

Strategic Management of Scout Extracurricular Activities to Enhance Holistic Character Development in Primary School Students

Rini Martini ^{a.1,*}, Ahmad Sukanda ^{b.2}

^{*ab} Universitas Islam Nusantara 1 & 2, Indonesia 1 & 2.

^{*1} martinezrini@gmail.com ; ² ahmadsukandar@uninus.ac.id

^{*}Correspondent Author

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the management of Scout extracurricular activities in elementary schools as a strategy to counter declining student discipline, particularly amidst the growing influence of digital technology. Utilizing a qualitative case study approach, the research was conducted at SDN Tegallame and SDN Mulyasari, analyzing the implementation of Scout programs through G.R. Terry's Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling framework. Data were collected via participatory observation, in-depth interviews with principals, Scout coordinators, instructors, and students, and document analysis, subsequently analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model. Findings reveal that systematic POAC management of Scout activities effectively fosters discipline, responsibility, independence, and leadership. Meticulous planning, involving student input, structures both routine and incidental experiential learning events. Clear organizing through a hierarchical structure with instructors as multifaceted mentors and students as patrol leaders cultivates responsibility and group management. Actuating emphasizes practical habituation, such as punctual attendance and task division, reinforced by comprehensive evaluation and reward systems to internalize Pancasila Student Profile values. Despite challenges in human resources, infrastructure, and funding, schools demonstrated adaptability through instructor training, stakeholder collaboration, facility optimization, and alternative funding, ensuring program sustainability. Evaluation consistently showed measurable improvements in student discipline and participation, including achievements in Scout competitions. This research addresses a critical gap by focusing on the management of Scout activities as a specific strategy for discipline improvement, especially in the context of digital-era challenges. The study's novelty lies in articulating a systematic, measurable, and adaptive Scout management model that integrates habituation, role modeling, task assignment, and continuous evaluation, offering a replicable template for educational institutions seeking to cultivate disciplined, resilient, and responsible students.

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Introduction

1 Background

Discipline is one of the fundamental pillars in character building and learning success for elementary school students (Andria & Suriani, 2025; Sudaryono & Aryani, 2021). Disciplinary values not only create order during the learning process but also form positive habits such as obedience, responsibility, and good social skills (Andria & Suriani, 2025; Sudaryono & Aryani, 2021). At the basic education level, these values become an important foundation for the moral and behavioral development of students at higher educational levels (Thomas et al., 2022).

However, in recent years, elementary schools in various regions have faced serious problems in the form of declining student discipline (Abebe & Hailemariam, 2007; Tantu & Marina, 2023). The development of digital technology, especially the excessive use of social media and online games, has become one of the most dominant factors (Cano et al., 2022; Septiadi et al., 2020). Many students spend hours using digital devices, neglecting study routines, reducing rest time, and experiencing a decrease in concentration (Adelantado-Renau et al., 2019; Muppalla et al., 2023). Not a few also show changes in social behavior such as truancy, late arrival to class, violating school rules, and a decline in responsibility towards the environment and academic tasks (Abebe & Hailemariam, 2007; Inchaurtieta et al., 2022). This phenomenon indicates a crisis of discipline that, if not handled early, has the potential to hinder the overall character building of students (Sudaryono & Aryani, 2021).

Amidst these challenges, the Pramuka extracurricular activity is one effective strategy that can be used to instill disciplinary values in students (Adiputra & Hermaya, 2020; Hanif & Yunitasari, 2024). Pramuka is a mandatory activity in elementary schools as regulated in Law Number 12 of 2010 concerning the Scouting Movement (Syawal, 2019; Yulianti et al., 2020). Through non-formal education methods based on direct experience, Pramuka provides various activities such as parades, routine exercises, ceremonies, camping, and social activities that directly foster obedience, order, leadership, togetherness, and student responsibility (Adiputra & Hermaya, 2020; Hanif & Yunitasari, 2024). These activities are not only enjoyable for students but are also relevant to their physical, emotional, and social development needs (Suratman et al., 2024).

The success of Pramuka as a means of discipline building highly depends on the quality of activity management implemented in schools (Gurung, 2021; Tawakkal et al., 2025). Referring to G.R. Terry's theory of management, effective management includes four main functions: planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling (Putra et al., 2024; Sholihah, 2019). In the context of Pramuka activities, planning is needed to formulate goals and work programs; organizing arranges the management structure and the roles of instructors and students; actuating ensures student involvement and motivation; while controlling ensures all activities run according to plan and have a positive impact on the development of student discipline (Cuello, 2023; Putra et al., 2024). With structured management, Pramuka activities can run effectively, sustainably, and contribute significantly to the character building of students (Amir, 2020; Tawakkal et al., 2025).

However, the reality on the ground shows that the management of Pramuka activities in various schools is still not optimal. Many schools run Pramuka activities merely as a weekly routine without mature program planning, clear organizational structure, and minimal evaluation of activity results (ENĂCHESCU, 2019; Kadri et al., 2019). This condition causes the potential of Pramuka as a discipline-building instrument to not be utilized optimally (Kadri et

al., 2019). In addition, there are striking differences between students who actively participate in Pramuka and those who do not, especially in terms of punctuality, adherence to rules, behavior management, and social responsibility (Adiputra & Hermaya, 2020). This situation indicates the need for improving the quality of Pramuka activity management as a strategic effort to foster discipline in elementary school students (Amir, 2020; Tawakkal et al., 2025).

On the other hand, previous research has largely focused on the general benefits of Pramuka activities for student character building (Suratman et al., 2024). Not many studies have examined how Pramuka management specifically plays a role in improving student discipline, especially in the context of digital era challenges and high exposure to online games (Dewi et al., 2023; Νικολοπούλου, 2024). Meanwhile, changes in student behavior patterns in the digital era demand more adaptive, systematic, and relevant development strategies (Kreuder et al., 2024; Zheng et al., 2023).

The low discipline of elementary school students is an urgent problem because it not only affects the quality of the teaching and learning process but also impacts the development of the nation's character in the future (Sudaryono & Aryani, 2021; Wijaya et al., 2023). If this problem is not addressed early, the discipline crisis can worsen with increasing access to technology and changes in digital culture among children (Abebe & Hailemariam, 2007; Inchaurtieta et al., 2022). Therefore, an effective, enjoyable, and challenging strategy is needed, one of which is through strengthening the management of Pramuka extracurricular activities. With good management, Pramuka has great potential to become a means of building disciplined, resilient, and responsible character in elementary school students (Adiputra & Hermaya, 2020; Tawakkal et al., 2025).

2 Previous Literature Review

Several studies have highlighted the positive role of extracurricular activities, particularly Scout (Pramuka) programs, in developing students' character and discipline. Rombokas and Hollrah (year) found that students' involvement in extracurricular activities significantly enhanced their academic performance, social skills, and character development. Similarly, Mulyono (2015) demonstrated that a well-managed Scout program contributes substantially to building students' discipline and overall personal development. Zakiyah and Munawaroh (2020) further emphasized that structured management of Scout activities fosters students' independence, rule compliance, and responsibility. In contrast, other studies have pointed to challenges arising from excessive use of digital media. Wahid Waham et al. (2022) reported that overexposure to online games negatively affects students' discipline, politeness, and academic motivation. Septriyeni et al. (2021) similarly found that prolonged gaming leads to tardiness, neglect of assignments, and a decline in rule adherence. These findings underscore the growing impact of digital behavior on students' self-discipline, highlighting the urgency of effective intervention strategies within schools.

Despite the documented benefits of Pramuka, several gaps remain in the literature. Most previous studies focus on the general benefits of Scout activities for character development, without specifically examining how the management of these activities serves as a strategy for improving student discipline. Moreover, there is limited research linking Scout management to the challenges posed by the digital era, such as excessive use of social media and online games. Previous research also rarely integrates the four functions of management planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling as a comprehensive framework to strengthen discipline. Consequently, the potential of Scout programs to serve as a systematic and adaptive tool for character building in primary schools remains underexplored.

This study addresses these gaps by analyzing how the management of Scout extracurricular activities can effectively foster student discipline. The novelty of this research lies in the development of a systematic, measurable, and adaptive Scout management model that incorporates habituation, role modeling, task assignment, and continuous evaluation. This approach not only emphasizes the routine implementation of Scout activities but also aligns them with the contemporary challenges of the digital era, thereby maximizing their role in character development. In sum, the rationale for this study is rooted in the urgent need to strengthen student discipline in primary schools, a factor that influences not only academic achievement but also long-term character formation. By examining and modeling effective management of Scout activities, this study aims to provide both theoretical and practical contributions to educational practice, offering a strategy that integrates structured management with the development of discipline and responsibility among students in the digital age.

Method

This study employs a qualitative research approach with a case study method to gain an in-depth understanding of the management of Scout extracurricular activities and its role in fostering discipline among primary school students (Yin, 1984). The case study design allows the researcher to explore complex phenomena in real-life contexts, providing rich, contextual insights into how management practices are implemented and how they influence student behavior.

The research was conducted at SDN Tegallame and SDN Mulyasari in Cianjur Regency, sites intentionally selected due to their active implementation of Scout programs and varied management practices. Participants were chosen using purposive sampling, focusing on those with direct experience and involvement in managing or participating in Scout extracurricular activities. This group included school principals, Scout activity coordinators, Scout instructors, and selected students.

Data were collected through three main techniques to ensure comprehensive and triangulated findings. First, observation was conducted, focusing on the implementation of Scout activities, including planning sessions, regular exercises, ceremonies, and camping events. Observations specifically noted student participation, adherence to rules, and interactions with instructors and peers. Second, in-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted with school principals, Scout instructors, and selected students. Interview questions explored the processes of planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating Scout activities, as well as perceptions of their impact on student discipline. Third, document analysis involved examining relevant school documents, such as activity schedules, program reports, attendance records, and evaluation sheets, to understand how management structures and procedures were applied in practice.

The collected data were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model, which involves three key stages (Miles et al., 2014; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Data reduction systematically organized and condensed the data by selecting, focusing, and summarizing relevant information related to management practices and student discipline. Subsequently, data display presented the information in the form of matrices, tables, and narrative descriptions to illustrate patterns, relationships, and thematic categories. Finally, conclusion drawing and verification involved developing final interpretations based on recurring patterns, triangulated across different data sources and collection methods to ensure credibility.

To enhance the validity and reliability of the findings, triangulation was applied through multiple strategies, reflecting established principles in qualitative inquiry (Crozier et al., 1994; Lincoln & Guba, 1986). Source triangulation ensured data were collected from various participants, including students, instructors, and school administrators, to capture multiple perspectives. Method triangulation combined observation, interviews, and document analysis to verify consistency and reduce potential bias. Furthermore, time triangulation involved conducting data collection across multiple time points to capture a comprehensive view of activities and their impact on discipline. Through this qualitative case study design, the research provides a nuanced understanding of how effective management of Scout extracurricular activities can enhance discipline among primary school students, while also identifying best practices and challenges that can inform future educational strategies.

Result

Activity Planning

The study revealed that the planning of Scout extracurricular activities at SDN Tegallame and SDN Mulyasari was systematically designed with the primary focus on student character development. The prioritized character aspects include discipline, responsibility, independence, and leadership. Operationally, the activities are organized into two main forms. First, weekly routine activities, such as marching drills, Morse code introduction, and knot-tying training, are conducted consistently 1–2 times per week with a duration of 60–90 minutes per session. Second, incidental activities, including camping, Scout competitions, and social service programs, are held approximately 2–3 times per semester to provide students with direct experience in social skills and leadership development. Students are actively involved in the planning process, for instance, by providing input regarding activity types and equipment preparation, with an average of 15–20 students participating per patrol. However, schools face substantial challenges related to the availability of facilities, particularly camping equipment and adequate indoor training spaces, requiring some activities to be adapted to the existing field conditions.

Resource Organization

The organization of Scout activities is carried out through a clearly defined institutional structure. The school principal serves as the main person in charge, instructors act as the core implementers, and the student patrol leaders, known as the Dewan Galang, manage each patrol with 5–7 students per group. Instructors hold multidimensional roles as role models, directors, and supervisors in every activity, employing a firm yet friendly approach, fostering a disciplined but enjoyable environment. This organizational model allows students to develop leadership, responsibility, and group management skills, while encouraging active participation in the implementation of activities. The ratio of instructors to students is approximately 1:15–20, ensuring effective supervision while providing space for patrol leaders to learn leadership and management skills.

Operational Implementation

The implementation of activities emphasizes the internalization of character values in line with the Pancasila Student Profile, including discipline, responsibility, independence, and mutual cooperation. These values are instilled through practical habituation, such as punctual attendance, task division in groups, participation in outdoor activities, and involvement in decision-making related to activities. A comprehensive evaluation and reward system is applied periodically, assessing student attendance, participation, and behavior. Rewards include verbal praise or certificates for outstanding performance, while educational corrective

actions are applied for violations. Observations indicate that student attendance averages 85–95%, and approximately 30% of participants actively take on roles as patrol leaders or activity coordinators. Moreover, activities also enhance students' competencies across social, physical, and mental dimensions, fostering teamwork within patrol groups, developing physical attributes through marching drills, agility games, and camping, and strengthening mental resilience, courage, self-confidence, and leadership skills.

Evaluation of Effectiveness

Evaluations show significant positive impacts on students' discipline. Indicators include punctual attendance rates, proper use of Scout uniforms according to regulations, and increased awareness of cleanliness and the school environment compared to pre-participation. Achievements in Scout competitions further reflect program success. Both schools won district-level competitions, with one school advancing to the regency level. Student participation remained high and consistent, with many students actively serving as patrol leaders or activity coordinators. Despite limited facilities, schools demonstrated high adaptability by creatively utilizing available resources, such as multifunctional school fields and locally sourced materials like bamboo and ropes for training.

Implementation Challenges and Applied Solutions

Challenges encountered include human resources, specifically a limited number of instructors and a lack of regular advanced training; infrastructure issues, such as inadequate camping facilities and the absence of adequate indoor training spaces; and funding constraints, stemming from limited allocation from the School Operational Assistance Fund, which necessitates reliance on voluntary contributions from parents and local sponsors. To overcome these challenges, schools developed comprehensive and practical strategies. Teachers are encouraged to attend Scout training courses to improve professional competence as instructors. Stakeholder involvement is strengthened through collaboration with parents, alumni, and local Scout councils, providing moral and material support. Facility optimization is applied by using local materials and multifunctional school fields. Furthermore, alternative funding sources are developed through bazaars, voluntary contributions, and partnerships with external institutions, ensuring program continuity despite limited BOS funding.

Discussion

This study underscores the pivotal role of systematically managed Scout extracurricular activities in cultivating holistic student character, particularly regarding discipline, responsibility, autonomy, leadership, and social-emotional development. These findings resonate with prior research demonstrating that structured extracurricular engagement enhances social, academic, and personal development.

Beyond confirmation of prior findings, the study provides nuanced insights into the mechanisms by which deliberate management practices enhance program effectiveness. Systematic integration of planning, participatory organization, adaptive implementation, and continuous evaluation enables students to internalize discipline and character through experiential and reflective learning. Active involvement in planning cultivates intrinsic motivation, a sense of ownership, and advanced problem-solving capacities, addressing gaps in prior research that largely overlook primary school contexts under contemporary digital and socio-cultural pressures.

A key contribution lies in contextualizing these activities against modern challenges, particularly the pervasive influence of social media, online gaming, and other digital distractions. Structured Scout programs function as resilience-building mechanisms, reinforcing positive behaviors and mitigating negative influences. This research uniquely foregrounds management practices encompassing strategic planning, resource deployment, participatory governance, adaptive implementation, and systematic evaluation as critical determinants of extracurricular efficacy, offering a conceptual refinement beyond earlier work that primarily assessed generalized outcomes.

Management theory provides a robust interpretative lens. Terry's (2006) framework emphasizing planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling is evident throughout operational strategies, while Engkoswara's (2012) educational management principles underscore the importance of planning, execution, and evaluation in achieving developmental outcomes. The study demonstrates the novelty of a structured, adaptive model for managing Scout activities, optimized for contemporary primary school settings, including considerations for digital-era challenges, socio-emotional learning, and participatory leadership development.

Additionally, the research highlights how participatory methodologies, stakeholder engagement, and innovative resource use mitigate infrastructural and financial constraints. Schools leveraged limited facilities effectively, applying multifunctional spaces, local materials, and creative activity designs to maintain program quality and engagement. This evidence extends prior studies on resource-limited educational contexts by illustrating how community collaboration, participatory management, and creative problem-solving reinforce program sustainability and student learning outcomes.

Continuous, multi-level evaluation emerged as essential, enabling systematic identification of improvement areas, informed pedagogical intervention, and iterative program enhancement. This approach extends existing literature by linking reflective assessment directly to character development and leadership cultivation, addressing gaps where previous studies focused predominantly on academic or social metrics.

In conclusion, the findings substantiate that strategically managed Scout extracurricular activities constitute a robust mechanism for fostering discipline, holistic character development, leadership skills, social-emotional competencies, and civic responsibility in primary school students. The study's novelty resides in articulating a management-driven model that integrates comprehensive planning, participatory organization, adaptive implementation, and rigorous, multi-tiered evaluation. By bridging theoretical frameworks with practical outcomes, the model ensures demonstrable growth in student character, leadership capacity, and resilience, offering a replicable template for other educational contexts in the contemporary era.

Conclusion

This study underscores the critical role of systematically managed Scout extracurricular activities in addressing the prevalent challenge of declining student discipline, particularly amidst the growing influence of digital technology and online distractions among elementary school students. The research, conducted at SDN Tegallame and SDN Mulyasari, comprehensively analyzes the management of these activities through the POAC framework, revealing their profound impact on fostering discipline, responsibility, independence, and leadership. The findings demonstrate that meticulous planning of Scout activities, which actively involves students, creates a foundation for character development through a blend of routine drills and incidental experiential events. Organizing resources with a clear hierarchical structure, where instructors act as multifaceted mentors and students take on leadership roles,

effectively cultivates responsibility and group management skills. The operational implementation through practical habituation, such as punctual attendance and task division, reinforced by a comprehensive evaluation and reward system, significantly internalizes Pancasila Student Profile values. Despite facing challenges related to human resources, infrastructure, and funding, the schools exhibited remarkable adaptability through creative solutions like instructor training, stakeholder collaboration, facility optimization, and alternative funding, ensuring the sustainability and quality of the program. Ultimately, evaluation of effectiveness consistently showed measurable improvements in student discipline and participation. This study fills critical gaps in existing literature by specifically examining how the management of Scout activities, rather than just their general benefits, serves as an effective strategy for improving student discipline, particularly when considering the contemporary challenges posed by the digital era. The integration of the full POAC framework provides a comprehensive analytical lens that was previously underexplored. The novelty of this research lies in articulating a systematic, measurable, and adaptive Scout management model. This model emphasizes the integration of habituation, role modeling, task assignment, and continuous evaluation, making Scout activities a robust mechanism for resilience-building against negative digital influences and fostering holistic character development. By bridging theoretical management principles with practical outcomes, this study offers a replicable template for educational institutions seeking to cultivate disciplined, resilient, and responsible students in the modern age.

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