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THE ROLE OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION IN DEVELOPING SOCIAL LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES FOR SEAFARERS IN NORTH SULAWESI MARITIME POLYTECHNIC

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ABSTRACT
The heavily technical focus of maritime education has obscured the development of social leadership competencies, which are equally crucial for a seafarer. There is a gap between the internationally certified curriculum and the actual needs on board: the ability to lead multicultural teams, communicate effectively, and manage conflict under pressure. This study employed a qualitative field research approach. The techniques used refer to the criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. The results of the study indicate that: 1) The administrative configuration indicates that social leadership development planning is still fragmented and not supported by adequate budget allocation. Integration into the curriculum tends to be implicit with minimal portions, while non-academic programs such as LDK lack dedicated funding. Soft skills development is a secondary priority compared to technical training, which accounts for 70% of the training budget. 2) Implementation and field dynamics: program implementation faces the challenge of a hierarchical culture that conflicts with social leadership values. Role disorientation occurs between units, with lecturers focusing on technical aspects while leadership development is considered the responsibility of student affairs units. The heavy technical study load limits cadet participation, so the program only reaches a handful of intrinsically active cadets. 3) Evaluation and reorientation: The existing evaluation system is superficial, measuring only participant satisfaction without measuring long-term impact. There is no formal assessment of the development of social leadership competencies in academic transcripts, thus affecting cadets' motivation for self-development. A complete reorientation towards a holistic assessment system and formal recognition that is commensurate with academic achievement is needed.

Keywords: Educational Administration, Social Leadership Competence, Seafarers

INTRODUCTION
A fundamental transformation demanding a new paradigm in the education of prospective seafarers is currently being experienced in the global maritime world. While in previous eras, technical competencies such as navigation, engineering, and safety procedures were the primary benchmarks, the international shipping industry now increasingly emphasizes complex social leadership aspects (Smith & Johansen, 2021). A modern ship's officer is not only required to master maritime science but also must be able to lead a multinational team with high cultural sensitivity, resolve conflicts under the pressure of confined spaces in the middle of the ocean, communicate effectively in crisis situations, and build solid team cohesion under conditions of extreme social isolation (Kumar et al., 2023). This phenomenon is a response to the findings of various maritime

accident investigations that reveal that the root of the problem often lies not in technical failures, but in failures in communication and leadership (Chen & Park, 2022).

In Indonesia, as the largest archipelagic nation with a vision of becoming a global maritime axis, these global demands pose particular challenges to maritime educational institutions. Maritime Polytechnics, as the spearhead of producing superior maritime human resources, are required to not only produce graduates who meet the technical competency standards of the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification, and Watchkeeping (STCW), but also equip cadets with mature social leadership competencies (Pratama & Sari, 2024). The reality on board ships demonstrates that the social dynamics of a multicultural crew are a true testing ground for an officer, where the ability to build trust, mediate conflict, and inspire the team under pressure is precisely what determines navigational safety and operational efficiency (Gonzalez & Lee, 2023).

However, in practice, there is a significant gap between the idealism of the curriculum and the reality of implementation. The focus of education, which is still very dominant on achieving technical standards and international certification, tends to ignore the deepening of soft skills aspects that are social and emotional (Williams et al., 2020). Previous research shows that the integration of leadership values in vocational education is often fragmented and unsystematic, so the results are not optimal in forming a complete leadership character (Nurhayati & Setiawan, 2022). This condition is exacerbated by a maritime education culture that is still strongly militaristic and hierarchical, which can actually suppress the development of social skills such as collaboration and two-way communication (Irawan et al., 2023).

It is in this context that the role of educational administration becomes a crucial element that is often overlooked. Administrative governance that includes curriculum planning, budgeting, human resource management, and program evaluation holds the key to creating a conducive ecosystem for the development of social leadership competencies (Thompson, 2024). Unfortunately, previous research has revealed that administrative units in vocational education tend to focus on logistics and accreditation, neglecting the development of a structured character-building model (Hartono & Wibowo, 2023). A study by Li & Wang (2022) of several maritime institutions in Southeast Asia also showed that the budget allocation for soft skills development averaged only 5-10% of the total training budget, significantly lower than the allocation for improving technical facilities.

Based on this description, this study attempts to comprehensively examine the role of educational administration in developing social leadership competencies for seafarers at the Maritime Polytechnic. By analyzing aspects of program planning, implementation, and evaluation, this research is expected to provide practical contributions to improving the quality of graduates and theoretical contributions in developing a holistic vocational education administration model, especially in the maritime sector (Zhang et al., 2025).

The North Sulawesi Maritime Polytechnic's efforts to produce technically competent sailors face a complex challenge that often goes unnoticed: developing social leadership competencies. The modern shipping world no longer requires merely captains skilled at steering ships or mechanics capable of repairing any damage. The global maritime industry now demands leaders on deck who are capable of leading multicultural teams, resolving conflicts under pressure, communicating effectively, and managing the social dynamics that occur in the confined and isolated space of the

ocean. The main problem lies in the gap between the curriculum's focus on maritime technical aspects (hard skills) and the systematic development of soft leadership. Education for prospective sailors tends to focus on achieving international competency standards such as STCW, while social leadership content is often merely included in certain courses or even assumed to develop naturally during sea practice.

Research on the role of educational administration in developing social leadership competencies for seafarers at the North Sulawesi Maritime Polytechnic is not only relevant, but also very urgent and strategic. The first urgency is to answer the demands of the global maritime industry. International shipping companies are now increasingly selective in recruiting officers, not only based on diplomas and technical certifications, but also on soft skills and leadership abilities. An officer with strong social leadership competencies will be able to create a harmonious work environment on board, reduce crew turnover, and most importantly, improve overall shipping safety.

Many maritime incidents are rooted in communication and leadership failures, not technical failures. This research has strategic implications for Indonesia's positioning in the global shipping arena. As a major maritime nation, Indonesia has a strategic interest in having a seafaring workforce recognized not only for its technical skills but also for its integrity and leadership capacity. By strengthening the social leadership aspect, graduates of the North Sulawesi Maritime Polytechnic can compete at a higher level, not just as workers, but as future leaders in the maritime industry.

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative research type with a field research approach. This approach was chosen because it aligns with the research objective of understanding the phenomenon in-depth and holistically within its natural context, namely the North Sulawesi Maritime Polytechnic (Sugiyono, 2021). Through field research, researchers can interact directly with research subjects, observe ongoing administrative processes, and capture the meanings constructed by the actors within them. This research is not intended to test hypotheses, but rather to build a rich and contextual understanding of how administrative governance supports or hinders the development of social leadership.

The data sources in this study consist of two types. First, primary data sources, representing key actors directly involved in the educational process. These include cadets/students as the direct recipients of administrative policies, and lecturers and academic administrative staff as the designers and implementers of these policies. Second, secondary data sources include supporting documents such as study program curricula, polytechnic Master Plans (RIPs), standard operating procedures (SOPs) for student activities, competency test reports, meeting archives, and budget documents related to soft skills development. Utilizing these secondary data sources will provide a more comprehensive understanding and serve as triangulation with the primary data (Moleong, 2021).

Data collection techniques will be conducted using multiple methods to ensure data depth and accuracy. The main techniques used are: 1) In -depth interviews with cadets, lecturers, and administrative officials (such as heads of study programs, student affairs) using a semi-structured interview guide to explore their perceptions, experiences, and challenges. 2) Participatory observation, where researchers will engage in activities designed for leadership development, such

as basic leadership training, simulations on training ships, or student organization activities, to directly observe social leadership practices and the administrative roles behind them. 3) Document study, namely by analyzing the secondary documents mentioned above to track policies, commitments, and resource allocations related to the research theme (Creswell & Poth, 2022).

After the data is collected, the data analysis technique that will be applied is the interactive analysis model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014) which includes three streams of activities carried out simultaneously, namely: 1) Data Reduction, namely the process of selecting, focusing attention, simplifying, and abstracting raw data obtained from the field. 2) Data Presentation, namely compiling a set of information that allows for drawing conclusions and taking action, for example in the form of a matrix, flowchart, or table. 3) Conclusion Drawing/Verification, where researchers begin to look for meaning, patterns, explanations, and relationships between concepts found. Initial conclusions will be continuously verified throughout the research process to ensure their validity.

In order for the research results to be scientifically accountable, data validity testing techniques were carried out. The techniques used refer to the criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Sugiyono, 2021). To ensure credibility (data accuracy), the researcher will conduct source triangulation (comparing data from cadets, lecturers, and documents) and method triangulation (comparing the results of interviews, observations, and document studies). Member checking (rechecking data and interpretations with participants) will also be conducted to ensure that the researcher's understanding aligns with what the participants intended. For transferability, the researcher will provide a rich and detailed description of the research context so readers can assess whether the findings can be applied in other contexts. Dependability (consistency) is maintained with an audit trail, which documents the entire research process in detail, from data collection to analysis. Finally, confirmability (neutrality) is ensured by reflecting on the existence of researcher bias and ensuring that the findings are supported by evidence gathered in the field.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Administrative Configuration: Planning and Budgeting Analysis for Social Leadership Development

Based on in-depth interviews with academic administration leaders and document review, this study revealed that a planning framework for social leadership development has been established, but remains implicit and fragmented. An analysis of the Independent Learning Campus (MBKM) Curriculum documents shows that social leadership competencies are not formulated as a specific course, but are instead integrated as part of the Graduate Learning Outcomes (CPL) in several courses such as "Leadership on Ship" and "Crew Management." However, interviews with the lecturers teaching these courses revealed limitations: "Leadership content focuses more on aspects of command and hierarchy on board, while social aspects such as mediating conflict, managing diversity, or building team cohesion are still minimal," said one senior lecturer.

On the other hand, non-academic planning is the main backbone of this configuration. The Student Affairs Unit's Annual Work Plan (RKT) explicitly includes programs such as Basic Leadership Training (LDK), cadet organizations (Menwa, Taruna Representative Council), and volunteer activities. Unfortunately, budget analysis reveals significant disparities. Technical training,

such as loading and unloading simulations or machine maintenance, can account for up to 70% of the total training budget, while allocations for soft skills development, including social leadership, lack a specific and explicit budget line. Funds for LDK are usually combined with other student activity budgets, often resulting in suboptimal utilization. "To bring in a psychologist or professional leadership trainer, the budget is difficult to approve because it is not considered a primary need," explained a financial administration staff. In other words, the planning commitment has not been balanced with budgeting consistency, making social leadership development a " stepchild " in the institution's financial priorities.

The research findings reveal a complex and paradoxical administrative configuration in planning and budgeting for social leadership development at the Maritime Polytechnic. On the one hand, the institution has demonstrated strategic awareness of the importance of social leadership competencies through their integration into the MBKM curriculum document and the Annual Work Plan of student units. However, on the other hand, its implementation faces significant structural challenges, particularly related to policy fragmentation and unequal budget allocations, reflecting the lack of systemic commitment to the development of these soft skills.

Analysis of the curriculum documents shows that social leadership competencies are implicitly integrated into several courses such as “Leadership on Ship” and “Crew Management.” However, based on interviews with the lecturers, it was revealed that leadership content is still dominated by aspects of command and hierarchy, with a very minimal portion for social aspects such as mediating conflict, managing diversity, and building team cohesion. This finding is in line with research by Chen & Park (2022) which revealed that the leadership curriculum in many Asian maritime institutions still focuses on traditional approaches and is less responsive to the demands of social leadership in the era of globalization. A study by Zhang et al. (2025) also found that the integration of social competencies in engineering curricula is often symbolic without being supported by appropriate pedagogical methods.

On the non-academic planning side, this study found that student units are the primary driving force through programs such as Basic Leadership Training (LDK), cadet organizations, and volunteer activities. However, these programs operate separately from the academic curriculum, creating fragmentation in the leadership development ecosystem. This condition is reinforced by the findings of Smith & Johansen (2021) who emphasized the importance of a whole-institution approach in leadership development, where all elements of the institution must be integrated in building a coherent leadership culture.

The most critical aspect of this administrative configuration lies in budget analysis. The research findings show a very significant imbalance between the allocation for technical training (reaching 70% of the total training budget) and soft skills development which does not have a specific budget item. Financial administration staff expressed difficulties in submitting budget requests for professional psychologists or leadership trainers because they were considered non-essential. This reflects the instrumental mindset that still dominates financial decision-making in vocational institutions, as revealed in research by Hartono & Wibowo (2023), which found that budget allocation in vocational education remains heavily biased toward hard skills and technical equipment.

Furthermore, the absence of a dedicated budget for social leadership development indicates

that this aspect is not yet viewed as a strategic investment, but rather as a complementary one. This finding is consistent with research by Li & Wang (2022), who conducted a comparative study in five Southeast Asian countries and found that the average budget allocation for soft skills development in maritime institutions was only 5-15% of the total training budget. However, a study by Gonzalez & Lee (2023) showed that investments in social leadership development actually yield significant returns in the form of improved shipping safety and reduced crew turnover.

The dilemma facing educational administration in this configuration is how to meet dual demands: on the one hand, ensuring the achievement of stringent technical standards in accordance with international regulations, and on the other, developing increasingly needed social competencies. Research by Thompson (2024) confirms that the tension between the demands of technical accreditation and character development is indeed a universal challenge in vocational education. However, Williams et al.'s (2020) study offers a solution through integrated curriculum design, which combines technical and social aspects in integrated learning.

Based on these findings, it becomes clear that the root of the problem in the administrative configuration lies in the absence of a clear strategic framework that positions social leadership as a core competency on par with technical competencies. As proposed in the research by Kumar et al. (2023), leadership development in maritime education requires a systemic approach that includes clear policy direction, dedicated funding, an integrated curriculum, and systematic evaluation. Without this strategic framework, social leadership development efforts will remain marginal activities that do not significantly impact the development of cadet leadership character.

B. Implementation and Field Dynamics: Synergy and Challenges in Program Operationalization

At the implementation level, this research found a wide gap between administrative design and the reality of social dynamics in the field. Participatory observation in LDK activities and cadet organizations shows that social leadership values such as collaboration, empathy, and effective communication are indeed being instilled. However, the main challenge comes from an institutional culture that is still thick with militaristic spirit and rigid hierarchy. A senior cadet said, "In the organization, we are taught to be democratic, but in daily life in the dormitory, the seniority system is still very strong. We are required to be absolutely obedient without being able to ask many questions. This is confusing, which one should we follow?"

Data from interviews with lecturers confirm this role disorientation. Most lecturers feel that their primary responsibility is to master technical competencies and maintain discipline. "I focus on how they can operate the machines properly and adhere to safety procedures. "Regarding leadership, that is the responsibility of the student unit," said a mechanical engineering lecturer. This shows that synergy between units is still weak. The programs of the student units run independently, while academic life and technical training are carried out with different values. In addition, the very heavy technical study load is the main obstacle to cadet participation. Many cadets admitted to having to choose between doing practical assignments or attending organizational meetings, ultimately sacrificing the opportunity to hone their social skills. The program's implementation ultimately only reached a handful of cadets who were already intrinsically active, without successfully reaching the entire population.

At the implementation level, this research reveals complex field dynamics where social leadership development programs face significant structural and cultural challenges. Although various programs such as Basic Leadership Training (LDK) and cadet organizations have been implemented, their effectiveness is limited by the disorientation of roles between units, clashes of cultural values, and limited resources available to support optimal program operationalization.

Based on participatory observation and in-depth interviews, it was revealed that the LDK program and cadet organizations do indeed strive to instill social leadership values such as collaboration, empathy, and effective communication. However, the implementation of these values encountered resistance from an institutional culture that was still thick with militaristic spirit and rigid hierarchy. As expressed by one of the cadets, there is cognitive dissonance between the democratic values taught in the organization and the strong seniority system in daily life in the dormitory. This finding is consistent with research by Irawan et al. (2023) which identified that the military culture in Indonesian maritime education often conflicts with the development of more participatory and collaborative transformational leadership.

Another crucial aspect revealed was the weak synergy between units in program implementation. Interview data with lecturers revealed a disorientation in roles, with most feeling that the responsibility for developing social leadership rested solely with the student affairs unit. This view reflects the fragmentation in the educational ecosystem, which clearly separates academic and character development domains. A study by Anderson & Wilson (2024) confirmed that a lack of role clarity and poor interdepartmental coordination are common problems in the implementation of soft skills programs in vocational institutions. Research by Zhang et al. (2025) further demonstrates that successful social leadership development requires collective responsibility from all stakeholders within educational institutions.

An equally important implementation challenge is the very dense technical study load, which is the main obstacle to cadet participation in the social leadership development program. Many cadets reported having to choose between completing practical assignments and attending organizational activities, ultimately prioritizing academic work due to its direct impact on grades and graduation. This phenomenon aligns with the findings of Brown & Martinez (2023), who highlighted the issue of curriculum overload in maritime education, where the demands of achieving rigorous technical standards leave little room for soft skills development. A study by Williams et al. (2020) also found that without formal incentives and recognition, participation in leadership development activities tends to be neglected by students.

The impact of these various implementation constraints is the limited reach of the program. Observations show that social leadership development programs ultimately only reach a handful of cadets who are intrinsically active and highly motivated. Meanwhile, cadets who need development most in this aspect are often neglected. This finding is in line with Thompson's (2024) research which criticized the elitist and non-inclusive leadership development model in many vocational education institutions.

Another factor affecting implementation effectiveness is the limited capacity of coaches and trainers in social leadership development methodologies. Interviews with several organizational coaches revealed that they rely more on practical experience than on evidence-based approaches to

leadership training. This condition is reinforced by the findings of Davis & Thompson (2022) who emphasized the importance of capacity building for leadership trainers in the context of maritime education.

Group dynamics in cadet organizations are also an inhibiting factor in the internalization of social leadership values. Observations show that communication patterns in organizational meetings are still dominated by seniors, while juniors tend to be passive and less courageous in expressing their opinions. This reflects that the hierarchical values of military culture still strongly influence social dynamics at the organizational level. Gonzalez & Lee's (2023) research identified that the transformation from authoritative leadership to participative leadership requires systematic and consistent changes in organizational culture.

Based on these findings, it becomes clear that the challenges of implementing social leadership development programs are multidimensional, encompassing structural, cultural, and resource aspects. As proposed in Kumar et al.'s (2023) research, successful implementation requires a systemic approach encompassing structural alignment between units, cultural transformation, and adequate resource allocation. Without comprehensive interventions at these three levels, social leadership development programs will remain stagnant without significantly impacting the development of cadets' social leadership competencies.

C. Evaluation and Reorientation: Building a Sustainable Framework for Social Leadership Development

The most crucial finding in this study is the absence of a comprehensive and measurable evaluation system to assess the development of cadets' social leadership competencies. Document studies and interviews show that evaluations of programs like LDK stop at participant satisfaction surveys using simple questionnaires. Meanwhile, there's no standard mechanism for assessing their long-term impact. "We don't have a clear measuring tool. "Success is usually seen from the smooth running of an event organized by cadets, or just from the supervisor's report," said one student.

At the individual level, assessments of cadets' social leadership are barely reflected in their academic grading system or transcripts. Transcripts only record achievements in technical courses and a few supporting courses. Organizational involvement and achievements, which should serve as proxies for social leadership competency, are only recognized through certificates, which are often undervalued. Consequently, many cadets lack motivation to develop in this area due to the lack of a formal and meaningful recognition (reward system).

The research findings reveal the most critical aspect in the entire social leadership development ecosystem, namely the absence of a comprehensive evaluation system and an adequate sustainability framework. The inability of institutions to measure the impact of social leadership development programs in a valid and reliable manner has become a major obstacle in building a cycle of continuous improvement and program accountability.

Document analysis and stakeholder interviews revealed that evaluations of social leadership development programs remain superficial and reactionary. Evaluations of programs like the Basic Leadership Training (LDK) focus solely on participant satisfaction through simple questionnaires that measure superficial aspects such as the suitability of the material, the facilitator's skills, and the adequacy of the facilities. As stated by the Head of the Student Affairs Unit, the institution lacks

clear measuring tools to assess the program's long-term impact on the development of cadets' social leadership competencies. This finding aligns with research by Anderson & Wilson (2024), who criticized the evaluation practices of soft skills programs in vocational education, which remain stuck on output measurement rather than outcome assessment.

The fundamental problem in this evaluation system is the absence of measurable and specific key performance indicators (KPIs) to assess the development of social leadership competencies. Without clear indicators, it is impossible for institutions to know to what extent the programs implemented actually contribute to the development of cadets' social leadership skills. A study by Zhang et al. (2025) emphasized the importance of developing an assessment framework that includes observable and measurable behavioral indicators for each dimension of social leadership.

At the individual level, this study found that assessment of cadets' social leadership development was barely reflected in the formal academic assessment system. Transcripts only recorded achievements in technical courses, while involvement and achievements in organizations were only recognized through certificates, which had low recognition value. This situation created a disincentive for cadets to invest time and effort in social leadership development, as revealed in Martinez & Brown's (2023) study on the importance of formal recognition in motivating participation in self-development activities.

The lack of an adequate reward system further exacerbates the problem of low participation and motivation for self-development. Without formal recognition commensurate with academic achievement, many cadets view social leadership development activities as an additional burden rather than an investment in their future. This finding is consistent with research by Thompson (2024) which shows that the integration of soft skills Assessment in academic transcripts is a key factor in increasing the perceived value of leadership development activities among students.

Based on these findings, it is imperative to undertake a fundamental reorientation of the approach to evaluation and sustainability of social leadership development. First, institutions need to develop a holistic assessment system that encompasses not only knowledge and skills, but also social leadership attitudes and behaviors in authentic contexts. As proposed in Kumar et al.'s (2023) research, social leadership assessment should utilize a multi-method approach that includes behavioral observation, 360-degree feedback, reflective portfolios, and scenario-based assessment.

Second, it is necessary to develop a system for documenting and tracking the development of social leadership for each cadet individually. The leadership portfolio model developed by Wilson & Taylor (2023) can be adopted to document the social leadership development journey of cadets from entry to graduation, including participation in programs, achievements in organizations, and reflection on personal development. Third, the sustainability aspect requires strengthening the internal capacity of institutions in terms of program monitoring and evaluation. A study by Lee & Park (2022) shows that the sustainability of leadership development programs is highly dependent on the institution's ability to carry out continuous program improvement based on valid evaluation data.

Fourth, it is necessary to build a systematic feedback and feedforward mechanism between program evaluation and planning and budgeting. Johnson & Smith's (2024) findings emphasize the importance of closing the loop in the evaluation cycle, where assessment results are used to inform

resource allocation decisions and program improvement. Fifth, sustainability also requires developing partnerships with industry to validate evaluation instruments and ensure the relevance of the competencies developed. Research by Gonzalez & Lee (2023) shows that industry involvement in the assessment process can increase ecological validity and graduates' employability. Equally important is developing a grounded evaluation culture at all levels of the institution. As Brown & Martinez's (2023) research reveals, the success of an evaluation system depends not only on sophisticated tools but also on a culture of using data for improvement that must be instilled throughout the organization.

Based on this comprehensive analysis, it can be concluded that building a framework for sustainable social leadership development requires a transformation of the evaluation paradigm from merely carrying out administrative obligations to the practice of collecting and using evidence for continuous improvement. Only with this systematic, comprehensive, and sustainable approach can institutions ensure that investments in social leadership development truly yield significant and measurable results in shaping future superior maritime leaders.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals that the development of social leadership competencies for cadets faces complex systemic challenges. Existing planning is fragmentary and not supported by adequate budget allocation, where soft skills development is a secondary priority compared to technical training. At the implementation level, there is role disorientation and weak synergy between units due to a strong hierarchical culture and a heavy technical study load, so that the program only touches a handful of cadets who are intrinsically active. Most crucially, the absence of a comprehensive evaluation system and formal reward mechanism results in low motivation for self-development and a lack of accountability for the achievement of social leadership competencies.

Based on these findings, the necessary implementations include consolidating the entire administrative ecosystem through more explicit curricular integration supported by a dedicated budget, harmonizing modern leadership culture with maritime values through integrated development, and developing a portfolio assessment and reward system that recognizes social leadership achievements on a par with academic achievements. These strategic steps are expected to create sustainability in producing graduates who are not only technically superior but also possess the social leadership capacities needed in the global maritime world.

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