

The Role of Leadership Styles in Improving Educational Standards: Teachers' Perspectives

Nila Sari^{1*}, Dodi Ilham²  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0557-4508>, Hasbi³, Mardhiah⁴

^{1,2,3}State Islamic Institute of Palopo (IAIN Palopo), Indonesia

⁴Alauddin State Islamic University of Makassar (UIN Alauddin Makassar), Indonesia

*e-mail: nilsarhasan017@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes teachers' perceptions of the principal's leadership style in enhancing teacher performance, infrastructure, curriculum implementation, and the teaching and learning process at SD Celebes Islamic School Belopa, Kabupaten Luwu. The study involved 37 respondents (27 educators and 10 administrative staff) using a quantitative approach with a survey method. Data analysis is conducted descriptively. The findings reveal that the principal's leadership style significantly influences education quality: 1) The authoritarian style contributes the most to teacher performance development (37.5%) by increasing compliance through strict supervision; 2) In infrastructure provision, the authoritarian style is dominant (41.3%), ensuring facility availability through strict oversight, while the democratic style (41.2%) promotes participation and transparency, and the laissez-faire style (17.5%) offers freedom but negatively impacts maintenance; 3) The democratic leadership style has the greatest impact on curriculum implementation (43.9%), enhancing participation and satisfaction, whereas the authoritarian style (28.1%) supports uniformity but limits innovation, and the laissez-faire style (28.0%) allows freedom in teaching methods; 4) In the teaching process, the democratic style is most effective (38.3%), fostering innovation and teacher involvement, while the authoritarian style (34.5%) reinforces standards but restricts creativity, and the laissez-faire style (27.2%) encourages creativity but leads to inconsistency. The study highlights that a combination of leadership styles tailored to each educational aspect can create a conducive learning environment, emphasizing the importance of flexible leadership to meet dynamic educational needs and improve sustainable quality.

INTRODUCTION

Educational leadership is a critical factor in shaping the quality of education, influencing not only the performance of teachers but also curriculum implementation, school infrastructure, and the overall learning environment (Diem & Welton, 2020; Hanafi et al., 2021; Waite, 2021). The role of school principals in educational institutions extends beyond administrative responsibilities to encompass pedagogical leadership, staff motivation, and institutional development (Kalkan et al., 2020; Marta Baltodano, 2023). Effective school leadership is essential to foster a conducive learning atmosphere,

enhance teacher engagement, and improve student outcomes ([DeMatthews et al., 2020](#); [Gómez-Leal et al., 2022](#); [Leithwood et al., 2020](#)).

Academic research has widely discussed Leadership styles in education, with Kurt Lewin's classification of leadership styles—authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-faire—being among the most referenced models ([Burnes, 2020](#); [Kurt Lewin, 1947](#)). Each leadership style presents unique advantages and challenges within an educational setting. Authoritarian leadership, characterized by centralized decision-making and strict supervision, is often associated with structured discipline and high levels of compliance among teachers. However, it can also limit teacher autonomy and creativity, potentially stifling innovation in pedagogy ([Chen et al., 2024](#); [Du et al., 2020](#); [Pizzolitto et al., 2023](#)). Democratic leadership, on the other hand, emphasizes collaboration, inclusivity, and shared decision-making. Principals who adopt this style often create an environment where teachers feel valued and empowered, leading to greater job satisfaction and a stronger commitment to professional growth ([Devi & Subiyantoro, 2021](#); [Raupu et al., 2021](#); [Syakur et al., 2022](#)). Meanwhile, laissez-faire leadership, which involves minimal intervention from school leaders, grants teachers greater independence in their instructional methods but may lead to inconsistencies in policy implementation and reduced accountability ([Ahmed Iqbal et al., 2021](#); [Kamal et al., 2024](#); [Thanh & Quang, 2022](#)).

How teachers perceive their principal's leadership style significantly impacts their motivation, job performance, and overall job satisfaction. Research has shown that when teachers view their school leadership positively, they tend to be more engaged, proactive, and dedicated to achieving institutional goals ([Cann et al., 2021](#); [Sanchez et al., 2022](#)). Conversely, negative perceptions of leadership can lead to disengagement, decreased morale, and even higher turnover rates ([Fuller, 2022](#); [Nikolova et al., 2021](#); [Tahir et al., 2024](#)). It is imperative to explore teachers' perceptions of different leadership styles and how they influence various aspects of educational quality.

Several studies have examined the role of leadership in school effectiveness, particularly its influence on teacher performance and student achievement ([Leithwood et al., 2020](#); [Li & Liu, 2022](#); [Nurabadi et al., 2021](#)). However, a research gap remains regarding how teachers perceive their principal's leadership style and how these perceptions influence their work. The success of educational policies and reforms often depends on the alignment between leadership strategies and teacher expectations. Understanding these perceptions can provide valuable insights for school administrators and policymakers in designing leadership training programs and refining educational management strategies.

This study examines teachers' perceptions of school principals' leadership styles and their influence on four key areas: teacher performance, infrastructure management, curriculum implementation, and the teaching-learning process. Given the significance of leadership styles in school development, it is crucial to understand how teachers interpret and respond to various leadership approaches. A leadership style that is well-received by teachers is more likely to lead to improved educational outcomes, while a leadership approach that is perceived negatively may create barriers to progress. This study seeks to fill the existing knowledge gap by comprehensively analyzing teachers' perceptions regarding their principal's leadership style and its implications for school quality.

By understanding the impact of leadership styles on teacher performance, infrastructure management, curriculum implementation, and the teaching-learning process, this research contributes to educational management. The findings will help school administrators and policymakers develop more effective leadership training programs and adopt management strategies that align with the needs of teachers and students. Ultimately, this study aims to promote a leadership framework that supports sustainable educational improvement and fosters a positive school culture.

METHODS

This study employs a quantitative research approach using a survey-based methodology ([Leavy, 2022](#)) to assess teachers' perceptions of school principals' leadership styles. A descriptive research design is utilized to analyze the relationships between leadership styles and key educational components, including teacher performance, infrastructure management, curriculum implementation, and the teaching-learning process. The study population comprises all teachers at Celebes Islamic School Belopa, totaling 41 individuals. The sample size was determined using Slovin's formula with a margin of error of 5%, resulting in a final sample of 37 teachers.

Data were collected using structured questionnaires of 84 validated items to measure teachers' perceptions of their principal's leadership style. The questionnaire employed a Likert scale format to assess levels of agreement with various leadership-related statements. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Descriptive analysis summarized demographic characteristics and perception trends, while inferential analysis, including correlation and regression tests, was conducted to determine the relationships between leadership styles and educational outcomes. Statistical software such as SPSS was used for data processing.

RESULTS

Teachers' Perceptions of Principal Leadership Styles in Enhancing Teacher Performance

Table 1. Descriptive Analysis of Teacher Performance

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Y1.1	4	5	4,56	,506
Y1.2	2	5	4,00	,734
Y1.3	1	5	2,19	1,210
Y1.4	2	5	4,04	,759
Y1.5	1	5	2,63	1,006
Y1.6	1	4	1,74	,764
Y1.7	1	4	1,74	,764
Y1.8	1	5	1,59	,971
Y1.9	2	5	4,11	,801
Y1.10	1	5	2,15	1,134
Y1.11	2	5	4,15	,770
Y1.12	1	5	4,04	,940
Y1.13	1	4	1,85	,949
Y1.14	1	4	2,15	,770
Y1.15	1	5	2,00	1,000
Y1.16	1	4	1,96	,759
Y1.17	1	5	3,33	1,074
Y1.18	1	5	3,33	1,074
Y1.19	1	5	3,15	1,167
Y1.20	1	5	3,07	1,174
Y1.21	1	5	2,00	,961
Y1.22	1	5	2,07	1,072
Y1.23	1	4	2,11	,751
Y1.24	1	5	1,93	,874
Valid N (listwise)				

The findings show a significant difference in the effects of authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-faire leadership styles on teacher performance. In the authoritarian leadership style, it was found that the average score for the item of clear direction (Y1.1) reached 4.56, indicating that teachers felt the instructions from the principal were communicated clearly and specifically. The average score of 4.00 for performance monitoring (Y1.2) suggests strict supervision of teaching standards. However, this style tends to hinder teacher creativity, as reflected in the low score for flexibility in teaching (Y1.6), with an average of 1.74. This finding indicates that while effective in ensuring compliance, the authoritarian style requires a more flexible approach to support innovation.

On the other hand, the democratic leadership style showed more positive results in terms of teacher involvement. The average score of 4.11 for involvement in decision-making (Y1.9) and 4.15 for communication transparency (Y1.11) indicates active participation and openness of information in the school environment. However, there is a deficiency in recognizing teacher contributions, as seen from the average score of 1.85 for item Y1.13. It suggests the need for a greater appreciation of teachers' roles in the decision-making process.

The laissez-faire leadership style, which gives teachers more autonomy, showed moderate values regarding freedom in teaching methods, with a score of 3.33 for item Y1.17. However, this style reveals weaknesses in structural support and guidance, as reflected in the low average score of 2.00 for the aspect of support when facing difficulties (Y1.21). Based on the data presented above, here is the presentation in the form of a diagram:

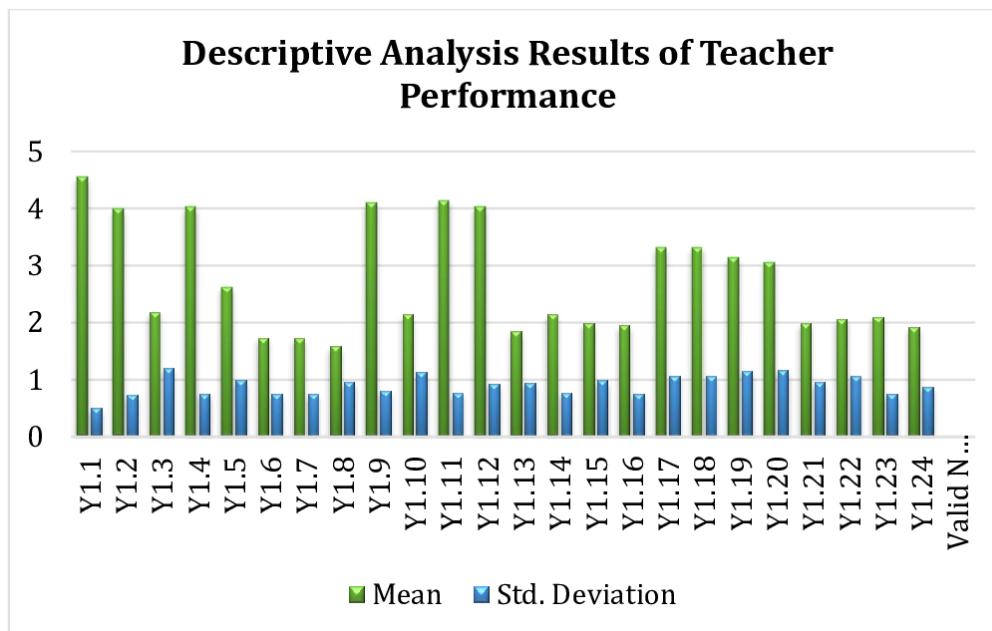


Diagram 1. Descriptive Analysis Results of Teacher Performance

Based on the results of the analysis, teachers' perceptions of the principal's leadership styles at SD Celebes Islamic School Belopa show significant differences in the influence of each leadership style on teacher performance. The authoritarian leadership style contributes 37.5% to teacher performance, with a high average score on aspects such as clear direction (4.56) and performance monitoring (4.00). However, there is a weakness in teaching flexibility, reflected by the low score of 1.74. The democratic leadership style contributes 36.7%, with average scores of 4.11 for involvement in decision-making and 4.15 for communication transparency, indicating active participation and openness of information. However, there is a deficiency in recognizing teacher contributions, reflected in a score of 1.85. Meanwhile, the laissez-faire leadership style contributes 25.8%, with a relatively high score of 3.33 for freedom in teaching methods, but shows weaknesses in support during difficulties, with a score of 2.00.

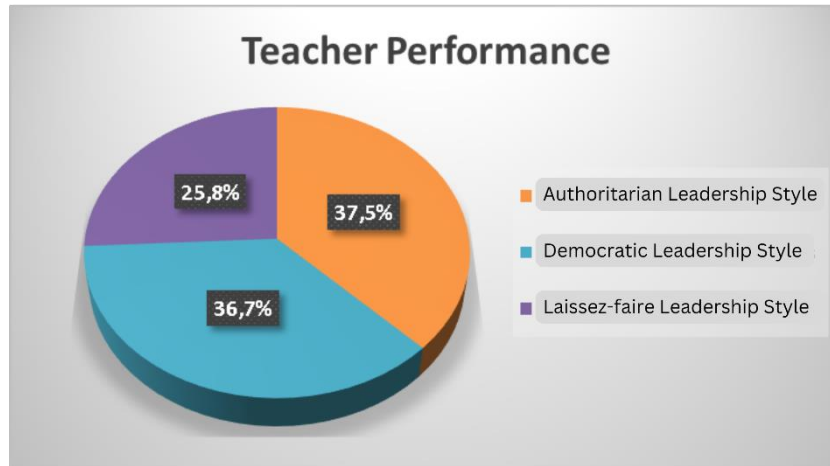


Figure 1. Percentage of Leadership Styles in Developing Teacher Performance

Teachers' Perceptions of Principal Leadership Styles in Meeting the Infrastructure Needs

Table 2. Descriptive Analysis Results of Infrastructure Fulfillment

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Y2.1	1	5	4,32	,816
Y2.2	1	5	4,19	,742
Y2.3	1	5	4,18	,750
Y2.4	3	5	4,40	,631
Y2.5	1	5	2,03	,890
Y2.6	1	5	1,97	,835
Y2.7	1	5	1,82	,610
Y2.8	1	5	1,90	,747
Y2.9	2	5	4,26	,767
Y2.10	2	5	4,09	,799
Y2.11	2	5	4,28	,808
Y2.12	2	5	4,13	,760
Y2.13	1	4	1,91	,616
Y2.14	1	4	1,97	,742
Y2.15	1	4	1,74	,747
Y2.16	1	5	1,90	,792
Y2.17	1	5	3,83	,903
Y2.18	2	5	3,72	,918
Y2.19	2	5	3,72	,918
Y2.20	1	5	3,83	,903
Y2.21	1	4	1,95	,628
Y2.22	1	5	2,03	,804
Y2.23	1	5	2,01	,760
Y2.24	1	4	2,09	,820
Valid N (listwise)				

The findings show a varied impact of authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-faire leadership styles on the fulfillment of facilities and infrastructure in the school. In the authoritarian leadership style, the average score for the availability of facilities according to standards reached 4.32, indicating that the principal ensures adequate facilities for teaching and learning activities. Additionally, an average score of 4.19 for facility management suggests strict maintenance to keep the facilities in good condition. However, this style shows a weakness in involving staff in planning, as reflected by the low score of 1.82

on the item related to staff involvement in planning. These findings suggest a more inclusive approach to improve management effectiveness.

In contrast, the democratic leadership style shows more positive results involving various stakeholders. The average score of 4.26 for teacher involvement in facility procurement and 4.28 for transparency in procurement plans indicates open communication and active participation from staff. However, the average score of 1.74 for information transparency suggests a need to improve the consistency of communication in evaluating facility needs.

The laissez-faire leadership style, which grants more autonomy to staff, shows moderate scores on the freedom to determine the use of facilities, with a value of 3.83. However, this style demonstrates weaknesses in coordination and guidance, as reflected by the low average score of 1.95 on support in facility management. It suggests that although its flexibility supports staff initiatives, the lack of direction can hinder optimal management.

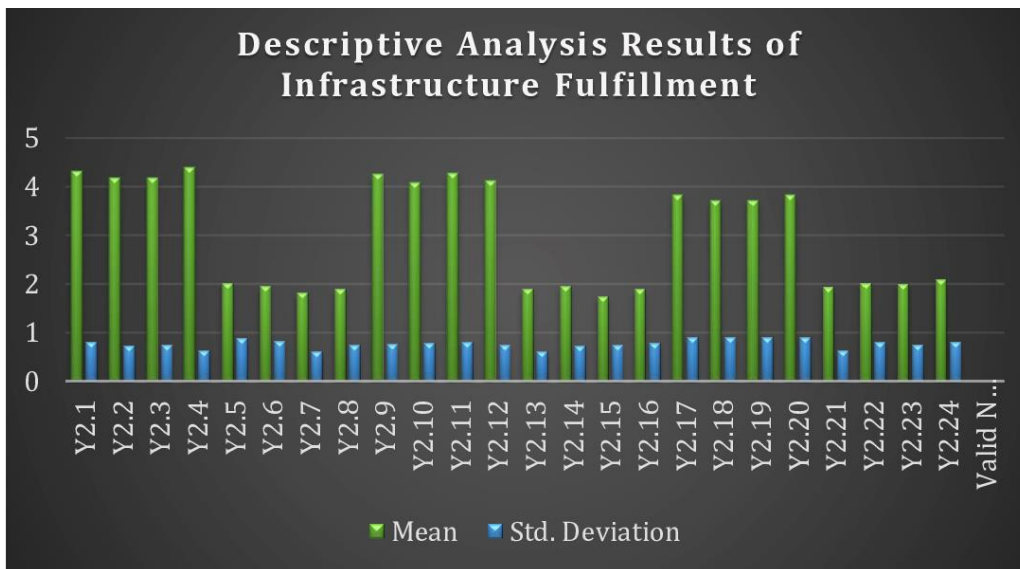


Diagram 2. Descriptive Analysis Results of Infrastructure Fulfillment

Based on the results of the analysis, teachers' perceptions of the principal's leadership style in fulfilling facilities and infrastructure at SD Celebes Islamic School Belopa show varying contributions from each leadership style. The authoritarian leadership style contributes 41.3%, with high average scores for the availability of facilities according to standards (4.32) and facility management (4.19). However, this style lacks staff involvement in planning, as reflected by the score of 1.82 on the item related to staff involvement in planning. While effective in ensuring the availability and maintenance of facilities, the authoritarian style needs to improve staff participation in planning to optimize management.

The democratic leadership style contributes 41.2% to the fulfillment of facilities and infrastructure. This style shows positive results in teacher involvement in facility procurement (4.26) and transparency in procurement plans (4.28). However, there is a lack of information transparency, as reflected in the score of 1.74 on the item related to information openness, indicating the need for consistent communication in evaluating facility needs. Nevertheless, this style demonstrates active participation from various parties and open communication, positively impacting facilities and infrastructure fulfillment.

Meanwhile, the laissez-faire leadership style contributes 17.5% to fulfilling facilities and infrastructure. This style provides staff with the freedom to determine the use of facilities, with a score of 3.83 on the item related to freedom in facility usage. However, this style shows weaknesses in support and coordination, as reflected in the score of 1.95 on the item related to support in facility management. While the laissez-faire style allows staff initiative, the lack of direction and guidance can hinder optimal management.

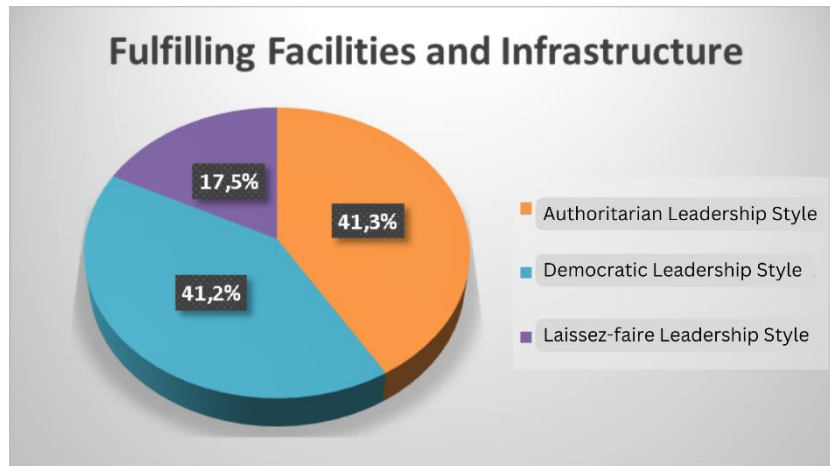


Figure 2. Percentage of Leadership Styles in Fulfilling Facilities and Infrastructure

Teachers' Perceptions of Principal Leadership Styles in Curriculum Implementation

The questionnaire results were analyzed using descriptive statistics with SPSS software, and the following is the analysis result:

Table 3. Descriptive Analysis Results of Curriculum Implementation

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Y3.1	1	5	2,08	1,115
Y3.2	1	4	1,92	,954
Y3.3	1	4	1,86	,887
Y3.4	1	4	1,78	,821
Y3.5	1	5	2,08	1,115
Y3.6	1	5	1,92	,954
Y3.7	2	5	4,11	,774
Y3.8	2	5	4,11	,774
Y3.9	1	4	1,92	,954
Y3.10	1	4	1,81	,845
Y3.11	1	4	1,92	,954
Y3.12	1	4	2,16	,928
Valid N (listwise)				

The research findings indicate that authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-faire leadership styles have varied impacts on the effectiveness of curriculum implementation at the school. In the authoritarian leadership style, the average score for indicator Y3.1, which assesses clear direction in curriculum implementation, reached 2.08, indicating that the principal provides clear guidance in the teaching process. Additionally, the average score of 1.92 for indicator Y3.2, related to monitoring curriculum implementation, shows that the principal actively controls teaching standards. However, this style tends to reduce teacher creativity, as reflected in the low score for indicator Y3.3 (average 1.86), indicating that excessive involvement of the principal hinders innovation in teaching.

In contrast, the democratic leadership style showed more positive results in engaging teachers. The average score of 2.08 for indicator Y3.5, related to teacher participation in curriculum planning, and 1.92 for indicator Y3.6 regarding communication transparency confirms that teachers feel involved and are open to information. However, some shortcomings were observed in indicators Y3.7 and Y3.8, with high scores of 4.11, indicating that some teachers still feel less involved in important decisions regarding curriculum implementation.

The laissez-faire leadership style, which grants teachers more autonomy, showed a moderate average score of 1.92 for indicator Y3.9, assessing the freedom of teaching methods. However, weaknesses in structural support were seen in the average score of 1.81 for indicator Y3.10, and uncertainty in curriculum monitoring was reflected in a score of 2.16 for indicator Y3.12, emphasizing the lack of clear direction from the principal.

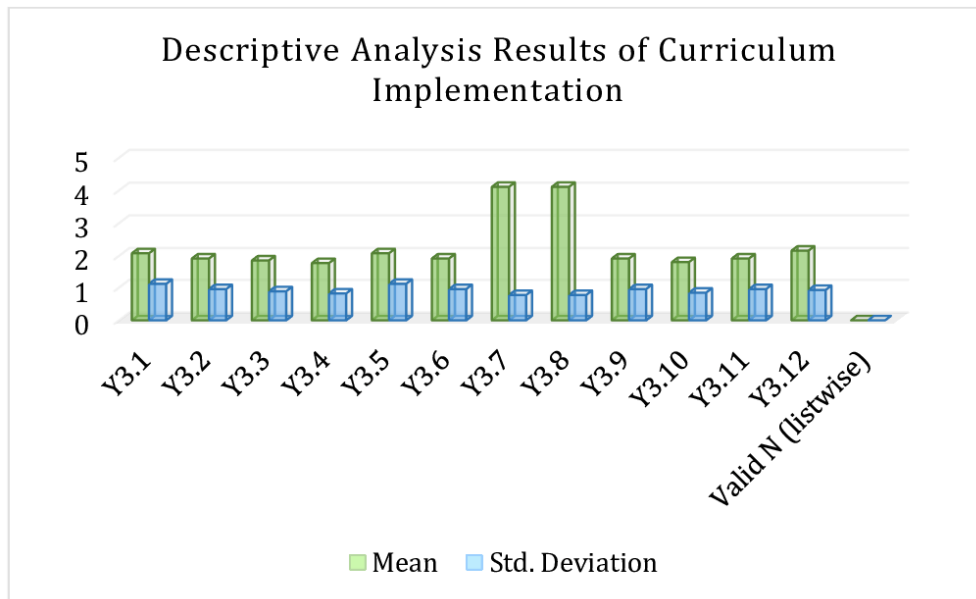


Diagram 3. Descriptive Analysis Results of Curriculum Implementation

Based on the results of the analysis, teachers' perceptions of the principal's leadership style in curriculum implementation at SD Celebes Islamic School Belopa show differing contributions from each leadership style. The authoritarian leadership style contributes 28.1%. While this style effectively provides clear direction and monitors curriculum implementation, with an average score of 2.08 for the direction indicator and 1.92 for the curriculum monitoring indicator, it tends to reduce creativity and innovation in teaching. It is reflected in the low score of 1.86 for the indicator measuring the principal's involvement in teaching innovation.

The democratic leadership style contributes the largest share, 43.9%. This style has proven to enhance involvement and communication between the principal and teachers, with an average score of 2.08 for teacher participation in curriculum planning and 1.92 for the transparency in communication indicator. Transparency in communication and decision-making involving teachers significantly helps create a positive work atmosphere. However, some teachers still feel less involved in key curriculum-related decisions, as reflected in the score of 4.11 for the involvement in decisions indicator.

The laissez-faire leadership style contributes 28.0%. This style gives teachers greater freedom to determine teaching methods and allows room for creativity, reflected in the average score of 1.92 for the freedom of teaching methods indicator. However, this style also shows weaknesses in structural support and curriculum monitoring, with low scores of 1.81 for the support in the curriculum management indicator and 2.16 for the curriculum monitoring indicator.

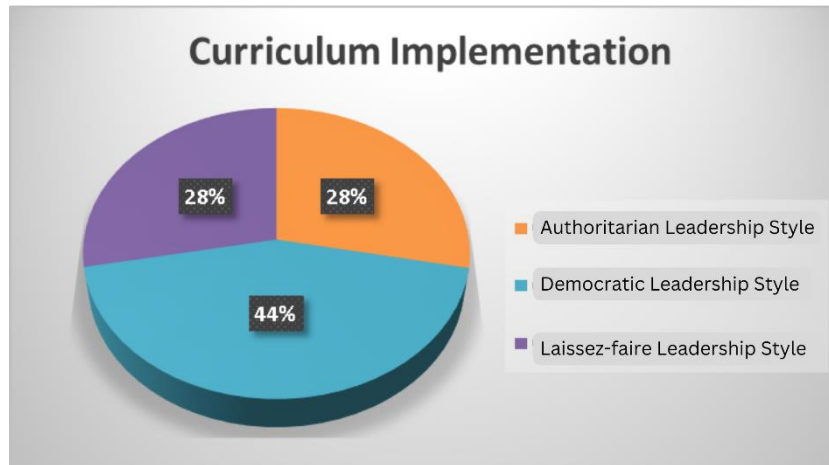


Figure 3. Percentage of Leadership Styles in Curriculum Implementation

Teachers' Perceptions of Principal Leadership Styles in the Teaching and Learning Process

The results of the questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistics with SPSS software, and the following are the analysis results:

Table 4. Descriptive Analysis Results of the Teaching and Learning Process

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Y4.1	1	5	3,95	,880
Y4.2	1	4	2,03	1,013
Y4.3	1	4	1,92	,954
Y4.4	2	5	3,68	,915
Y4.5	1	4	1,92	,862
Y4.6	1	4	1,97	,957
Y4.7	1	4	2,00	,882
Y4.8	1	4	1,86	,887
Y4.9	1	4	2,03	1,013
Y4.10	1	5	1,97	1,118
Y4.11	1	5	2,11	1,100
Y4.12	1	4	1,92	,954
Y4.13	1	5	1,92	1,064
Y4.14	1	4	1,81	,938
Y4.15	1	4	1,86	,822
Y4.16	1	5	1,86	,976
Y4.17	1	5	1,95	1,026
Y4.18	1	5	1,92	1,038
Y4.19	1	5	3,76	1,116
Y4.20	1	4	2,03	1,013
Y4.21	1	5	1,81	,877
Y4.22	1	4	1,86	,713
Y4.23	1	4	1,92	,829
Y4.24	1	5	2,05	1,053
Valid N (listwise)				

The research findings show a variation in teachers' views on the impact of authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-faire leadership styles on the effectiveness of teaching implementation. In authoritarian leadership, teachers perceive that the principal provides detailed instructions and strict supervision. It is reflected in the average scores of 3.95 for clear instructions (Y4.1) and 3.68 for

consistent direction (Y4.4). However, this leadership style limits teachers' creativity in teaching, as evidenced by the low score of 1.92 for flexibility in teaching methods (Y4.5). This perception indicates that while the authoritarian approach effectively maintains teaching standards, it does not support innovation.

In contrast, the democratic leadership style shows a more positive perception from teachers, particularly regarding involvement and communication transparency. The average scores of 2.03 for involvement in decision-making (Y4.9) and 2.11 for communication transparency (Y4.11) indicate the principal's efforts to involve teachers in decisions related to the teaching and learning process. However, a deficiency in this style is seen in the average score of 1.92 in recognizing teachers' contributions (Y4.13), suggesting that some teachers feel their roles and contributions are undervalued.

In the laissez-faire leadership style, teachers experience more freedom in determining teaching methods, as reflected in the average score of 3.76 for freedom in teaching methods (Y4.19). However, this style shows weaknesses regarding support and guidance from the principal. The average score of 2.05 for support in material adjustment (Y4.24) suggests that teachers need clearer direction and more consistent guidance from the principal.

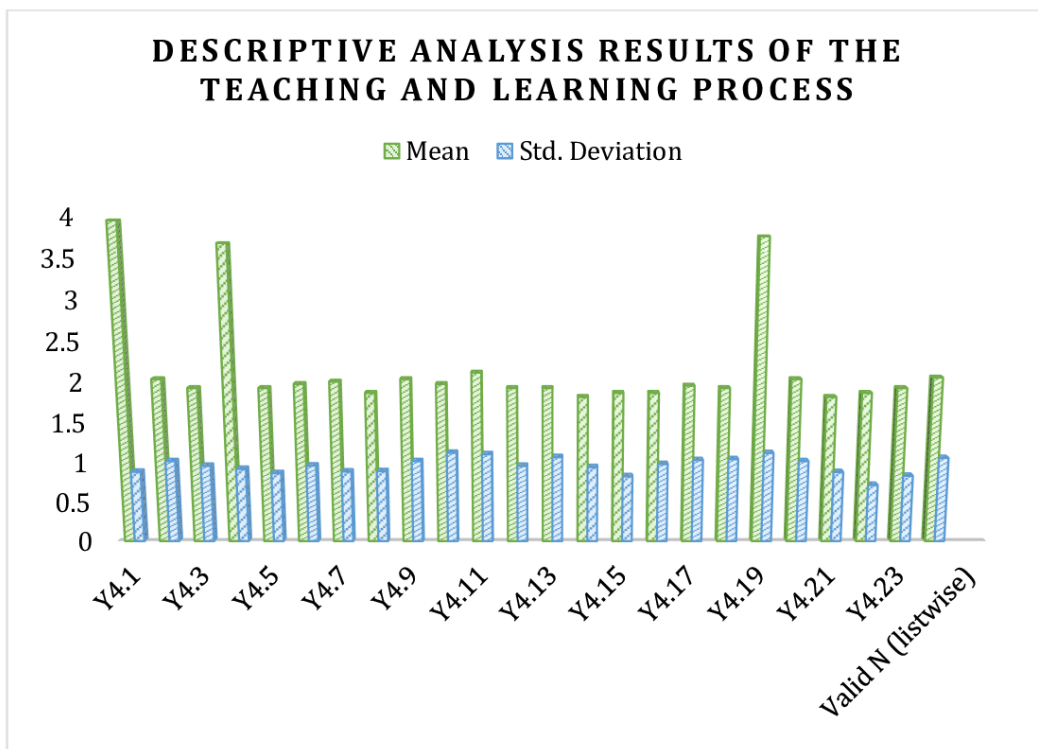


Diagram 4. Descriptive Analysis Results of the Teaching and Learning Process

Based on the results of the analysis, teachers' perceptions of the principal's leadership style in the teaching and learning process at Celebes Islamic School Belopa show varying contributions from each leadership style. The authoritarian leadership style contributes 34.5%. This style effectively provides clear instructions and consistent supervision of teaching, as seen in the average scores of 3.95 for clear instructions and 3.68 for consistent direction. However, the authoritarian style tends to limit teachers' creativity in selecting teaching methods, with a low score of 1.92 for flexibility. Although effective in maintaining teaching standards, this style must allow more space for innovation in the learning process.

The democratic leadership style contributes the largest, at 38.3%. This style has improved teacher involvement in decision-making and communication transparency between the principal and teachers. It is reflected in the average scores of 2.03 for involvement in decision-making and 2.11 for communication transparency. However, some teachers feel undervalued for their contributions to teaching, with a score of 1.92 on recognizing teachers' contributions, indicating that the principal needs to provide more appreciation for teachers' roles.

The laissez-faire leadership style contributes 27.2%. This style gives teachers more freedom in determining teaching methods, as reflected in the average score of 3.76 for freedom in teaching methods. However, this style also shows weaknesses in structural support, as seen in the score of 2.05 for support for material adjustments. The lack of support and curriculum monitoring may reduce the overall effectiveness of teaching.

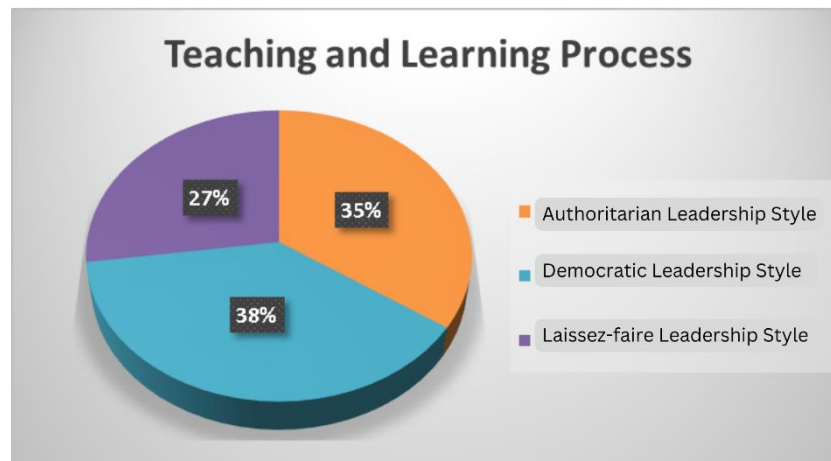


Figure 4. Percentage of Leadership Styles in the Teaching and Learning Process

DISCUSSION

Teachers' Perceptions of Principal Leadership Styles in Enhancing Teacher Performance

The findings of this study reveal that teachers perceive the principal's leadership style as a critical factor in shaping their performance. Each leadership style—authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-faire—has distinct influences, highlighting the need for a strategic and adaptive leadership approach.

The authoritarian leadership style is seen as effective in maintaining discipline and ensuring adherence to teaching standards. Teachers appreciate the clear direction and structured supervision the principal provides, which helps them stay aligned with school policies and performance expectations. However, this approach limits teacher creativity and autonomy in instructional decision-making (Du et al., 2020; Hanaysha, 2023). While beneficial for consistency, the emphasis on control and compliance may discourage pedagogy innovation and reduce teacher engagement over time. These findings align with Lewin's theory, which suggests that authoritarian leadership can foster efficiency but may hinder intrinsic motivation and professional growth (Crosby, 2020; Hidayat et al., 2023).

The democratic leadership style is perceived as the most supportive of teacher engagement and professional development. Teachers report feeling more valued and involved in decision-making processes, which enhances their sense of ownership and responsibility in the school environment. Open communication between the principal and teachers fosters a collaborative culture where educators feel empowered to contribute ideas and share best practices. However, some challenges remain in ensuring teacher contributions are formally acknowledged and rewarded. As previous research argues, democratic leadership can be highly effective in fostering job satisfaction and professional commitment, but it requires a structured approach to recognition and support (Fakhri et al., 2021; Wilson, 2020).

The laissez-faire leadership style offers the most flexibility, allowing teachers autonomy in designing and implementing their teaching strategies. While this approach is beneficial for fostering creativity and adaptability, the findings suggest that a lack of guidance and structured support can lead to inconsistencies in performance. Teachers who thrive under self-direction may appreciate this leadership style, but others may struggle with the absence of clear expectations and accountability. Previous research highlights that while laissez-faire leadership can promote innovation, it must be balanced with adequate oversight to prevent disorganization and disengagement (Ahmed Iqbal et al., 2021; Rassa & Emeagwali, 2020).

These findings suggest that an adaptive leadership approach—where principals flexibly apply different leadership styles based on specific situations—is crucial for optimizing teacher performance.

While an authoritarian approach may be necessary for enforcing school policies and maintaining discipline, democratic leadership is essential for fostering collaboration, motivation, and job satisfaction. Laissez-faire leadership, when used appropriately, can empower teachers with autonomy while still providing necessary support and direction ([Kamal et al., 2024](#); [López-Cabarcos et al., 2024](#); [Made et al., 2023](#)).

To enhance teacher performance effectively, school leaders should adopt a balanced leadership strategy that integrates structured oversight, participatory decision-making, and professional autonomy according to the specific needs of teachers and the school environment. A culture of recognition and appreciation must also be cultivated to ensure that teachers feel valued for their contributions, enhancing their motivation and engagement ([Kumar & Vasudevan, 2024](#); [Sullanmaa et al., 2024](#)). Additionally, targeted professional development programs should equip teachers with the necessary skills and confidence to navigate structured and autonomous teaching environments ([Abedi, 2024](#); [Haug & Mork, 2021](#); [Nawab & Sharar, 2022](#)). By implementing these strategies, school principals can create a more dynamic and responsive educational environment that supports teacher effectiveness and student success.

Teachers' Perceptions of Principal Leadership Styles in Meeting the Infrastructure Needs

The findings indicate that teachers perceive the principal's leadership style as a significant factor in determining the effectiveness of school infrastructure management. A well-managed infrastructure is essential for creating a conducive learning environment, and the principal's leadership approach plays a key role in ensuring school facilities' availability, maintenance, and development. The three leadership styles—authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-faire—each influence infrastructure management differently.

The authoritarian leadership style is perceived as effective in ensuring the availability and quality of school facilities. Teachers recognize that principals with this leadership style enforce strict oversight in infrastructure management, ensuring that necessary resources are provided and maintained according to established standards. Clear guidelines and rigorous monitoring help maintain discipline and accountability in facility management ([Amaechi et al., 2022](#); [Okoro, 2023](#)). However, this centralized approach limits teacher involvement in infrastructure-related decisions, making them feel excluded from planning and resource allocation processes. While effective in maintaining order and efficiency, this approach may overlook teachers' valuable input regarding the learning environment's practical needs ([Hidayat et al., 2023](#); [Okoro, 2023](#); [Syakur et al., 2022](#)).

The democratic leadership style fosters a more participatory and transparent approach to infrastructure management. Teachers feel more involved in decision-making processes, particularly in the planning and procuring of school facilities. Open communication between the principal and teachers allows for better identification of infrastructure needs, ensuring that resources are allocated based on actual classroom requirements ([Kalkan et al., 2020](#); [Raupu et al., 2021](#)). This leadership style also promotes shared responsibility, encouraging collaboration between teachers, staff, and the school administration in maintaining and improving facilities ([Crosby, 2020](#); [Syakur et al., 2022](#); [Wilson, 2020](#)). However, while democratic leadership enhances inclusivity and teamwork, it may require more time to reach decisions, potentially delaying urgent infrastructure improvements ([Devi & Subiyantoro, 2021](#); [Fakhri et al., 2021](#)).

The laissez-faire leadership style gives teachers and staff the highest autonomy in managing school infrastructure. This approach allows greater flexibility in determining the use and maintenance of facilities, which can be beneficial in encouraging creativity and independent problem-solving ([Kamal et al., 2024](#); [López-Cabarcos et al., 2024](#); [Rassa & Emeagwali, 2020](#)). However, the findings suggest that a lack of clear guidance and structured oversight can lead to inconsistencies in infrastructure maintenance. Without a strong leadership presence, facility management may become disorganized, and essential repairs and upgrades are overlooked. While some teachers appreciate the freedom associated with this style, others feel that the absence of leadership results in unclear responsibilities and inefficiencies in infrastructure management.

Teachers' Perceptions of Principal Leadership Styles in Curriculum Implementation

The findings indicate that teachers perceive the principal's leadership style as crucial in successfully implementing the school curriculum. How a principal provides direction, fosters collaboration, and supports instructional practices influences how effectively teachers deliver the curriculum and achieve learning objectives. The three leadership styles—authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-faire—contribute differently to curriculum implementation.

The authoritarian leadership style is seen as effective in maintaining consistency and adherence to curriculum standards. Teachers recognize that principals with this leadership style provide clear guidelines, structured supervision, and rigorous monitoring of curriculum implementation. This approach ensures that teaching follows standardized procedures, reducing variations in instructional delivery ([Chen et al., 2024](#); [Pizzolitto et al., 2023](#)). However, the rigid nature of authoritarian leadership may limit teachers' flexibility in adapting curriculum materials to student needs ([Du et al., 2020](#); [Hanaysha, 2023](#)). Teachers may feel constrained in experimenting with innovative teaching methods, as strict oversight can discourage creative approaches to curriculum delivery. While this style promotes uniformity and accountability, it may hinder pedagogical innovation.

The democratic leadership style fosters a more inclusive and participatory approach to curriculum implementation. Teachers feel empowered to contribute to curriculum planning, instructional strategies, and assessment methods. Open communication between the principal and teachers facilitates collaborative decision-making, allowing for adjustments to curriculum content based on student learning needs. This leadership style encourages professional dialogue and continuous improvement, leading to a more dynamic and responsive curriculum ([Fakhri et al., 2021](#); [Raupu et al., 2021](#)). However, while democratic leadership enhances teacher involvement, it may also result in longer decision-making processes, which can slow the implementation of new curricular initiatives ([Devi & Subiyantoro, 2021](#); [Hidayat et al., 2023](#)).

The laissez-faire leadership style offers teachers the highest level of autonomy in curriculum implementation. Teachers appreciate the flexibility to determine their teaching approaches, instructional materials, and classroom strategies. This independence allows for more personalized and student-centered learning experiences. However, the findings suggest that the absence of clear direction from the principal can lead to inconsistent curriculum application across different classrooms. Some teachers may struggle with aligning their instructional practices with school-wide educational goals without structured guidance. While this leadership style supports innovation, it requires a balance between autonomy and accountability to ensure coherence in curriculum implementation ([Ahmed Iqbal et al., 2021](#); [Desgourdes et al., 2024](#); [Thanh & Quang, 2022](#)).

The findings highlight the importance of an adaptive leadership approach in curriculum implementation. While authoritarian leadership ensures compliance with curriculum standards, democratic leadership fosters teacher engagement and instructional creativity. Laissez-faire leadership, when applied strategically, allows for instructional flexibility but must be accompanied by structured support to maintain consistency in educational delivery ([Kamal et al., 2024](#); [López-Cabarcos et al., 2024](#)). To optimize curriculum implementation, school leaders should integrate structured oversight with collaborative decision-making, ensuring curriculum policies are standardized and adaptable to student needs. Encouraging professional learning communities can enhance teacher collaboration, allowing them to share best practices and refine instructional strategies ([Cann et al., 2021](#); [Li & Liu, 2022](#)). Additionally, continuous feedback and evaluation should be established to monitor the effectiveness of curriculum implementation and make necessary adjustments. By employing a leadership approach that balances structure, participation, and flexibility, school principals can support teachers in delivering a rigorous and responsive curriculum that is responsive to students' evolving needs.

Teachers' Perceptions of Principal Leadership Styles in the Teaching and Learning Process

The findings suggest that teachers perceive the principal's leadership style as a key factor in shaping the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process. A principal's ability to provide clear direction, foster collaboration, and support pedagogical innovation directly impacts how teachers engage with students and deliver instruction. The three leadership styles—authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-faire—have distinct implications for the teaching and learning environment.

The authoritarian leadership style is viewed as effective in maintaining instructional discipline and ensuring adherence to teaching standards. Teachers recognize that principals who adopt this leadership approach provide structured guidance, enforce lesson planning protocols, and conduct regular evaluations to uphold teaching quality. This structured approach helps maintain consistency in instructional delivery and ensures that academic expectations are met ([Du et al., 2020](#); [Hanaysha, 2023](#)). However, the rigid nature of authoritarian leadership may restrict teachers' ability to experiment with new teaching methods. Limited flexibility in instructional practices can reduce creativity in lesson design, making it challenging to adapt teaching strategies to diverse student needs. While this style ensures standardization, it may not fully support the evolving demands of modern pedagogy.

The democratic leadership style fosters a more engaging and collaborative teaching environment. Teachers appreciate the opportunity to participate in pedagogical discussions, curriculum adjustments, and instructional decision-making. Open communication between the principal and teachers promotes professional dialogue, allowing educators to share ideas, reflect on best practices, and implement innovative teaching strategies. This approach enhances teacher motivation and encourages continuous professional development ([Devi & Subiyantoro, 2021](#); [Raupu et al., 2021](#); [Syakur et al., 2022](#)). However, while democratic leadership creates a more inclusive atmosphere, it may also require additional time for decision-making, which can slow down the implementation of necessary instructional changes.

The laissez-faire leadership style offers teachers the greatest autonomy in teaching and learning. Teachers who prefer independence value the flexibility to design and execute lessons without significant administrative interference. This autonomy allows for a more student-centered approach, where teachers can tailor their methods based on classroom dynamics and learning styles ([Desgourdes et al., 2024](#); [López-Cabarcos et al., 2024](#); [Thanh & Quang, 2022](#)). However, the findings indicate that the absence of strong instructional leadership can lead to inconsistencies in teaching quality. Some teachers may struggle with maintaining instructional effectiveness and alignment with institutional goals without clear guidance and accountability measures. While this leadership style encourages innovation, it requires periodic oversight to uphold educational standards.

The findings emphasize the need for a situational leadership approach in supporting the teaching and learning process. While authoritarian leadership helps maintain instructional consistency, democratic leadership fosters teacher engagement and innovation. Laissez-faire leadership, when applied appropriately, allows for flexibility but must be complemented by structured support to ensure instructional coherence ([Ahmed Iqbal et al., 2021](#); [Rassa & Emeagwali, 2020](#)). To enhance the teaching and learning process, school leaders should implement a leadership strategy that integrates clear instructional expectations with opportunities for teacher collaboration. Professional development programs should be encouraged to help teachers refine their instructional practices and explore innovative teaching methodologies ([Abedi, 2024](#); [Cann et al., 2021](#); [Nawab & Sharar, 2022](#)). Additionally, establishing a structured feedback system can help monitor teaching effectiveness while allowing room for pedagogical experimentation ([Li & Liu, 2022](#); [Thanh & Quang, 2022](#)). By adopting a leadership approach that balances oversight, participation, and autonomy, school principals can create a dynamic and responsive teaching environment that supports educators and students in achieving optimal learning outcomes.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that teachers' perceptions of the principal's leadership style show that the authoritarian style contributes 37.5%, increasing compliance but reducing emotional support. The democratic style contributes 36.7%, enhancing communication and teacher participation, while the laissez-faire style contributes 25.8%, giving teachers freedom in classroom management. The authoritarian style contributes the most at 41.3%, effectively ensuring adequate facilities through strict supervision, although it involves less staff participation. The democratic style contributes 41.2%, increasing participation in facility procurement, although decision-making processes take longer, and the laissez-faire style contributes 17.5%, offering freedom but with suboptimal facility maintenance. In curriculum planning, the democratic style contributes the most at 43.9%, with open communication and teacher involvement, while the authoritarian style contributes 28.1%, supporting teaching uniformity but limiting innovation, and the laissez-faire style contributes 28.0%, giving freedom but with less supervision. In teaching, the democratic style contributes 38.3%,

promoting innovation and teacher participation, and the authoritarian style contributes 34.5%, strengthening compliance with teaching standards but limiting creativity. The laissez-faire style contributes 27.2%, supporting creativity but with insufficient supervision in implementing standards.

It is recommended that the principal optimize situational leadership styles tailored to specific needs, such as using the authoritarian style for facility management, the democratic style to encourage teacher participation, and the laissez-faire style with clear guidance to provide space for teaching innovation. The principal should also develop situational leadership skills through training that emphasizes selecting and applying leadership styles according to the school's characteristics. Participation in forums with other principals can also be a platform to share leadership strategies. Additionally, it is important to have a system of regular evaluation and monitoring to assess the impact of leadership styles on teacher performance, facilities, and teaching, allowing for appropriate adjustments. Future research is recommended to explore situational leadership styles in more diverse contexts, using a mixed-method approach and analyzing external support to improve the effectiveness of the principal's leadership.

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