



**“EQREM ÇABEJ” UNIVERSITY  
FACULTY OF EDUCATION  
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**



**UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN MACEDONIA  
FACULTY OF HUMANITY AND SOCIAL  
SCIENCES**

## **RESEARCH PROJECT PROPOSAL**

### **FOR THE JOINT STUDY PROGRAM**

#### **DOCTORATE IN EDUCATION AND HUMAN SCIENCES**

#### **1. TOPIC OF THE DISSERTATION:**

***"RESEARCHING THE DYNAMICS: EXPLORING THE INTERACTION OF TEACHER LEADERSHIP STYLES AND SCHOOL CULTURE IN THE ERA OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION"***

#### **1. FIELD AND SCOPE OF STUDY**

*Field of study: Education*

*Scope: Initial professional development and leadership*

#### **2. CO-SUPERVISING TEAM**

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This study investigates the intricate interplay between teacher leadership styles and school culture, particularly in the context of digital transformation. Through a rigorous mixed-methods approach, it examines how diverse leadership modalities adopted by educators shape and are shaped by the cultural ethos of schools. Using surveys and qualitative interviews with educators and stakeholders, the research uncovers patterns linking leadership typologies to key aspects of school culture, such as collaboration, accountability, and teacher engagement. By analyzing these interdependencies, the study enhances understanding of how leadership influences institutional culture in an evolving digital landscape. Its findings offer practical insights for educational administrators and policymakers, guiding the development of school environments that foster holistic student growth and academic success.

#### **1. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

The foundation of this study lies in the pivotal roles that teacher leadership and school culture play in shaping educational environments, particularly in the era of digital transformation. Teacher leadership is increasingly recognized as a key driver of school improvement, with educators' expertise and decision-making abilities influencing institutional development. Understanding the impact of various leadership styles on school culture is essential for fostering effective educational practices and continuous professional growth.

School culture, encompassing shared beliefs, values, norms, and practices, directly affects student engagement, academic performance, and teacher satisfaction. A positive school culture promotes collaboration and innovation, while a dysfunctional one can hinder progress. Given the intricate relationship between teacher leadership and school culture, this study seeks to explore how different leadership styles interact with and shape school culture dynamics. By addressing this gap in the literature, the research aims to generate valuable insights that inform educational policy and practice, ultimately contributing to the creation of more supportive and effective learning environments.

## 2. RATIONALE FOR THE RESEARCH

This research explores the intersection of teacher leadership, school culture, and digital transformation to enhance educational practices. Understanding how leadership styles shape school culture is key to fostering collaboration, innovation, and student success. As education evolves with technology, teacher leaders must integrate digital tools to enhance teaching, professional collaboration, and institutional growth.

By identifying leadership strategies that positively impact school culture, this study supports professional development and leadership initiatives, strengthening both teacher effectiveness and student outcomes. In the digital era, tech-savvy teacher leaders drive innovation by integrating AI, adaptive learning, and virtual collaboration tools, fostering personalized learning and data-driven decision-making.

This study provides insights into how educators can make use of technology to enhance leadership, improve school culture, and drive sustainable educational progress, offering valuable recommendations for policymakers, administrators, and teachers.

## 3. OBJECTIVES AND IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is of great importance in the field of education for several key reasons:

- Interweaving of Leadership Styles and School Culture and Digital Transformation;
- Improving Educational Practice;
- Contribution to the Academic Literature;
- Impact on Educational Policies;

Specific objectives:

1. **To study the leadership styles of teachers in the digital era:** This objective involves examining various leadership styles and approaches while considering how digital tools and

technologies influence instructional leadership, distributive leadership, transformational leadership, and collaborative leadership.

2. **To analyze the dimensions of school culture in a digitalized educational environment:** This involves exploring how digital transformation impacts school culture, including communication, collaboration, innovation, and adaptability in teaching and learning.
3. **To examine the interrelationships between teacher leadership styles and school culture in the digital age:** The study will investigate how digital tools, virtual collaboration, and technological advancements shape the dynamic between leadership and school culture.
4. **To identify influencing factors in the digital context:** This objective focuses on recognizing key digital-era factors—such as technological infrastructure, digital literacy, and online learning environments—that affect the effectiveness of teacher leadership in shaping school culture.
5. **To explore leadership efficiency in learners' progress within digital learning environments:** The study aims to highlight how leadership effectiveness, supported by digital resources, contributes to student learning, engagement, and socio-emotional development in both physical and virtual settings.
6. **To provide applicable recommendations for education in the digital age:** The study will offer practical insights and policy recommendations that help integrate digital strategies into leadership training, school management, and educational policies for a future-ready learning environment.

### 3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How are different leadership styles of teachers manifested—such as instructional leadership, distributive leadership, and transformational leadership—within Albanian educational institutions in the context of digital transformation?
2. What are the dominant dimensions of school culture within Albanian schools, and how do digital tools and technologies influence teaching and learning practices?
3. How do teachers' leadership styles interact with school culture in a digitalized educational environment, and what are the implications for fostering a positive and technologically adaptive educational setting?
4. What contextual factors—such as leadership support, organizational structures, access to digital resources, and professional development in digital pedagogy—affect the effectiveness of teacher leadership in shaping school culture?
5. What are the perceived effects of teacher leadership on student outcomes—including academic achievement, engagement, and socio-emotional development—within Albanian educational contexts, particularly in technology-enhanced learning environments?

These research questions aim to explore the interaction between teacher leadership styles and school culture in the era of digitalization within Albanian schools, providing insights into effective leadership practices and their impact on student outcomes and overall school effectiveness.

We are raising the hypotheses based on the research questions with the final aim of ensuring adaptability in educational practices. Adaptability is the key to addressing the challenges and opportunities derived by rapid social and technological change.

### 5. METHODOLOGY

The proposed methodology will focus on exploring the **interplay** between teacher leadership styles and school culture within Albanian educational institutions, with particular attention to the **impact of digital tools** and **technological change** in shaping these relationships. Here is a detailed description of the methodology:

Research Design: For this thesis, a **mixed-methods research design** will be employed to capture both the **quantitative and qualitative aspects** of the relationship between teacher leadership styles and school culture. The mixed methods approach is ideal for exploring the **complexities** of these interconnections and for examining how **digital tools** influence leadership practices and school culture.

## DATA COLLECTION METHODS

- **Quantitative data collection**: Surveys will be distributed to teachers, school leaders, and students to gather numerical data on leadership styles, school culture dimensions, and perceptions of digital integration in teaching. The surveys will include questions about the use of **digital tools** and technologies in leadership and classroom management, as well as their impact on school climate and student outcomes.
- **Qualitative data collection**: Interviews and focus groups will be conducted with key stakeholders, such as teachers, administrators, and policymakers, to gain in-depth insights into the **digital impact** on leadership practices and school culture. The qualitative data will help to understand the **contextual factors** influencing leadership effectiveness in the digital age, such as **professional development in technology** and **virtual collaboration**.

## DATA ANALYSIS

- **Quantitative Analysis**: Statistical methods will be employed to analyze the survey data, looking for correlations between leadership styles and school culture dimensions, with a particular focus on the role of **digital resources** in shaping these relationships.
- **Qualitative Analysis**: Thematic analysis will be used to identify recurring patterns, themes, and insights from interviews and focus groups, focusing on **digital tools' impact** on leadership practices and the **culture of collaboration** in schools. The data will be coded to identify the role of technology in improving leadership efficiency and school outcomes.

Upon completion of this study all the tools will be utilized in all phases of research in order to come up with well-grounded and comprehensive conclusions and recommendations.

## 6. EXPECTED RESULTS

1. **An Expanded Awareness of Digital Leadership Dynamics**: A deeper understanding of the dynamics between teacher leadership styles and school culture in the context of digital transformation, providing insight into how these elements interact and influence each other within the educational context.
2. **Identifying Patterns and Trends in the Digital Context**: Identifying patterns and trends of **digital integration** and how they intersect with teacher leadership styles and school culture within the educational settings studied, highlighting similarities and differences that contribute to a nuanced understanding of their interaction.
3. **Insights for Educational Practice in the Digital Age**: The findings will offer practical insights into how educational practitioners—including teachers, administrators, and policymakers—can make use of digital tools to optimize leadership practices and create a tech-savvy, collaborative school culture that enhances student learning and development.

4. **Contribution to Educational Research with a Digital Focus:** The study will contribute to the field by expanding current theoretical frameworks to include digital leadership and its relationship with school culture.
5. **Informing Policy and Reform in the Digital Age:** The research will provide evidence-based recommendations to policymakers, advocating for policies that support digital literacy, teacher training in technology integration, and investments in digital infrastructure.

## 7. Recommended bibliography

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