocate for the provision of adequate resources, updated teaching materials, and improved working conditions. Respondent 4 noted, *"We constantly push for better resources and ensure that teachers have the materials they need to succeed. Our advocacy ensures that they can focus on teaching without being hindered by a lack of tools."* By securing the necessary resources, administrators create an environment where teachers can thrive and perform at their best.

The importance of work-life balance and flexibility also emerged as a key strategy. Administrators acknowledge that teachers face increasing demands both in and outside of the classroom, and they strive to provide flexible work arrangements to help teachers balance their professional and personal lives. Respondent 5 remarked, *"We offer flexible schedules during exam periods and encourage teachers to take time off when needed. We believe that a healthy work-life balance is essential for long-term performance and well-being."* This flexibility helps reduce stress and burnout, contributing to improved job satisfaction and teacher retention.

Lastly, collaboration and open communication are emphasized as essential strategies in enhancing teachers' job satisfaction and performance. By fostering an environment of collaboration, shared decision-making, and open communication, administrators increase teachers' sense of ownership and involvement in the school's operations.

Respondent 6 shared, “We believe in the power of open dialogue. Teachers are involved in decision-making processes, and their opinions are valued. This collaborative approach helps build a strong sense of community and job satisfaction.” By encouraging input from teachers, administrators create an inclusive environment where teachers feel heard, respected, and more committed to their roles.

The findings in Table 2 align with recent research on the role of school administrators in promoting teachers’ job satisfaction and performance. According to Garcia et al. (2023), “Administrators who actively support their teachers’ emotional and professional needs create environments where teachers feel valued and supported, leading to higher levels of job satisfaction and performance” (p. 45). This resonates with the current study’s findings that administrators prioritize teacher well-being as a crucial factor in boosting job satisfaction.

Similarly, the emphasis on mentorship and professional development is supported by the work of Nguyen and Thomas (2022), who argue that “continuous professional development programs not only enhance teachers’ instructional skills but also contribute significantly to their sense of professional growth and satisfaction” (p. 60). In the current study, administrators highlighted the importance of ongoing training and mentorship to help teachers develop their skills and feel supported in their roles.

The theme of recognition and appreciation also finds support in the literature. Lee et al. (2024) note that “recognition programs that celebrate teachers’ efforts are powerful motivators, leading to greater teacher satisfaction and retention” (p. 78). The current study reinforces this by highlighting how administrators use recognition to foster a positive work environment.

The importance of resource provision and advocacy in enhancing job satisfaction is echoed by Davis and Williams (2023), who found that “adequate resources and a supportive school environment are essential for teachers to perform effectively, especially in resource-poor areas” (p. 102). This is consistent with the administrators’ efforts in the current study to ensure that teachers have the materials and resources they need to succeed.

Finally, the theme of work-life balance is increasingly recognized as a significant factor in teacher satisfaction. According to Rodriguez and Garcia (2022), “offering flexible work arrangements and promoting work-life balance are key to reducing teacher burnout and improving job satisfaction, leading to better overall performance” (p. 89). This supports the findings of the present study, where administrators emphasized the importance of flexibility in enhancing teachers’ well-being.

Table 2. School administrators’ perception of their role in influencing teachers’ job satisfaction and performance.

Emerging Themes	Frequency	Core Ideas
Teacher Support & Well-being	General	Administrators prioritize the emotional, professional, and logistical support for teachers, ensuring their well-being to boost motivation and performance.
Mentorship & Professional Development	General	Administrators view themselves as mentors, offering continuous professional development opportunities, training, and mentorship to enhance teaching skills and job satisfaction.
Recognition & Appreciation	General	Acknowledging and celebrating teachers’ efforts through recognition programs and rewards, fostering a sense of value and job satisfaction.
Resource Provision & Advocacy	Typical	Administrators advocate for adequate resources, updated teaching materials, and improved working conditions to enhance teacher performance and job satisfaction.
Work-Life Balance & Flexibility	Typical	Emphasizing flexible work arrangements and providing support to balance work demands with personal life, enhancing teachers’ well-being and overall performance.
Collaboration & Open Communication	Typical	Fostering an environment of open communication, collaboration, and shared decision-making, which increases teachers’ sense of ownership and satisfaction in their roles.
General	50% and above of the responses	
Typical	25% of the responses	
Variant	24% of the responses	

Challenges School Administrators Face in Fostering a Positive School Culture

Table 3 outlines several key challenges that school administrators face in fostering a positive school culture. These challenges are often intertwined with the socio-political, cultural, and geographical context in which the schools are located. However, administrators have devised various strategies to address these challenges, ensuring that their schools maintain a positive and conducive learning environment.

One of the significant challenges highlighted is geographical and security issues. Administrators in geographically isolated areas or conflict-affected regions often struggle with limited access to resources and security concerns, which can hinder school operations. Respondent 1 shared, *“Our school is located in a remote area, and getting resources to the school is often difficult. We work closely with local leaders and the community to ensure we have the safety and resources we need to function.”* This response illustrates how administrators actively collaborate with community leaders to secure the safety of the school environment and ensure access to necessary resources.

Another recurring challenge is resource scarcity. Limited financial and material resources are common obstacles in many schools, making it difficult to provide adequate facilities, teaching materials, and support systems for both teachers and students. Respondent 2 noted, *“We don’t have the luxury of abundant resources, so we constantly seek external funding and collaborate with government and non-government organizations to supplement what we can provide.”* This strategy of seeking external funding and maximizing available resources is key to overcoming resource limitations and ensuring that educational needs are met.

Teacher burnout and mental health are also significant concerns. Many teachers experience emotional strain due to heavy workloads, stressful working conditions, and the pressures of teaching in challenging environments. Respondent 3 emphasized, *“We’ve noticed a rise in teacher burnout, so we’ve implemented mental health programs and work-life balance initiatives to help teachers manage stress and maintain their well-being.”* Administrators recognize the importance of supporting teachers’ emotional well-being to maintain a productive and positive school culture. By offering mental health support and professional development opportunities, they help alleviate the strain teachers face.

Cultural and linguistic diversity within schools also presents challenges in promoting unity and understanding. With students and teachers coming from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, it can be difficult to foster a harmonious school environment. Respondent 4 observed, *“We have students from various ethnic groups, and sometimes there’s a lack of understanding between them. To address this, we’ve incorporated peace education, conflict resolution, and cultural sensitivity training to promote unity.”* These programs aim to reduce misunderstandings and foster mutual respect among diverse groups within the school community.

Student engagement and attendance is another challenge that administrators face, especially in regions with challenging socio-political contexts. Low student attendance and disengagement can disrupt the learning process. As Respondent 5 shared, *“In times of conflict or instability, we see a drop in student attendance. To address this, we’ve created extracurricular activities and peer support programs that encourage student involvement and foster a sense of belonging.”* These initiatives are designed to keep students engaged and provide them with a sense of connection to their school and peers.

Lastly, political instability and conflict are challenges that disrupt school operations, especially in conflict-affected regions. Political instability creates uncertainty and may lead to school closures or disruptions in learning. Respondent 6 noted, *“In areas where there is political instability, it’s hard to maintain normal school operations. We prioritize peace education and work closely with the community to ensure that education continues even amidst conflict.”* By focusing on peace education and building strong community support, administrators help maintain stability and continuity in the educational process.

The challenges identified in Table 3 align with several recent studies on the difficulties school administrators face in fostering a positive school culture, especially in conflict-affected and resource-limited settings. According to Iqbal et al. (2023), *“Geographical isolation and security concerns are major challenges for school administrators, particularly in rural and conflict-prone regions. These challenges hinder access to resources and disrupt school operations, requiring administrators to engage in community-based solutions”* (p. 122). This finding supports the current study’s emphasis on community partnerships and collaboration with local leaders to ensure the safety and functioning of schools.

Resource scarcity is another challenge that resonates with recent literature. As observed by Hassan and Ali (2022), *“Limited resources significantly impact the ability of school administrators to provide quality education. In many cases, administrators have to seek external funding and maximize available resources to meet the educational needs of students”* (p. 99). The current study’s findings reflect this reality, as administrators employ various strategies to overcome resource limitations and ensure that schools remain functional despite these challenges.

The issue of teacher burnout and mental health is a growing concern in education systems worldwide. According to Baker et al. (2024), *“Teacher burnout has reached alarming levels in many regions, particularly in*

schools with high-stress environments. Administrators are increasingly implementing support systems, including mental health programs and work-life balance initiatives, to address these issues” (p. 75). This aligns with the findings in the present study, where administrators are prioritizing the emotional well-being of teachers to improve their performance and job satisfaction.

Cultural and linguistic diversity also presents challenges in creating a harmonious school culture. As stated by Jones and Wang (2022), “Cultural diversity within schools can lead to misunderstandings and conflict if not properly managed. School leaders must implement programs that promote cultural sensitivity, conflict resolution, and inclusivity” (p. 113). The current study reflects this by highlighting the incorporation of peace education and cultural sensitivity training as essential strategies for fostering unity and understanding among diverse student and teacher populations.

Finally, the challenge of student engagement and attendance is also well-documented in recent literature. According to Smith et al. (2023), “Student absenteeism and low engagement are common in conflict-affected regions, making it difficult for schools to maintain consistent learning environments. Administrators often create extracurricular programs and peer support initiatives to encourage engagement and reduce absenteeism” (p. 89). The strategies discussed in the current study, such as extracurricular activities and peer support programs, are effective responses to this challenge.

Table 3. What challenges do school administrators face in fostering a positive school culture, and how do they address these challenges?

Emerging Themes	Frequency	Core Ideas
Geographical and Security Issues	General	Administrators face challenges related to geographical isolation and security concerns, which hinder school operations and access to resources. They address this by strengthening community partnerships and collaborating with local leaders to enhance school safety and resource provision.
Resource Scarcity	General	Limited financial and material resources impact the ability to provide adequate facilities, teaching materials, and support for both teachers and students. Administrators address this by seeking external funding, collaborating with local and government partners, and optimizing available resources.
Teacher Burnout and Mental Health	General	Teachers' emotional well-being is often compromised due to workload pressures, burnout, and stressful working conditions. Administrators tackle this by implementing support systems such as professional development, mental health programs, and work-life balance initiatives.
Cultural and Linguistic Diversity	Typical	The diversity of students and teachers, including varying languages and cultural practices, presents challenges in promoting unity and understanding. Administrators address this by incorporating peace education, conflict resolution, and cultural sensitivity training in their programs.
Student Engagement and Attendance	Typical	Student absenteeism and low engagement, especially in challenging socio-political contexts, are major hurdles. Administrators foster student engagement through extracurricular activities, peer support programs, and promoting a culture of inclusivity and belonging.
Political Instability and Conflict	Typical	Political instability and local conflicts disrupt school operations and create uncertainty. Administrators mitigate these impacts by prioritizing peace education and building strong community support to maintain stability and continuity in education.
General	50% and above of the responses	
Typical	25% of the responses	
Variant	24% of the responses	

Specific Strategies of School Administrators to Promote a Positive School Culture

Table 4 outlines a variety of strategies employed by school administrators to foster a positive school culture among teachers and learners. These strategies are essential for creating a supportive and thriving educational environment, especially in schools facing unique challenges such as geographical isolation, resource limitations, and cultural diversity.

One of the primary strategies is promoting resilience through disaster preparedness. Administrators in flood-prone areas have implemented comprehensive disaster preparedness programs to ensure the safety of teachers and students during crises. These programs not only address immediate safety concerns but also promote resilience and community collaboration. As Respondent 1 noted, *"We actively involve both students and teachers in disaster preparedness and recovery efforts. This helps build resilience and strengthens our school community during tough times."* This proactive approach ensures that schools are better equipped to handle disasters and recover quickly, while fostering a sense of unity and shared responsibility.

Another key strategy is community engagement and partnerships. Administrators understand the importance of collaborating with local communities, parents, and government partners to enhance school facilities, secure resources, and support both teachers and students. Respondent 2 shared, *"We rely heavily on the support of local leaders and community members to ensure our school is well-equipped and that teachers and students feel supported."* Through these partnerships, administrators create a supportive school environment that encourages participation from all stakeholders.

Empowering teachers through professional development is also a significant strategy. Administrators prioritize offering continuous professional development programs, mentoring, and recognition of teachers' achievements to ensure that teachers remain motivated and dedicated. Respondent 3 emphasized, *"We offer regular training sessions and mentoring to help teachers grow professionally. Recognizing their hard work keeps them motivated and focused on their teaching."* These initiatives not only enhance the professional growth of teachers but also contribute to their job satisfaction and overall performance.

In regions characterized by cultural diversity, peace education and conflict resolution play a vital role. Administrators integrate peace education programs and conflict resolution training to promote mutual understanding and respect among teachers and students. Respondent 4 noted, *"We emphasize peace education to help students and teachers navigate cultural differences and resolve conflicts respectfully. It's crucial in maintaining a harmonious school environment."* By focusing on peace education, administrators create a cohesive school culture that values diversity and inclusivity, helping to mitigate potential conflicts.

Inclusive student engagement is another strategy employed by administrators. Engaging students in extracurricular activities, leadership programs, and community service initiatives helps them develop a sense of belonging and responsibility. Respondent 5 stated, *"We involve students in leadership programs and community service activities, which allows them to take ownership of their school and community. It also helps them feel more connected to the school."* These strategies ensure that students feel valued and part of the school community, which in turn fosters a positive school culture.

Finally, celebrating successes and recognizing achievements is a crucial aspect of promoting a positive school culture. Administrators encourage the celebration of both academic and non-academic successes, which helps build a sense of pride and belonging among teachers and students. Respondent 6 remarked, *"We make it a point to recognize the achievements of both students and teachers, whether it's academic or extracurricular. This recognition helps boost morale and fosters a sense of pride in our school."* By regularly celebrating accomplishments, administrators reinforce a culture of appreciation and collaboration, further strengthening the school community.

The strategies discussed in Table 4 align with recent research on effective school leadership and the promotion of positive school cultures. According to Awan and Ahmad (2023), *"Disaster preparedness programs are crucial in regions affected by natural disasters, as they help schools build resilience and ensure the safety of students and staff. Involving students in recovery efforts strengthens community ties and prepares them for future challenges"* (p. 58). This supports the current study's emphasis on disaster preparedness and community collaboration as key strategies in fostering a positive school culture.

Community engagement and partnerships are also essential components of effective school leadership. As highlighted by Khan and Shah (2022), *"Collaboration with local communities and parents is a critical strategy for enhancing school resources and creating a supportive environment. Strong partnerships ensure that schools can overcome challenges and provide a high-quality education"* (p. 67). The findings from the current study resonate with this, as administrators are actively engaging with local communities to enhance school facilities and secure resources.

Empowering teachers through professional development is an ongoing focus in educational leadership. According to Lee and Park (2023), *"Ongoing professional development, mentorship, and recognition programs are*

vital for improving teacher morale and performance. Administrators who prioritize these areas contribute to a motivated and effective teaching workforce” (p. 93). The current study supports this finding by emphasizing the importance of professional development and mentorship in empowering teachers.

In culturally diverse settings, peace education and conflict resolution are increasingly recognized as essential strategies. As noted by Patel and Sharma (2022), “In schools with diverse student populations, peace education and conflict resolution training are essential for fostering mutual respect and understanding. These programs help address conflicts and promote harmony among students and staff” (p. 112). The strategies outlined in the current study are in line with this research, as administrators integrate peace education to create a positive and cohesive school culture.

Inclusive student engagement is another well-supported strategy in the literature. According to Torres et al. (2023), “Engaging students in extracurricular activities, leadership programs, and community service initiatives is a powerful way to foster a sense of belonging and responsibility. These activities promote a positive school culture and encourage students to take ownership of their education” (p. 88). This reflects the findings in the present study, where administrators use student engagement initiatives to enhance school culture.

Finally, celebrating successes and recognizing achievements is essential for reinforcing a positive school environment. As highlighted by Harris and White (2023), “Recognition and celebration of achievements, both academic and non-academic, are key strategies in promoting teacher and student morale. These practices create a culture of appreciation and motivate individuals to continue striving for excellence” (p. 75). The current study’s findings affirm this by emphasizing the role of recognition in fostering a positive and collaborative school culture.

Table 4. Specific strategies of school administrators to promote a positive school culture among teachers and learners.

Emerging Themes		Frequency	Core Ideas
Promoting through Preparedness	Resilience Disaster	General	Administrators implement comprehensive disaster preparedness programs to ensure safety and recovery in flood-prone areas. These programs promote resilience and community collaboration, with students and teachers actively participating in recovery efforts.
Community Engagement Partnerships		and Typical	School administrators actively collaborate with local communities, parents, and government partners to enhance school facilities, secure resources, and support both teachers and students. These partnerships help in creating a supportive and thriving school environment.
Empowering through Development	Teachers Professional	General	Administrators prioritize teacher empowerment by offering continuous professional development programs, mentoring, and recognizing achievements. These initiatives aim to foster a motivated and dedicated teaching workforce.
Peace and Conflict Resolution	Education and	Typical	In culturally diverse regions, administrators integrate peace education programs and conflict resolution training to promote mutual understanding and respect among teachers and students. This helps in navigating cultural differences and fostering a cohesive school environment.
Inclusive Engagement	Student	Typical	Administrators use extracurricular activities, leadership programs, and community service initiatives to engage students and instill a sense of belonging and responsibility. These strategies foster a positive school culture that values student input and participation.
Celebrating and Achievements	Successes Recognizing	Typical	Administrators foster a culture of appreciation by celebrating both academic and non-academic successes. This recognition helps build a sense of pride and belonging among teachers and students, reinforcing a positive and collaborative school culture.
	General	50% and above of the responses	
	Typical	25% of the responses	
	Variant	24% of the responses	

4. CONCLUSIONS

The study concludes that school administrators actively foster a positive school culture through diverse and adaptive strategies tailored to their respective school contexts. In areas frequently affected by disasters or conflict, administrators implement comprehensive disaster preparedness plans and community recovery initiatives that engage both teachers and learners, promoting resilience and unity. Additionally, they enhance school culture by building strong partnerships with local communities, parents, and government agencies, which help secure resources and strengthen support systems for both educators and students.

Administrators also perceive themselves as central figures in influencing teacher satisfaction and performance. They take on the roles of mentors, advocates, and motivators by offering continuous professional development, providing emotional and logistical support, and recognizing teachers' achievements. This fosters a professional environment marked by appreciation, collaboration, and a shared commitment to educational goals. These leadership practices contribute significantly to improving teacher morale, instructional quality, and overall school effectiveness.

However, administrators face substantial challenges in sustaining a positive school environment. These include geographical isolation, security threats, and limited financial and material resources, all of which hinder the delivery of quality education and support services. Teacher burnout, cultural and linguistic diversity, student absenteeism, and the effects of political instability further complicate their efforts. In response, administrators adopt innovative and community-driven solutions, such as integrating peace education, offering cultural sensitivity training, and promoting inclusive student activities and leadership programs to foster engagement and unity within the school.

The findings highlight the critical need for systemic support for school administrators. Enhanced access to resources, targeted leadership training, mental health initiatives, and stronger collaboration with stakeholders are essential to sustain and scale the positive impacts of their leadership. By addressing these structural gaps, school administrators can continue to play a transformative role in nurturing teacher well-being, student engagement, and a resilient, inclusive school culture.

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